



C/2026/1101

18.2.2026

**Publication of an application for registration of a geographical indication pursuant to Article 15(4) of
Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council**

(C/2026/1101)

Within three months from the date of this publication, the authorities of a Member State or of a third country, or a natural or legal person having a legitimate interest and established or resident in a third country, may lodge, in accordance with Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾ an opposition with the Commission.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

Designations of origin and geographical indications of agricultural products

‘Peperoncino di Calabria’

EU No PGI-IT-03421 – 29 April 2025

1. Name(s)

‘Peperoncino di Calabria’

2. Geographical indication type

PDO ☐ PGI ☒

3. Country to which the defined geographical area belongs

Italy

4. Description of the agricultural product

4.1. Classification of the agricultural product in accordance with the Combined Nomenclature heading and code, as referred to in Article 6(1) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143

— 07 – EDIBLE VEGETABLES AND CERTAIN ROOTS AND TUBERS

0709 – Other vegetables, fresh or chilled

0709 60 – Fruits of the genus *Capsicum* or of the genus *Pimenta*

— 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*

0904 21 – Dried, neither crushed nor ground

0904 21 90 – Other

⁽¹⁾ 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 (OJ L, 2024/1143, 23.4.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1143/oj>).

4.2. Description of the agricultural product to which the registered name applies

The designation 'Peperoncino di Calabria' refers to the fresh and dried fruits (whole or in pieces, flaked or powdered) belonging to the species *Capsicum annuum*, of the following varieties: Amando, Barbarian, Corno di Capra, Cayenne, Ciliegia, Pinocchio, Red Devil, Rodeo, Picaro, Shakira, Trottolino Amoro (known locally as 'Naso di cane' [dog's nose]), Vulcan, Sigaretta, Calabrese, Pizzitano and Jalapeno, produced in the defined area referred to in point 4 below.

- 2.1. Physical properties Shape: The different varieties of 'Peperoncino di Calabria' come in shapes including conical, elongated conical, slightly oval tapering, and tapering to a rounded tip, with a length varying between 3 and 25 cm, or they may be round, like cherries, with diameters varying between 1 and 4 cm. The fruits must have a green stalk, be whole, and be free of marks and any visible foreign matter. Flesh: for all varieties: for the fresh product only: compact with a firm texture
- 2.2. Physical and chemical properties: moisture content for the dried product (whole, in pieces, flaked or powdered): permitted moisture content: maximum 15 %
- 2.3. Organoleptic properties: Colour: for the fresh product: red (the unripe fruit is green or yellow in colour); for the dried product (whole, in pieces, flaked or powdered): from brick-red to intense carmine (intense deep red), with yellow parts only for products with seeds.

Aroma: penetrating aroma, intense and characteristic, with herbaceous and fruity notes in the case of the fresh product.

Heat: medium-high heat (between 5 000 and 70 000 SHU (Scoville Heat Units))

4.3. Derogations on sourcing of feed (for products of animal origin designated by a Protected Designation of Origin only) and restrictions on sourcing of raw materials (for processed products designated by a Protected Geographical Indication only)

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

The stages of production of 'Peperoncino di Calabria' PGI that must take place within the identified geographical area are as follows: cultivation, harvest, drying of the product whole, forming the strings or lines, cutting the product into pieces, and grinding into powder or flakes.

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

'Peperoncino di Calabria' can be released for consumption packaged or loose, in the following formats:

fresh – loose: provided that it is presented in dedicated compartments or recipients bearing a clearly displayed label containing the same information as the packaged product;

packaged: in containers of various materials to a maximum of 1 kg.

In the case of business to business transactions or where the product is being sent for processing, the fresh product can be transported in containers of various materials with a maximum capacity of 250 kg, bearing a clearly displayed label containing the same information as the packaged product.

dried – in strings or lines: between 20 and 120 cm in length, that can be sold loose or packaged in packets, boxes or vacuum-packed;

whole or in pieces: in containers of various materials to a maximum weight of 3 kg.

ground or crushed: with or without seeds, flaked or powdered, and sold in containers of various materials with a maximum weight of 10 kg.

