



C/2025/4074

22.7.2025

**Publication of the communication of an approved standard amendment to a product specification of
a geographical indication in accordance with Article 5(4) of Commission Delegated
Regulation (EU) 2025/27 ⁽¹⁾**

(C/2025/4074)

COMMUNICATION OF APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT

(Article 24 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143)

‘Pimentón de Murcia’

PDO-ES-0113-AM04 – 30.4.2025

1. Name of product

‘Pimentón de Murcia’

2. Geographical indication type

- ☒ Protected designation of origin (PDO)
- ☐ Protected geographical indication (PGI)
- ☐ Geographical indication (GI)

3. Sector

- ☒ Agricultural products
- ☐ Wines
- ☐ Spirit drinks

4. Country to which the geographical area belongs

Spain

5. Member State authority communicating the standard amendment

Directorate-General for Food, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

6. Qualification as standard amendment

Explanation as to why the amendment(s) fall under the definition of a standard amendment as provided for in Article 24(4) of Regulation (EU) No 2024/1143:

The amendments set out and explained below do not entail any risk of voiding the link or any new restrictions on the marketing of the product. They are therefore ‘standard amendments’ within the meaning of Article 24 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 on geographical indications for wine, spirit drinks and agricultural products, as well as traditional specialities guaranteed and optional quality terms for agricultural products, amending Regulations (EU) No 1308/2013, (EU) 2019/787 and (EU) 2019/1753 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

7. Description of the approved standard amendment(s)

Extension of the production area

This amendment concerns Section C (Geographical area) of the product specification and Section 4 (Brief description of the geographical area) of the single document.

⁽¹⁾ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/27 of 30 October 2024 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council with rules concerning the registration and the protection of geographical indications, traditional specialities guaranteed and optional quality terms and repealing Delegated Regulation (EU) No 664/2014 (OJ L, 2025/27, 15.1.2025, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2025/27/oj).

It is proposed to include all the municipalities of the Region of Murcia in the production area. The amendment of 2021, approved in 2023, automatically aligned the processing area with the production area, resulting in the exclusion of some processing plants that had previously been part of the production and packaging area. The purpose of this amendment is to address that situation. Extending the area will also potentially allow new processing plants to be covered by the 'Pimentón de Murcia' designation of origin.

Reason:

This amendment was requested by operators entered in the management body's registers.

The Region of Murcia has played a fundamental role in the development and further improvement of pepper milling. The region has had mills specialising in this product since the 18th century. In the 20th century, the Alcantud system was patented and further developed, which helped consolidate the industry. This system allowed the milling of peppers to be optimised by ensuring uniform quality and has become the reference method both nationally and internationally.

The Pimentón de Murcia PDO production process stands out not only for the milling system used, but also for the crucial role played by the master miller, who monitors each stage of the milling process to ensure the final paprika product has the right properties. The master's expertise in regulating the pressure of the stone mills, the grinding speed and the product flow is crucial to maintaining quality. This know-how, along with the Alcantud system developed in the 1950s and other technological innovations adopted in the region, further distinguishes the process from that of other production areas in Spain.

Extending the production area, and thus also the processing area, to the entire region of Murcia will guarantee the continuity of this paprika production model, ensuring that traditional mills, potentially joined by new mills, can continue to operate under the designation of origin.

The Pimentón de Murcia PDO production process includes the following main stages, ensuring the quality and homogeneity of the final product:

- Reception [of the raw material]: each batch is checked; the supplier is recorded and the peppers classified according to quality.
- Cutting: the peppers are first roughly cut with a knife to prepare the product for subsequent processing.
- Cleaning: dust, twine, leaves and other foreign matter are removed by air.
- Crushing: a hammer crusher breaks the shells into pieces of around 8 mm in preparation for milling.
- Milling: stone milling lines are used, in line with the Alcantud system, to reduce the size of the product through several passes, supervised by the master miller and the quality manager who visually check each batch, comparing it with the previous one to ensure uniformity. An ammeter is used to monitor the milling and the power is adjusted at each pass. The master miller also checks the noise made by the stones to see if the mill feed needs adjusting. To ensure the mill stones work effectively, they are fitted manually with a disc and hammer.
- Transmission: adjusted according to the quantity of oil added and monitored by ammeter (40 amperes if there is little oil and 30 amperes if there is more).
- Sieving: the temperature is checked to ensure the stability of the final product.
- The following technical reports are attached to the application to further explain this amendment:
- Milling system for producing paprika under the designation of origin. The document gives a detailed description of the traditional milling process and the key role of the master miller.
- Development and evolution of the paprika industry. The document describes how the paprika industry developed in the Region of Murcia, highlighting the Alcantud system and the importance of expertise in the milling process.

