

**Publication of an 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**

(2012/C 294/09)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 <sup>(1)</sup>. Statements of objection must reach the Commission within six months of the date of this publication.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

**COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006**

**‘ΑΓΟΥΡΕΛΑΙΟ ΧΑΛΚΙΔΙΚΗΣ’ (AGOURELEO CHALKIDIKIS)**

**EC No: EL-PDO-0005-0736-14.01.2009**

**PGI ( ) PDO ( X )**

**1. Name:**

‘Αγουρέλαιο Χαλκιδικής’ (Agoureleo Chalkidikis)

**2. Member State or Third Country:**

Greece

**3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff:**

**3.1. Type of product:**

Class 1.5. Oils and fats (butter, margarine, oil, etc.)

**3.2. Description of product to which the name in (1) applies:**

Agoureleo Chalkidikis is an extra virgin olive oil, produced by pressing the fruit of the indigenous varieties of olive, the ‘Hondrolia Halkidikis’ and ‘Halkidikis’ of the species *Olea Europaea*. These are primarily table varieties, so similar to one another that the differences are imperceptible, grown mainly in the Prefecture of Halkidiki. The olives are harvested and pressed before they are completely ripe, when the fruit is still green. They are the biggest Greek olives, with a flesh-stone ratio of up to 10:1; the size is up to 60/70 pieces per kilo. Hondrolia Halkidikis and Halkidikis are used in two ways: as quality table olives and to produce olive oil (oil yield:14-20 % ). To produce Agoureleo Chalkidikis, the smaller fruit are normally used.

Both varieties are perfectly adapted to the geographical environment of the Prefecture of Halkidiki, where they account for around 90 % of the olives produced. It is here that the specific characteristics of these varieties best manifest themselves.

After two months’ storage in tanks, the Agoureleo has the following characteristics:

Colour:	Shades ranging from bright green to bright yellowish green
Aroma:	Greenly fruity, with faint odours of exotic fruit (banana) and freshly mown grass (Mf > 4,0).
Taste:	Bitter (Mb > 3,5) and pungent (Mp > 4,0) with a typical mild, slightly bitter aftertaste. Zero defect value (Md = 0,0).
Acidity:	≤ 0,35 %
Peroxide value:	≤ 15 meq O <sub>2</sub> /kg
Ultraviolet absorbency: K <sub>270</sub> :	≤ 0,15
	K <sub>232</sub> : ≤ 1,80

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12.

Waxes:  $\leq 100$  mg/kg

Oleic acid:  $\geq 75,00$  % of total fatty acids

Ratio of oleic acid to linoleic acid: maximum: 16,87, minimum 9,73

Ratio of monounsaturated fatty acids to polyunsaturated fatty acids: maximum: 15,73, minimum: 9,12.

3.3. *Raw materials (for processed products only):*

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

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

All stages of the production of Agoureleo Chalkidikis, i.e. cultivation of the olive trees, harvesting, pressing of the olives and extraction of the oil, take place within the defined geographical area.

3.6. *Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc.:*

Traditionally, the Agoureleo has been bottled and packaged on the premises where the olives are pressed or in facilities belonging to the producers, provided that transport is kept to a minimum, as when the product is transported in bulk there is a risk that its quality could be adversely affected by uncontrolled factors (variations in temperature, shaking, exposure to sunlight and to oxygen in the air, etc.).

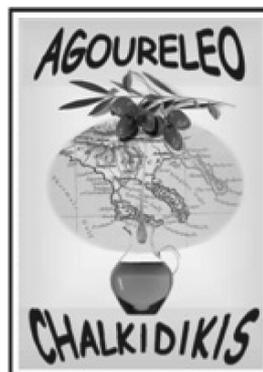
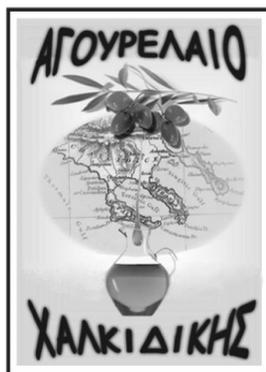
More specifically, unsuitable transport and storage conditions can impair the product's exceptional quality and specific organoleptic characteristics, and high temperatures during transport or storage can adversely affect its volatile components.

This is why the product cannot be packaged outside the boundaries of the geographical area of the Halkidiki prefecture.

