

Publication of an amendment application pursuant to Article 50(2)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(2013/C 177/10)

This publication confers the right to oppose the amendment application, pursuant to Article 51 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾.

AMENDMENT APPLICATION

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs ⁽²⁾

AMENDMENT APPLICATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 9

‘MONTES DE GRANADA’

EC No: ES-PDO-0105-0169-28.07.2008

PGI () PDO (X)

1. Heading in the product specification affected by the amendment

- Name of product
- Description of product
- Geographical area
- Proof of origin
- Method of production
- Link
- Labelling
- National requirements
- Other (inspection body)

2. Type of amendment(s)

- 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 have 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 phyto-sanitary measures by public authorities (Article 9(4) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006).

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ Replaced by Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

3. Amendment(s)

3.1. Geographical area

The geographical production area for PDO 'Montes de Granada' has been extended to include a further 22 municipalities:

on the one hand, the municipalities of Peligros and Víznar in the Sierra Arana region, and on the other, the following municipalities on the Altiplano de Granada:

Beas de Guadix, Benalúa de Guadix, Cortes y Graena, Gor (except the area of that municipality that forms part of the *Parque Natural Sierra de Baza*), Gorafe, Guadix, Marchal, Purullena, Baza and Caniles (except the areas of those two municipalities that form part of the *Parque Natural Sierra de Baza*), Benamaurel, Cortes de Baza, Cúllar, Cuevas del Campo, Freila, Zújar, Castelléjar, Castril, Galera and Huéscar.

The reason for including these municipalities in the PDO 'Montes de Granada' production area is that, together with the area defined at present, they form a homogeneous entity as regards both the natural environment (orography, geology, soil, climate, etc) and human factors (olive varieties grown, cultivation techniques and methods used to obtain the virgin olive oil). In addition, the olive oil produced in the municipalities proposed for inclusion have the same physical, chemical and organoleptic characteristics as PDO 'Montes de Granada' olive oil.

3.2. Packaging

The restriction that the product be packed at the point of production has been lifted, as means of guaranteeing traceability have now been established.

3.3. Link

The text has been amended to correspond with the structure of point 5 of the Single Document 'Link with the geographical area'.

3.4. Inspection body

The competent authority responsible for inspections has been specified and its web address included, where the names of the bodies responsible for checking compliance with the Specification before the product is marketed can be found.

3.5. National requirements

The legislative requirements have been updated, detailing the current legislation.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs⁽³⁾

'MONTES DE GRANADA'

EC No: ES-PDO-0105-0169-28.07.2008

PGI () PDO (X)

1. Name

'Montes de Granada'

2. Member State or Third Country

Spain

⁽³⁾ See footnote 2.

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

Extra virgin olive oil obtained from healthy, ripe fruit of the olive tree (*Olea europaea*) of the principal varieties (Picual, Lucio and Loaime) and secondary varieties (Escarabajuelo, Negrillo de Iznalloz, Hojiblanca y Gordal de Granada) grown in the defined area.

The oils are obtained by joint milling of principal and secondary varieties. They are therefore multi-varietal oils and are enriched by the specific characteristics of each variety used. Among the oils's organoleptic characteristics, the strong character of the dominant Picual variety stands out (its green colour, medium to intense bitterness and fruity aromas) but this is softened by the Lucio and Loaime and secondary varieties, which introduce fresh aromas, reminiscent of various types of fruit, a less bitter taste and more golden hues.

Overall, the extra virgin olive oils produced in the area have a fruity aroma and flavour (medium to high intensity), reminiscent of freshly pressed green or ripe olives, a slightly bitter taste with a full body, whose intensity varies depending on the degree of ripeness of the olives milled. The acidity level is low and the colour covers a wide range of greens, from the brightest green to greenish yellow.

The lipid profile is marked by a high oleic acid content, which is usually above 80 % and sometimes reaches 83 %. The oils also have a high monounsaturated/polyunsaturated acid ratio (12 to 20) and therefore high dietary value and stability vis-à-vis oxidation. They have high chemical stability, largely due to the polyphenol components that provided the bitter flavour, which makes them more resistant to oxidation than other extra virgin olive oils.

3.3. Raw materials (for processed products only)

Not applicable.

3.4. Feed (for products of animal origin only)

Not applicable.

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

The olives must be grown and the oil produced within the geographical area defined in point 4.

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

The oil must be packaged in appropriate conditions and using food grade packaging in order to ensure that the product has a longer shelf life. The packaged product must be stored away from light and heat so that it reaches the consumer in optimal condition.

3.7. Specific rules concerning labelling

The product must bear a conformity mark known as a secondary label, identified by an alphanumeric code, to be affixed in such a way that it cannot be reused and permitting guaranteed traceability.