This amendment affects the single document.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

‘Pimentón de Murcia’

EU No: PDO-ES-0113-AM04 – 30.4.2025

PDO (X) PGI ()

1. Name(s) (of PDO or PGI)

‘Pimentón de Murcia’

2. Member State or third country

Spain

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff**3.1. Combined Nomenclature code**

— 09 – COFFEE, TEA, MATÉ AND SPICES

0904 – Pepper of the genus *Piper*; dried or crushed or ground fruit of the genus *Capsicum* or of the genus *Pimenta***3.2. Description of the product to which the name in (1) applies**

Product resulting from the milling of completely red peppers of the genus *Capsicum annuum* L., ‘Bola’ variety. The peppers used must be harvested, ripe, healthy, clean, dry and entirely free from pests or diseases and they must be grown in the defined production area.

Organoleptic characteristics:

The paprika is entirely sweet, with a characteristically strong aroma, high colouring power, fat content and distinctive taste. It is shiny red in colour. It is very stable in terms of colour and aroma.

Physical and chemical characteristics:

Particle size: the paprika must be milled so that it passes through a No 16 sieve or screen on the ASTM scale (equivalent to a 1,19 mm mesh).

— Metallic residues: maximum arsenic 1 p.p.m. and maximum lead 4 p.p.m.

— Food or food ingredients: addition of edible vegetable oils up to a maximum of 8 % of the dry product by mass.

— Foreign matter: there is a ban on the addition of seeds from other varieties of peppers used in the manufacture of canned peppers, placentas, calyces and stalks in a greater proportion than that of the fruit itself, artificial colourings and other substances affecting the parameter values defining the qualities.

Analytical characteristics of paprika in the commercial category Extra:

— Colour (at the time of milling) — Minimum ASTA units: ≥ 120

— Maximum humidity: ≤ 14 %

— Maximum ether extract of dry matter: ≤ 20 %

— Maximum ash in dry matter:

— Totals: $\leq 9,4$ %

— Insoluble: $\leq 0,7$ %

— Raw fibre in dry matter: 27 %

— Maximum capsaicin: $\leq 0,003$ %.

Analytical characteristics of paprika in the commercial category Primera (Class I):

- Colour (at the time of milling) — Minimum ASTA units: ≥ 90
- Maximum humidity: $\leq 14 \%$
- Maximum ether extract of dry matter: $\leq 23 \%$
- Maximum ash in dry matter:
- Totals: $\leq 9,9 \%$
- Insoluble: $\leq 1 \%$
- Raw fibre in dry matter: 28%
- Maximum capsaicin: $\leq 0,003 \%$.

3.3. *Feed (for products of animal origin only) and raw materials (for processed products only)*

Both products, paprika in the commercial category 'Extra' and paprika in the commercial category 'Primera' [Class I], must be made from completely red peppers of the genus *Capsicum annuum* L., 'Bola' or 'Americano' variety, grown in the production area.

3.4. *Specific steps in production that must take place in the identified geographical area*

Production of the raw material and production of the protected product.

The stages in the production or cultivation of the raw material include the hotbeds, land preparation, fertilisation, planting, transplantation, irrigation and fertilisation.

The processing stages include harvesting, drying the peppers and milling the dried shells.

3.5. *Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc. of the product the registered name refers to*

The milling and packaging process must take place quickly and in proximity, so as to preserve the specific characteristics of the product and avoid possible changes in moisture which would affect its subsequent preservation.

3.6. *Specific rules concerning labelling of the product the registered name refers to*

The packaging of products covered by the 'Pimentón de Murcia' PDO intended for consumption must be identified by a numbered label or secondary label, which must be supplied in advance by the Regulatory Board in accordance with the applicable rules.

