Publication of an amendment application pursuant to Article 6(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(2009/C 315/11)

This publication confers the right to object to the amendment application pursuant to Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006. Statements of objection must reach the Commission within six months of the date of this publication.

**AMENDMENT APPLICATION**

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

Amendment application pursuant to Article 9

‘MELA VAL DI NON’

EC No: IT-PDO-0105-0197-10.12.2007

PGI ( ) PDO ( X )

1. **Heading in the specification affected by the amendment:**
   - [ ] Name of product
   - [X] Description
   - [ ] Geographical area
   - [ ] Proof of origin
   - [X] Method of production
   - [ ] Link
   - [ ] Labelling
   - [ ] National requirements
   - [X] Other [Legal references]

2. **Type of amendment:**
   - [X] Amendment to single document or summary sheet
   - [ ] Amendment to specification of registered PDO or PGI for which neither the single document nor the summary sheet has been published
   - [ ] Amendment to specification that requires no amendment to the published single document (Article 9(3) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)
   - [ ] Temporary amendment to specification resulting from imposition of obligatory sanitary or phytosanitary measures by public authorities (Article 9(4) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

3. **Amendment(s):**

   It has been deemed appropriate to make reference, in Article 2 of the current specification on the product description, to the background colouration of the skin, which varies progressively from green to yellow, so as to facilitate the harvesting of apples of the Red Delicious variety at the most suitable stage of ripening.
In addition, since the current product specification indicates the chemical, physical and organoleptic characteristics of the fruit without specifying the stage at which they must be checked, a time frame has been identified during which these characteristics must be assessed. The quality parameters measured during this time frame are to be considered valid for the entire commercial life of the product, since, as a result of modern preservation techniques, no significant degradation will occur in the fruit’s firmness, sugar level or acidity.

The reference to the limit on planting density of 4 800 plants/ha has been removed from Article 5 of the specification on the method of production, since setting a density limit only makes sense if it is tied in with biological, agronomical and soil/climate parameters, while it serves no useful purpose if it is included without any other reference.

It has also been deemed appropriate to remove from Article 5 of the current specification the reference to the average yield per holding of 68 t/ha, since it penalises small holdings compared with large ones.

In addition, a paragraph concerning storage of the fruit has been added to Article 5. Given that, in particularly good years, producers do not have suitable facilities for storing all the fruit harvested, the possibility of storage in other suitable facilities under the supervision of the authorised inspection body has been introduced.

Lastly, the references to Community law in Article 7 of the current specification have been updated, with Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 replacing Regulation (EEC) No 2081/92.

1. Name:
‘Mela val di Non’

2. Member State or third country:
Italy

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff:

3.1. Type of product (Annex II):
Class 1.6. Fruit, vegetables and cereals, fresh or processed

3.2. Description of the product to which the name in (1) applies:
The ‘Mela Val di Non’ protected designation of origin is reserved for apples of the Golden Delicious, Renetta Canada and Red Delicious varieties that meet the following criteria.

External appearance when released for consumption:
intact, with a fresh, healthy appearance, clean and free of foreign matter and odours.

The fruit must be:
— oblong, truncated cone-shaped for Golden Delicious and Red Delicious;
— truncated cone-shaped or slightly flattened for Renetta Canada.

The coloration of the fruit is typically:
from green to yellow, sometimes with red tones, for Golden Delicious;
greenish yellow with rough skin for Renetta del Canada;
red on a green/yellow background for Red Delicious.
**Chemical characteristics**

Within two months of harvest, the fruit must have the following minimum sugar content:

- 12° Bx for Golden Delicious;
- 9° Bx for Renetta Canada;
- 9° Bx for Red Delicious.

Within two months of harvest, the fruit must have the following minimum acidity levels:

- 5 meq NaOH/100 g for Golden Delicious;
- 8 meq NaOH/100 g for Renetta Canada;
- 3.5 meq NaOH/100 g for Red Delicious.

In addition, within two months of harvest, Golden Delicious apples must have a minimum score in the Thiault index — ‘total sugars (g/l) + acidity (g/l) of malic acid x 10’ — of 170.