4. Concise definition of the geographical area

The geographical area comprises the following municipalities: Alamedilla, Alfacar, Alicún de Ortega, Beas de Guadix, Benalúa de Guadix, Benalúa de las Villas, Benamaurel, Calicasas, Campotéjar, Castillejar, Castril, Cogollos Vega, Colomera, Cortes de Baza, Cortes y Graena, Cúllar, Cuevas del Campo, Darro,

Dehesas de Guadix, Deifontes, Diezma, Fonelas, Freila, Galera, Gobernador, Gorafe, Guadahortuna, Guadix, Güevéjar, Huélago, Huéscar, Iznalloz, the northern part of the municipality of La Peza (up to the river Fardes), Marchal, Montejícar, Montillana, Morelábor, Nívar, Pedro Martínez, Piñar, Peligros, Purullena, Torrecardela, Villanueva de las Torres, Víznar, Zújar, Moclín (the eastern part up to the natural boundary formed by the river Velillos), Albolote and Atarfe, (the northern part between the rivers Cubillas and Colomera up to the point where they meet) and Baza, Caniles and Gor (except the areas of those three municipalities that form part of the *Parque Natural Sierra de Baza*).

5. Link with the geographical area

5.1. Specificity of the geographical area

From an agrological standpoint, the 'Montes de Granada' production area is a homogeneous olive-growing environment that is like no other in the Iberian Peninsula.

It has a higher average altitude than any other olive-growing area in the Iberian Peninsula (over 900 m above sea level) and is surrounded by the Subbaetic mountain systems. 'Montes de Granada', as it has traditionally been known, is thus an extensive *sierra* or low mountain olive-growing area within the province of Granada. The first reference to 'terrenos montuosos' (mountainous terrain) and 'cultivo del olivo' (olive growing) in the Montes de Granada region dates back to the 16th century. The document in question deals with land allocation after the Conquest of Granada by Ferdinand and Isabella and in it is stated '... to each neighbourhood a part of the olive grove is also allocated, which ...' (Peinado Santaella, 1989; *La repoblación de la tierra de Granada: Los Montes*, University of Granada).

The landscapes in the region feature depressions from some 750 to 900 m in altitude alternating with mountain ranges stretching from east to west and reaching maximum altitudes of 1 400 to 2 000 m. Land forms are generally more rugged in the limestone massifs, and other reliefs, also dissected by scarps, consist of low ridges and hills of limestone, marlaceous lime and loam. As we move towards the east, from Peligros, the southwesternmost municipality in the defined geographical area, close to the Vega de Granada (Intrabaetic depression), the landscape becomes more gentle, extending to a high plateau at an elevation of 1 200 m, where the Subbaetic mountains merge with the Intrabaetic depression in Huéscar, the northeasternmost municipality in the 'Montes de Granada' defined geographical area.

The defined geographical area has specific climatic features, which have a decisive influence on the characteristics of the extra virgin olive oils produced.

The climate is continental Mediterranean, with sharp differences in temperature between day and night and between one season and another. Winters are long and cold, lasting from November to March, with an average temperature of between 5 and 6 °C and a minimum below 2 °C, with frequent snowfall because of the high altitude (750 to 2 000 m). By contrast, owing to the province of Granada's southerly position, the summers are long and hot, lasting from the end of May until October, with average temperatures of over 30 °C. Average annual rainfall ranges from 400 to 600 mm and even less in very dry years.

The winters are similar to those in the northern Meseta of the Iberian Peninsula, although here we are in the south. The reason for these temperatures that are unusual so far south is the geographical location of the Montes de Granada region. It lies in the middle of a quadrilateral whose sides are formed by the mountain ranges with the lowest temperatures in the southern part of the Iberian Peninsula: to the southwest it borders on the Sierra Nevada (annual average temperature 8-10 °C), to the northwest it borders on the Sierra Mágina-Sierra de Lucena-Montejícar (annual average temperature of 10-12 °C), to the southeast it borders on the Sierra de Baza (annual average temperature of 10-12 °C) and to the northeast it borders on the Sierra de Castril and the Sierra de la Sagra (annual average temperature of 8-10 °C).

The extreme climate has determined the olive growing practices in the Montes de Granada area over the course of time, from the selection of olive varieties adapted to extreme winters, to practices such as early harvesting to avoid the frosts in January and February, and pruning techniques designed to maintain a maximum leaf/wood ratio to protect the trees from the severe winter frosts. On the other hand, these climatic conditions also help prevent the proliferation of pests and diseases endemic to other olive-growing areas in Andalucía, such as the olive fly and leaf spot, which enhances the quality of the fruit (low acidity) and in turn the quality of the oils.