3.7. *Specific rules concerning labelling:*

Labelling will include the name of the product, the EU PDO logo and anything else required by EU or Greek law. It will also include the following:

- A code number, which includes the year and month of production, the processing unit, the batch and the final packaging unit, if the final packaging is done in a different unit.
- A logo with the name of the product in Greek or Latin letters. In between, in the background there is an oval map showing Halkidiki, from an 1829 lithograph issued by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. In the foreground, there is an olive branch with green olives, and below the olives, a drop of olive oil dripping into a glass jug of olive oil.



The product may bear the certification mark of a recognised certification body, for production management systems, on the basis of recognised standards.

#### 4. Concise definition of the geographical area:

The Agoureleo Chalkidikis production area comprises all the territory of the Halkidiki Prefecture except the Mount Athos peninsula, which is a self-governed monastic community.

#### 5. Link with the geographical area:

##### 5.1. Specificity of the geographical area:

##### 5.1.1. Natural factors

The Halkidiki Prefecture has mountainous, semi-mountainous and lowland areas. Olive groves are found throughout the Prefecture, on flat or gently sloping land, up to an altitude of 700 m. Most of the olive groves are located in the Prefecture's coastal areas.

The soils in Halkidiki are mostly light, medium-textured, alkaline soils with a pH of 7,0-8,0. They vary widely, from poor, calcareous, stony soil in the mountains, to fertile, alluvial soil of limestone origin in the lowlands, containing a satisfactory amount of organic matter (1,5 %-2,0 %), which favours the development of the olive trees. The limestone origin of the soil has a beneficial impact on the volatile components in the fruit, and this gives the Agoureleo its typical aroma. There is sufficient groundwater to ensure that the olive groves get the water they need, through private drilling or collective irrigation systems.

The climate ranges from coastal Mediterranean in the lowlands to continental Mediterranean higher up and humid continental in the mountains.

The area's transitional Mediterranean climate is characterised by mild winters and cool summers, so there are no frosts or excessively high temperatures. The microclimate of the lowlands and of the mountainous areas where olives are grown is characterised by an absence of dangerous frosts or excessively high temperatures. The long hours of sunshine contribute to the smooth progress of all stages of the olive trees' development cycle (germination and growth, flowering and the development of the organoleptic characteristics of the fruit).

The average temperatures are suitable for olive growing, but even extreme temperatures do not harm the trees, because they are resistant and fully adapted to the local soil and climate.

The winds are mainly northerly to north-easterly and, mostly during summer, southerly. They do not usually cause any problems with the trees.

Generally speaking, Halkidiki's climate is particularly suitable for olive growing. Although Halkidiki is in northern Greece, because of its long Aegean coastline (630 kilometres) it is on the same isothermal curves for minimum and maximum temperatures as the olive-growing areas further south, such as Messinia, Aitolokarnania and Attica. The high rainfall is also beneficial: the average annual rainfall ranges from 470 mm (in the lowlands) to 850 mm (in the mountains).

##### 5.1.2. Human factors

The human factors involved in shaping the final product are an age-old tradition of olive growing, knowledge of the cultivation techniques required to achieve the desired result and the interest in producing and safeguarding a special product.

The following human factors contribute significantly to the specific nature of the product:

- Irrigation of the olive trees, which contributes to the high quality and stability of the Agoureleo.
- Pruning several times a year; the spring pruning is especially important because it helps ensure balanced fruit development.
- Early harvesting which, depending on the weather conditions in any given year and on the area where the olive groves are located, begins from 15 September and ends around the end of October each year (they are the first olives to be harvested in Greece). The olives must be harvested while they are green, before they begin to turn violet.

- The harvesting method (only by hand, so the olives can be visually checked and sorted immediately) which ensures that the harvested olives are of optimal quality.
- The gentle production conditions: after the unripe olives are pressed, malaxation takes place at a slow speed (17-19 revolutions per minute) for 20 to 30 minutes and the temperature of the olive paste is kept below 27 °C.
- Storage of the Agoureleo at a constant temperature in stainless steel tanks until it is packaged.
- Packaging: small quantities of Agoureleo Chalkidikis are packaged in dark glass bottles for rapid consumption; larger quantities are packaged in metal containers. In all cases it is protected from oxidation, which occurs when the product is exposed to the light.
- Under no circumstances may the Agoureleo be mixed with oil from previous harvests or with other olive oils, either during storage or during packaging.

#### 5.2. *Specificity of the product:*

Agoureleo Chalkidikis has specific distinguishing characteristics because it is produced from specific varieties of olive grown in Halkidiki, which flourish in the local climate and are in perfect harmony with the local cultivation methods.