The labelling of the protected paprika must prominently feature the words 'denominación de origen "Pimentón de Murcia"' or 'denominación de origen protegida "Pimentón de Murcia"' ['Pimentón de Murcia' designation of origin or protected designation of origin] (the abbreviation 'DOP' [PDO] may be used), the commercial category 'Extra' or 'Primera' [Class I] and the type of drying process used, either 'Secado al sol' [sun-dried] or 'Secado en secadero' [dried in drying chamber], in addition to the information and requirements laid down in the applicable legislation.

The words 'Pimientos desrabados' [destalked peppers], 'Pimientos sin rabo' [peppers with no stalk] or 'Pimientos sin pedúnculo' [peppers without stalks] may be featured on an optional basis.

4. **Brief description of the geographical area**

The defined geographical area comprises the Region of Murcia and the following municipalities in the provinces of Almería, Granada and Alicante:

- Province of Almería: Pulpí, Vélez Blanco and Vélez Rubio.
- Province of Granada: Orce and Puebla de Don Fadrique.
- Province of Alicante: Elche, Guardamar del Segura, Orihuela, Pilar de la Horadada and Torrevecilla.

5. Link with the geographical area

Specificity of the product

The specificity of the product, which makes 'Pimentón de Murcia' unique from other paprikas, is determined by its organoleptic, physical and chemical characteristics as defined in point 3.2.

Causal link between the quality and characteristics of the product described in the product specification:

This is reflected in the following natural and human factors:

Natural factors

The production area for peppers covered by the 'Pimentón de Murcia' PDO is located in the south-east of the Iberian Peninsula and includes municipalities from the Murcia region, Alicante, Almería and Granada. The relief is complex. The land located in the municipalities of Alhama de Murcia, Beniel, Cartagena, Molina de Segura, Murcia, San Javier, Santomera and Torre Pacheco in the Murcia region and Elche, Guardamar del Segura, Pilar de la Horadada and Orihuela in Alicante is at an altitude of less than 200 m. This zone accounts for less than half of the geographical area.

Most of the land is at medium or high altitudes. The municipalities of Caravaca, Fortuna, Librilla, Lorca, Mazarrón, Puerto Lumbreras and Totana in the Murcia region, Orce and Puebla de Don Fadrique in Granada and Pulpí, Vélez Blanco and Vélez Rubio in Almería are at higher altitudes ranging between 200 m and 2 000 m.

This difference in altitude within the defined area determines the growing seasons, which may vary according to climate.

Post-orogenic materials are very common in the geographical area concerned, particularly marl, clay, evaporite rocks and conglomerates.

Quaternary deposits are present in large expanses of plains and river basins, sometimes forming spectacular glacis. These areas generally have the best land for growing both rainfed and irrigated crops.

The soils used to grow peppers covered by the 'Pimentón de Murcia' PDO can be classified as saline. Salinity in soils with lower salt content is structural and inherent in the formation of the soil itself. In other cases it can be due to chlorides added as a result of irrigation.

In general, the climate is temperate, with a Mediterranean influence and some continental features. It is characteristically semi-arid, with rainfall of about 200 mm to 500 mm and high average potential evapotranspiration levels, reaching 180 in many localities in July and August.

Peppers covered by the 'Pimentón de Murcia' PDO are warm climate crops that require heat to thrive. Daytime temperatures of between 20 °C and 25 °C and night-time temperatures of between 16 °C and 18 °C are deemed to be necessary for optimal development and production. Floral abortions occur when temperatures rise above 32 °C, especially in dry conditions. When there is high relative humidity, the plant tolerates temperatures of more than 40 °C.

The crop requires significant ambient humidity (RH of between 50 % and 70 %) especially during the flowering and fruit-setting stages. During the early stages of development, it requires and tolerates a higher relative humidity than in the latter stages.

Peppers also require a lot of light during the growing season, especially during the flowering, fruit-setting and ripening stages. Light levels are therefore a limiting factor. Insufficient light causes the plant to whiten and the internodes and stems to become elongated, meaning they are left weakened and unable to bear the weight of the harvest.

Conditions are similar in the defined geographical area at different times of the year, with the result that the sowing and harvesting seasons can be extended in certain locations.

Human factors

As well as the growing conditions, the human factor, i.e. the expertise of the producers, also has an impact on the production of peppers covered by the 'Pimentón de Murcia' PDO.