**Physical characteristics**

Within two months of harvest, firmness must not be less than:

- 5 kg/cm² for Golden Delicious;
- 5 kg/cm² for Renetta Canada;
- 5.5 kg/cm² for Red Delicious;

The ‘Mela Val di Non’ PDO is reserved for apples of the ‘Extra’ Class and Class I. The minimum size is 65 mm. The minimum quality standards for the different varieties and classes are those laid down by Regulation (EEC) No 920/1989, as amended.

The much appreciated organoleptic characteristics of ‘Mela Val di Non’ apples derive from the correct balance of the above physical/chemical criteria.

In particular:

- Golden Delicious apples are distinguished by their crunchy and juicy flesh and by their particular sweet-acidic taste,
- Renetta Canada apples have varying consistency and taste depending on when they are eaten, ranging from a crunchy and distinctly acidic flesh to a doughy, sweet flesh, but nevertheless maintain strongly individual organoleptic characteristics,
- Red Delicious apples have a more doughy flesh with a predominantly sweetish taste.

3.3. Raw materials (for processed products only):

3.4. Feed (for products of animal origin only):

3.5. Specific steps in production that must take place in the identified geographical area:

The ‘Mela Val di Non’ PDO must be grown and harvested within the production area indicated in Section 4.

3.6. Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc.
3.7. Specific rules on labelling:
The abbreviation ‘PDO’ and the words ‘Mela Val di Non’ must appear on sales packaging or on individual apples. No indication of origin not expressly provided for or additional wording likely to mislead consumers may be added to the designation.

4. Concise definition of the geographical area:
The ‘Mela Val di Non’ PDO production area is the catchment area of the River Noce as it flows through the Val di Sole and the Val di Non, also known as the Valli del Noce or Anaunia, in the Autonomous Province of Trento.

This area, covering the two valleys, comprises the whole of the territory of the following municipalities:

Andalo, Amblar, Bresimo, Brez, Cagnò, Caldes, Campodenno, Castelfondo, Cavarena, Cavedago, Cavizzana, Cis, Cles, Cloz, Commezzadura, Coredo, Croviana, Cunevo, Dambel, Denno, Dimaro, Don, Flavon, Fondo, Livo, Malè, Malosco, Mezzana, Monclassico, Nanno, Ossana, Peio, Pellizzano, Rabbi, Revò, Roncallo, Romeno, Ronzone, Rufèr, Rumo, Sanzeno, Sarnonico, Sfruz, Smarano, Spormaggiore, Spornine, Taio, Tassullo, Teres, Terzolas, Ton, Tres, Tuenno, Vermiglio, Vervò.

5. Link with the geographical area:
5.1. Specificity of the geographical area:

Natural environment
Soil: ‘Mela Val di Non’ apples are grown in an area that is highly suited to the production of apples of excellent organoleptic quality. The area’s soils are formed from ‘dolomitic’ rock and in themselves provide an element of uniqueness. One of the characteristics of this type of soil is its exceptionally high level of exchangeable magnesium, often as much as twice the level considered normal in other fruit-growing areas.

The organic matter content of the soil, at between 4 % and 6 %, is excellent, as is the nitrogen content. The soil also has good levels of other macroelements and of minor elements.

Climate: The fruit-growing area has an extremely favourable south-south-east exposure and a climate ranging from temperate-oceanic to continental-alpine, strongly mitigated by the area’s particular tectonic formation (wide glacial valley).

The area’s low rainfall (an average of five to seven rainy days per month) means that there are up to 300 days of sunshine every year. The complete absence of fog and mist throughout the year, linked to the low humidity, results in a very clear atmosphere which allows the strong sunlight to play its full role in biosynthesising the sugars and in developing the full ‘bouquet’ of aromas. These factors characterise the apples produced in this specific area.

During the hottest part of the day, the clearness of the air is also aided by a southerly breeze (known as the Ora del Garda) that regularly gets up in the late morning, caused by the movement of air masses originating over the wide lake basin of Lake Garda, the largest lake in Italy.

Air quality throughout the production area is constantly monitored by APPA (Agenzia provinciale per la protezione dell’ambiente (Provincial Environmental Protection Agency)), which can certify the absence of urban atmospheric pollution in the whole ‘Mela Val di Non’ production area.

The natural surroundings, in an Alpine area with a typical range of flora and its own particular wild fauna, as described by botanists and naturalists, attest to the environmental and land-based synthesis between cultivation and nature.