All packaging must be sealed so that the product cannot be removed without the package being torn open.

Packaging, of both fresh and dried, can also take place outside of regional territory.

4.6. Specific rules concerning labelling of the agricultural product the registered name refers to

The product 'Peperoncino di Calabria' PGI is released for consumption with the designation 'Peperoncino di Calabria IGP', accompanied by the designation logo and the European PGI logo. Terms describing the physical state can appear in the sales name as follows: '*Peperoncino di Calabria IGP*' fresco [fresh] for the non-dried product; '*Peperoncino di Calabria IGP*' essiccato in collane or filari, for the dried product sold in strings or lines; '*Peperoncino di Calabria IGP*' essiccato intero or in pezzi, for the dried product sold in whole or in pieces; '*Peperoncino di Calabria IGP*' essiccato a scaglie or in polvere for the dried product sold flaked or powdered.

The labelling rules require labels to be affixed to the containers used stating the information set out above; for the product dried in strings or lines and sold loose, the information in question appears on a label attached to the line. It is forbidden to add any description that is not expressly provided for. However, it is permitted to use brand names provided these have no laudatory purport and are not such as to mislead the consumer, as well as the name of the holding from whose land the product comes and other truthful and documentable indications that do not conflict with the purposes and content of this product specification. For dried chilli, it is also possible for the labels to include information about the drying method: natural drying or oven-dried.

The designation 'Peperoncino di Calabria IGP' must be accompanied by the logo shown below:



5. Concise definition of the geographical area

The production area for 'Peperoncino di Calabria' includes the entire administrative territory of the Region of Calabria.

6. Link with the geographical area

'When a Calabrian calls for the chilli and sprinkles it reverently on every dish as if it were a religious ritual, it is not just about the food: it is an expression of the history and culture of their region' (Teti, *Storia del peperoncino* [History of chilli], 2015).

The application for recognition of the PGI 'Peperoncino di Calabria' is based on the reputation. References to the chilli plant date back to 1493 and the second voyage of discovery of Christopher Columbus. The plant was introduced into Spain in the early years of the 16th century and immediately gained notable success, as the low cost and adaptability to temperate climates seemed to many sufficient reasons to treat it as a substitute for pepper. However, expectations were soon curtailed and the early interest left little more than traces in the European countries under Spanish influence. The exception was Calabria, where the product became deeply rooted and 'represents the best way into understanding the culinary identity of the area' (Olivieri, *L'età delle spezie* [The age of spices], 2018). The sociologist Corrado Barberis refers to a deeper link, a sort of symbiosis even: 'when the chilli arrived from America, it was as if Fate had revealed the people of Calabria to themselves.' (Mangitalia, 2010). 'Peperoncino di Calabria' gained an importance in regional culture that led to the product's indisputable reputation. This is based primarily on a set of features recognised both by the scientific world and by a vast range of consumers, including at international level. Firstly, the product's medium-high, but not excessive, heat allows the other organoleptic properties intrinsic to the varieties selected to be appreciated (Cautela et al., *Piccantezza di popolazioni di peperoncino autoctono calabrese* [Heat in the local chilli populations of Calabria], 2004). The identity of 'Peperoncino di Calabria' is enhanced by the presence of a volatile fraction with a characteristic aromatic profile in which fruity and grassy aromas predominate (Ziino et al., *Volatile compounds and capsaicinoid of fresh hot peppers of different Calabrian varieties*, 2009). This is why various sources