The specific physical, chemical and organoleptic characteristics of Agoureleo Chalkidikis are low acidity, the bright green colour due to the chlorophylls in the unripe olive, a zero defect value, the greenly fruity aroma, with faint odours of exotic fruit (banana) and freshly mown grass, the bitter, pungent taste with a typical mild, slightly bitter aftertaste, the high oleic acid content and the high ratio of monounsaturated fatty acids to polyunsaturated fatty acids, which make the product stable. Agoureleo Chalkidikis is cloudy at the beginning, immediately after pressing. The initial cloudiness, due to the olive pulp, disappears within approximately two months. These characteristics remain unaltered for at least eight months after production (pressing), and if the Agoureleo is stored in the right conditions it can keep for up to 12 months after production (pressing).

#### 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 causal link, from an ecological, technical, historical, economic and commercial standpoint, between the quality and characteristics of Agoureleo Chalkidikis and the defined geographical area is substantiated by the following:

1. The distinct, indigenous varieties of olive (Hondrolia Halkidikis and Halkidikis), which are grown almost exclusively in Halkidiki and are among the best known olive varieties in the world.
2. The limestone origin of the soil, which has a beneficial impact on the volatile components in the fruit and hence the typical aroma of the Agoureleo.
3. The climate in Halkidiki: no major fluctuations in temperature and long hours of sunshine all year round, especially during the ripening period, when the organoleptic characteristics of the olives develop.
4. The systematic irrigation of the olive groves protects the olive trees from distress caused by lack of water during the critical stages of their production cycle, ensures that the trees are productive, and contributes to proper fruiting and the quality of the fruit and hence to the quality and stability of the Agoureleo produced.
5. Pruning several times a year; the spring pruning is especially important — it is done to ensure regular, steady fruiting.
6. The very early and prompt harvesting of the olives from which the oil is to be extracted. Agoureleo Chalkidikis is produced earlier in the year than any other olive oil in Greece.

7. The harvesting method (only by hand, so the olives can be visually checked and sorted immediately) which ensures that the olives are in optimal condition and protects them from damage so that the final product will be of the requisite quality.
8. Oil production conditions: because malaxation of the olive paste takes place at a low speed, for a prescribed length of time and at a low temperature, the acidity of the oil produced is exceptionally low, its colour is not altered and the aromatic components are not adversely affected.
9. The conditions of storage and preservation: the product is protected from contamination and spoiling by being stored in stainless steel tanks as soon as it is produced and it is not stressed by being transported for long distances. Before packaging, the product is stored only for the amount of time required for it to become clear. As a rule, the standardised product is placed on the market after the second month and during the following 8 to 10 months.
10. The historical link with the area of production:

The inhabitants of the Halkidiki peninsula have been linked with olive growing and olive oil production for hundreds of years. Pollination charts and archaeological finds revealing the presence of olive trees indicate that the systematic cultivation of olives in the Macedonia area started between the end of the classical period and the beginning of the Roman period.

The systematic cultivation of olive groves seems to have begun in the mid-nineteenth century. This new trend was also encouraged by the evolving Ottoman regime, which promoted the activity. Shortly before 1887, Christaki Effendi Zografos (one of the most prominent Greek figures of the time, socially, politically and economically) started work on the 'Portaria olive grove'. In around 1900 this fell into the hands of the progressive Turkish/Albanian brothers, Kenan and Mustafa Hatzi-Osman, who extended it and established, in all probability, the first systematically designed olive grove in the Macedonian lowlands. It occupies 4 125 decimal stremmata (412,5 hectares) and is located at the west and north boundaries of Nea Moudania. This was one of the main reasons why refugees from Mudanya on the Marmara coast in Turkey settled here in 1923. The Hatzi-Osman brothers set up a traditional oil mill on their land to process the olives from the grove and, in 1905 they set up the first known steam-powered oil mill in the Macedonia area, on Yerakini beach, to process olives from Polygyros and the surrounding area, which were now being produced in increasingly large quantities.

Nowadays, because of new dietary trends focusing on traditional Mediterranean produce, Agoureleo Chalkidikis is a highly valued product. Each year, when the new oil comes on the market, gastronomic events are organised to celebrate the new harvest and receive press coverage.

Today, the trade in Agoureleo Chalkidikis is evidenced by trade marks, packaging, proofs of purchase and sale, etc.

**Publication reference of the specification:**

(Article 5(7) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

[http://www.minagric.gr/images/stories/docs/agrotis/POP-PGE/prodiagrafes\\_agoureleo\\_xalkidiki130612.pdf](http://www.minagric.gr/images/stories/docs/agrotis/POP-PGE/prodiagrafes_agoureleo_xalkidiki130612.pdf)

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