Human environment
Alongside the natural environment, centuries-long human activity has had a decisive effect on the strong link between ‘Mela Val di Non’ apples and the defined production area, as described in the historical information concerning the proof of origin and proven by an extensive range of historical/cultural and scientific sources.
The deep roots of the rural population in the production area, its age-old experience, its agricultural skills handed down from generation to generation, and the ongoing pursuit and use of specific, traditional cultivation methods have created the conditions to permit apple-growing to consolidate over time to become what it is today, an historical, traditional and cultural asset of the whole area and the basis of its economy.

Today, indeed, no fewer than 15 000 people out of a total population of 35 000 in the area work in apple production.

Therefore, the life of the area's population moves in time with the cycles of apple production (in particular blossoming, ripening and harvesting) and many popular festivals, cultural events and conferences are linked to apples and to the very real significance of apple-growing in integrated mountain agriculture, in terms both of conserving the landscape and natural environment and of agricultural traditions.

5.2. **Specificity of the product:**

The cool spring temperatures, during the initial phases in the development of the young fruit, encourage the presence of natural gibberellins in the plant. These lead to efficient cell multiplication, producing particularly crunchy, naturally elongated fruit with, in the Delicious varieties, a typical truncated cone shape.

Rational irrigation prevents growth stress and allows the balanced growth of flesh and skin, ensuring that the fruit grow harmoniously throughout the summer, producing, in the case of the Delicious varieties, a particularly smooth skin without defects caused by russetting.

In addition, the Alpine climate (hot days and cold nights) permits an excellent balance between the high level of photosynthetic products produced during the day and the low level of sugar normally lost during the night. The balance is very positive, inasmuch as sugar losses caused by nocturnal respiration, which are directly proportional to night-time temperatures, are severely restricted by a climate that is particularly cool, even during summer nights.

The almost constant clear nights also play another vital role, covering the growing and ripening fruit in morning dew that, as it evaporates with the first rays of the sun, cools the fruit, producing an agreeable reaction in the skin, giving it a pink tone in the case of Golden Delicious and Renetta Canada and a bright, glossy red colour in that of Red Delicious.

5.3. **Causal link between the geographical area and the quality or characteristics of the product (for PDO) or a specific quality, the reputation or other characteristic of the product (for PGI):**

The links between the exceptional factors described above are such that the natural and human environments and the climate of the valleys concerned form an indissoluble whole.

This has helped give rise to a highly distinctive apple product with unique organoleptic and quality characteristics that is highly renowned and appreciated, with 'Mela Val di Non' apples everywhere enjoying a high reputation, among both consumers and the trade.

According to official surveys, 'Mela Val di Non' apples have for several decades constituted a category by themselves.

It should also be stressed that 'Mela Val di Non' apples usually command prices on average 20 % to 25 %, and occasionally as much as 40 % to 45 %, higher than apples of the same size and colour, i.e. of the same commercial class, grown elsewhere.

Moreover, this consistently higher price, linked to the specific provenance of the apples, is enjoyed by all three varieties for which protection as 'Mela Val di Non' PDO is requested, i.e. Golden Delicious, Renetta Canada and Red Delicious.

The natural variability of the product, which can be observed in the objectively wide range of analytical results describing the quality of 'Mela Val di Non' apples, is nevertheless characterised by a higher average quality. This is recognised by consumers, who are prepared to pay considerably more for apples grown in this production area.
As well as being appreciated by consumers for their particular qualities linked to the environment, the renown of 'Mela Val di Non' apples everywhere is shown by the prizes and certificates of merit they have won at numerous national and international fairs and exhibitions.

In short, these results are due to the ‘all-embracing’ involvement, as regards culture, work and economic activity, of the inhabitants of the area in the production process of ‘Mela Val di Non’ apples, which has created a strong link between the product and the environment and, in particular, brought about a strong ‘emotional’ link over time between the people of the valleys and this exceptional fruit.

Reference to publication of the specification:

This Ministry launched the national objection procedure with the publication of the proposal for recognising ‘Mela Val di Non’ as a protected designation of origin in the Official Gazette of the Italian Republic No 253 of 30 October 2007.

The full text of the product specification is available by clicking on the following link:

or

by going directly to the home page of the Ministry (http://www.politicheagricole.it) and clicking on ‘Prodotti di Qualità’ (on the left of the screen) and finally on ‘Disciplinari di Produzione all’esame dell’UE [regolamento (CE) n. 510/2006]’. 