The native varieties of olive grown in the defined geographical area such as Lucio, Loaime, Escarabajuelo and Negrillo de Iznalloz have been selected over the centuries because they are adapted to the extreme conditions; notably, they are resistant to frost and the fruit ripens early, so that it can be harvested before the winter frosts arrive. A work dated 1634 mentions the cultivation of 'Olivas de Marca' in the municipality of Cogollos Vega, in reference to trees yielding a rich harvest of high quality olives (*Libro de Apeos de Cogollos Vega, Real Chancillería de Granada*). Trees over 500 years old of the Loaime variety, which was grown before the reconquest of Granada by Ferdinand and Isabella, can still be found today in the Montes de Granada region (the name Loaime is of Arab origin).

The adaptation to the local environment of the Picual variety (the predominant variety), introduced into the area in the mid-19th century, more productive and vigorous than the native varieties mentioned above, has allowed most of the olive groves to develop with Picual being grown alongside the older, native varieties.

An important historical document dating back to the middle of the 19th century (*Diccionario Geográfico Estadístico e Histórico*, Pascual Madoz, 1845, republished by Bosque Maurel, 1987) praises the olive groves of this district and its exquisite oil and explicitly refers to: 'Montes de Granada ... and despite the scarcity of drinking water, the waters of the Rivers Cubillas, Benalúa and Moclin are used for irrigating the surrounding land, and all types of cereals, limpid and exquisite oil, wine and seeds of all kinds are produced ...'.

5.2. Specificity of the product

The specific characteristics which define 'Montes de Granada' olive oil are:

- A specific lipid profile, with a high oleic acid content (over 80 % and sometimes up to 83 %). It also has a high monounsaturated/polyunsaturated acid ratio (12 to 20), which gives it high nutritional value.
- Low acidity.
- Colour ranging from bright green to greenish yellow depending on the degree of ripeness of the olives and the proportions of the different varieties that make up the oil.
- Fruity aroma and taste, of green or ripe fruit, medium to high intensity (fruity median ≥ 3).
- Slightly bitter, pungent flavour, of varying intensity depending on the degree of ripeness of the fruit, related to the polyphenol levels in the oils.

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 high altitude of the Montes de Granada production area and the extreme temperatures in autumn-winter, when the olives are ripening, are crucial to the distinctive quality of these oils.

Scientists are well aware that the ambient temperature and altitude of olive-growing areas affect the ripening of the fruit in autumn-winter. The fatty acid profiles of the oils and their chlorophyll content (which gives them their green colour) are strongly influenced by these conditions. Thus the higher the altitude and the lower the ambient temperature, especially during the autumn-winter months when the fruit is ripening, the greater the oil's unsaturated fatty acid (especially oleic acid) and chlorophyll content, as a result of slow ripening of the fruit due to low temperatures, a specific feature of the Montes de Granada production area. The olive variety used is also an important factor. The main variety grown in the area is Picual, which has a higher oleic acid content than any other variety grown in Spain. 'Montes de Granada' olive oils have one of the highest oleic acid contents (80-83 %) of any virgin olive oil. For the same reasons, the monounsaturated/polyunsaturated fatty acid ratio is very high in these oils, between 12-20, moderated to some extent by the native Lucio and Loaime varieties, which contain less than Picual. It is Picual that gives 'Montes de Granada' oils their green colour, in varying intensity, from bright green to greenish yellow. Picual has one of the highest chlorophyll contents of all Spanish olives and when it ripens slowly — as it does in the defined area — it contains even more.

In addition, because much of the Montes de Granada area is mountainous (average altitude over 900 m), the oils have low acidity levels due to low temperatures during the harvesting period (winter), as lipase enzyme activity diminishes as the temperature drops. In addition, the low incidence of certain pests, such as olive fly, prevents lipolysis in the fruit during the autumn.

Lastly, it has been known since ancient times that the organoleptic quality of virgin olive oils is affected by local growing conditions, and that oil produced in mountain areas is more aromatic and has a better flavour than oil from lowland areas or open country. This is due to the unsaponifiable fraction of the virgin olive oils obtained, which gives them their aroma and which increases with altitude. Thus, the slower ripening of the fruit in the *Sierra* or low-altitude mountain environment of the Montes de Granada region gives us olives that contain higher levels of aromatic substances. The slower ripening, combined with environmental stress during autumn and winter (low temperatures and water stress) causes the polyphenol compound content to increase, and with that the bitter, pungent flavour of the oil. The olive variety is also an important factor when it comes to polyphenol compound content, and the Picual variety contains more than any other variety grown in Spain.

Publication reference of the specification

(Article 5(7) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 ⁽⁴⁾)

The full text of the product specification can be found at:

<http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/agriculturaypesca/portal/export/sites/default/comun/galerias/galeriaDescargas/cap/industrias-agroalimentarias/denominacion-de-origen/Pliegos/PliegoMontesdeGranadamodificado.pdf>

⁽⁴⁾ See footnote 2.