state a preference for 'Peperoncino di Calabria': guides to gastronomy (Gambacorta, *Eat Parade*, 2011: 'when it comes to chillis, I prefer the ones from Calabria'; the food industry (on its website, Barilla, the company that makes 'Vero Gusto peperoni e peperoncino calabrese' sauce, says of the product: 'Calabrian chilli is considered the finest Italian chilli on account of its unique sensory characteristics'); numerous regional and national websites and even foreign ones (including: 'A Couple Cooks'; 'The Spruce Eats'; 'PepperDodo'; 'Lidia's Italy'; 'Cozymeal'; 'Speciality Produce'. The former stress the product's link with Calabria, the tradition and its great versatility in cooking, while the latter stress the taste and the unique combination of colour and flavour. They all provide evidence of the reputation acquired by 'Peperoncino di Calabria'. The reasons for this reputation arise from a strong link between the product and the area, and can be attributed to a mix of natural and human factors. Natural factors include, above all, environmental factors. At the far end of the Italian peninsula, with 800 km of coastline, Calabria has a unique geographical configuration and a Mediterranean bio-climate with seasonal rainfall (Rivas-Martinez classification) which maximise the best conditions for the plant's development. 'Peperoncino di Calabria' particularly benefits from mid-to-high temperatures which do not reach extreme levels. Temperatures are at their hottest in July and August, the plants' full vegetation period, and lower in January and February. The autumn months are hotter than the spring months and are the main chilli harvest period (Scalzo, Local action plan, 2008). In addition, the lack of significant temperature variations (Attorre et al., *Produzione di mappe climatiche* [Climate map production], 2008) and the summer water stress index are both decisive factors for the significant capsaicinoid content, which is responsible for the product's heat level (Uarrotta et al. *Factors affecting the capsaicinoid profile*, 2021). The soil and climate conditions for cultivation have also been the subject of scientific research. Together with geographical origin and varietal selection, these factors have been shown to influence the volatile substances present to a significant degree in 'Peperoncino di Calabria', in particular aldehydes and alcohol, believed to be responsible for the fruity and grassy sensations (Trovato et al., *Elucidation of Analytical-Compositional Fingerprinting of Three Different Species of Chili Pepper*, 2022). Alongside natural factors, human factors are of great importance. The history of the region shows that the people of Calabria have a long-standing familiarity with chilli which has become, ever more clearly, an integral part of the culture of Calabria. Indeed, in the early 20th century, the famous writer Normal Douglas, in his travelogue *Old Calabria* (1915) wrote of the 'love of red peppers... which is peculiar to these parts, where they eat them voraciously in every form'. Other writers such as Corrado Alvaro (*Incontri d'amore*, 1940), Giuseppe Berto (*Il male oscuro*, 1964) and Domenico Zappone (*Peperoncini come zuccherini*, 2001) record the widespread tradition of chilli. Copious documentation shows that there are serious social reasons for this spread. In an unpublished text dated 1883, held in the State Archives of Cosenza, the author describes the different attitudes of the wealthy and the working classes towards the *cancaricchio* (traditional name for 'Peperoncino di Calabria'). In his study entitled *Lo Stato delle persone in Calabria* [The situation of people in Calabria] (1864), Vincenzo Padula had found that 'the fat of poor people is a dose of chilli peppers'. This shows not only that, in Calabria, chilli served as a substitute for pepper, which had failed to happen elsewhere, but also its wider role in supplementing the diet of the poor: 'giving flavour to insufficient and monotonous fare' (Teti, *Il colore del cibo* [The colour of food], 1999). 'Peperoncino di Calabria' is the most representative product of the region. This is clear from its constant use by the people of Calabria in different areas of daily life. In Calabria, the chilli is an ancient medicine (Tagarelli et al., *Folk medicine used to heal malaria in Calabria*, 2010); a modern cure-all (Gambino, *Venerdì e Domenica. Poesia calabrese del mangiare* [Friday and Sunday. Calabrian poetry of eating], 2004); and a source of genuine and imaginary folklore (Teti, *Storia del peperoncino* [History of chilli], 2007) and proverbs and sayings (Calandrone, *Gli anni di Scelba* [The Scelba years], 1975: 'We were shouting our heads off, with me as red as a Calabrian chilli'); a powerful symbol against misfortune and the evil eye (Canup, *Diventare cucina tipica* [Becoming typical cuisine], 2013; a by-word for strength and courage (represented by the manly ability to cope with the heat of chilli: Teti, *Storia*, op. cit.); a celebration of colour (the red of the chilli is the colour of blood, of meat and of wine, hence of life: Teti, *Il colore*, p. cit.); part of the urban landscape (in village houses, there is not a window or a balcony that does not have a string of chillis hanging out to dry), and indeed the very image of the strings and lines on display has always been a visible representation of an ancient and original craft, an unmistakeable sign of a wider know-how to which the product largely owes its reputation. Above all, 'Peperoncino di Calabria' is synonymous with the cuisine of Calabria. Since 1863, it has been noted that the peasants never eat victuals without the 'fiery' chillis. Indeed, it is well-known that the regional cuisine owes its reputation to the widespread use of 'Peperoncino di Calabria'. Leaf through any guide to the gastronomy of Calabria and you can find various highly imaginative recipes. The appendix to the aforementioned *Storia del peperoncino* contains 85, while there are over 100 in *Calabria a tavola* [Calabria at the table] (1997) by Ferretti Serra. The extreme versatility of uses is a recurrent theme in these recipes, as in more recent guides (Ferraro, *Calabria, in tutti i sensi* [Calabria, in all senses], 2016; Tigani Sava et al., *Cucina calabrese* [Cuisine of Calabria], 2022). It is also significant that 'Peperoncino di Calabria' is a vital ingredient in the dressings for the pasta shapes *struncatura* and *fileja* that originated in Calabria (Various authors, *Le Paste d'Italia* [Pastas of Italy], 2020; Zanini De Vita, *I sapori di Calabria nella cucina popolare italiana* [Flavours of Calabria in Italian popular cuisine], 2010). The reputation acquired by 'Peperoncino di Calabria' is also evident from the widespread use of the name