That is why the production process for peppers covered by the 'Pimentón de Murcia' PDO is based on the know-how of the producers. Plot selection, the system used to prepare the soil for sowing, seed selection, planting and harvesting all have a direct impact on the characteristics of the end product. This is why producers familiar with the needs of the pepper crop for 'Pimentón de Murcia' have been able to extend their crops to land with the same natural characteristics, particularly as regards temperature, humidity and light levels.

Propagation is carried out using seeds selected from the best plants in the previous harvest (normally the first picking) and from sun-dried peppers preserved in minimal light and cool temperature conditions. Seeds would traditionally be kept in earthenware jars or tin boxes in order to guarantee these conditions of minimal light and cool temperature until sowing time.

After the seeds are selected, it is time for them to be sown. A generous amount of fertiliser or manure is added at the time of sowing and seeds are protected from the cold. Checks are conducted on the sown seeds in mid-December or early January. Given that the temperatures at that time of year are not suitable for germination or for young plants to develop, producers used to set up special hotbeds known as 'almajaras' for the seedlings. To protect against the cold, they were covered with reeds or brushwood and a fine layer of top soil followed by gravel to prevent the surface from hardening into a crust. The 'almajaras' consisted of rectangular hollows in the soil, about 1,5 m wide and with a length that would depend on how level the plot was. The seeds would be sown in the middle, forming a kind of line. These days plastic covers known as 'planteles' are used to protect against the cold, with the same hotbed function as the 'almajaras'. Alternatively, the seeds are sown in a honeycomb formation on sowing trays with a good substrate, as this ensures that the seeds (selected by farmers or certified) can be kept in optimal controlled temperature conditions by the staff in charge.

'Pimentón de Murcia' is valued both as colouring and seasoning, and these characteristics depend on the variety and the fact that the pepper crop is grown in saline soils under the conditions described above. The staggered harvesting of the peppers by hand is also of crucial importance and has a direct impact on the end product, because it allows the peppers to be selected when they are at their ripest, which is when colour intensity is at a maximum and water content at a minimum.

Planting is never carried out before 15 April. The date that has traditionally been considered best for avoiding frost is 25 April, the feast of St Mark. Planting is carried out in grooves or using a plastic base, with seedlings being placed a hand span apart in a triangular layout. They are then irrigated by flooding or on a localised level to enable better control of scarce water and fertilisers.

The timing of the harvest is crucial in obtaining peppers with the sensory characteristics of the product covered by the PDO. Peppers are harvested by hand and only those that are fully ripe are picked. It is the producers, with their product expertise, that determine when the time is right. They are able to distinguish which peppers on each plant have attained optimal ripeness, i.e. maximum colour intensity, highest natural pigment content and minimum water content.

After the peppers were picked, they would be spread out on a kind of wattle or laid out on the slopes of the hillocks, depending on how big or small the batch was, until they became dehydrated by the heat of the sun. This traditional drying method has been preserved over the years, although drying chambers have also been introduced.

The drying and subsequent milling of the peppers are essential processes for preserving the characteristics of the fresh peppers in the end product, 'Pimentón de Murcia'. Both the traditional drying method (in which the peppers are dried by direct exposure to sunlight) and the method involving hot air and controlled time and temperature produce pepper 'shells' with a moisture content of less than 14 %. This dehydration is maintained until the milling stage by keeping the shells in dry premises, so that the 'crushing' they undergo in the hammer mill can bring out all the oils that give the product covered by the designation its distinctive characteristics.

The Pimentón de Murcia PDO production process stands out not only for the milling system used, but also for the crucial role played by the master miller, who monitors each stage of the milling process to ensure the final paprika product has the right properties. The master's expertise in regulating the pressure of the stone mills, the grinding speed and the product flow is crucial to maintaining quality.

Stone milling lines are used, in line with the Alcantud system developed in Murcia, to reduce the size of the product through several passes, supervised by the master miller and the quality manager who visually check each batch, comparing it with the previous one to ensure uniformity.

This production and processing system has remained unchanged since the first seeds were brought over from America in the 16th century. The growing system throughout the Mediterranean area spread according to the climate conditions and to make the most of the saline soils. The initial production in the Segura valley spread to neighbouring areas such as Campo de Cartagena, Campo de Elche and the Guadalentín valley, with the latter being the largest production area.

Reference to publication of the specification

https://www.mapa.gob.es/es/alimentacion/temas/calidad-diferenciada/dop-igp/htm/DOP_Pimenton_Murcia_modif_mayor.aspx