since the 1990s both in business-to-business relations and in the fact that the product appears as an ingredient on the labels and packaging of processed foods. Its reputation is widely known abroad, as many American and Australian websites talk about 'Calabrian chilis' or 'Calabria peppers', recognising the unique aromatic profile and heat of this product. The reputation of 'Peperoncino di Calabria' is also attested by the enormous success of events and festivals dedicated to the subject. These events take place throughout the region and attract the attention and interest of every part of the region and of Italy. 'Peperoncino di Calabria' is the subject of a 'hot' trail through places where it is produced and used. The discovery trail starts from the town that has become the symbol of the product: Diamante. Since 1992, Diamante has hosted the famous 'Peperoncino Festival', one of the region's most important summer events dedicated to gastronomy and culture. The neighbouring municipality of Maierà, in the province of Cosenza, is home to the Chilli Museum, the world's only museum entirely dedicated to this product. Other events dedicated to 'Peperoncino di Calabria' are: the 'Festival of peppers, chilli and typical products' which takes place in Castelsilano, in the province of Crotona, in August; the 'Chilli Fair' which takes place in Cerchiara di Calabria, province of Cosenza, the third Saturday in September; the 'Chilli Festival' in the municipality of Lago, province of Cosenza; the 'Hot night' in Catanzaro, an event with the chilli in all its forms as the star of the show. Also important is the 'Peperoncino Jazz Festival', a music event that takes place in different venues throughout the region of Calabria, and celebrated its 23rd edition in 2024, where the word 'Peperoncino' in the name has become synonymous with Calabria. Finally, it should be remembered that, in 2016, the Peperoncino di Calabria producers' association was founded in San Marco Argentano, province of Cosenza. Its principal activity is to support agricultural holdings in promoting, marketing and increasing the value of 'Peperoncino di Calabria'.

Reference to the publication of the product specification of the geographical indication

<https://www.masaf.gov.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeAttachment.php/L/IT/D/1%252F4%252Fe%252FD.0f648153900938a2311a/P/BLOB%3AID%3D3335/E/pdf?mode=download>
