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(1) Text with EEA relevance.
Non-opposition to a notified concentration  
(Case M.9640 — BCP/CD&R Fund X/BrandSafway)  

(Text with EEA relevance)  

(2020/C 37/01)

On 27 January 2020, the Commission decided not to oppose the above notified concentration and to declare it compatible with the internal market. This decision is based on Article 6(1)(b) of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 (1). The full text of the decision is available only in English and will be made public after it is cleared of any business secrets it may contain. It will be available:

— in the merger section of the Competition website of the Commission (http://ec.europa.eu/competition/mergers/cases/). This website provides various facilities to help locate individual merger decisions, including company, case number, date and sectoral indexes,


Non-opposition to a notified concentration
(Case M.9477 — STEAG/OYAK/SET)

(Text with EEA relevance)

(2020/C 37/02)

On 27 January 2020, the Commission decided not to oppose the above notified concentration and to declare it compatible with the internal market. This decision is based on Article 6(1)(b) of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 (1). The full text of the decision is available only in English and will be made public after it is cleared of any business secrets it may contain. It will be available:

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IV

(Notices)

NOTICES FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES AND AGENCIES

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Interest rate applied by the European Central Bank to its main refinancing operations (1):

0,00 % on 1 February 2020

Euro exchange rates (2)

3 February 2020

(2020/C 37/03)

1 euro =

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Exchange rate</th>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Exchange rate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USD US dollar</td>
<td>1,1066</td>
<td>CAD Canadian dollar</td>
<td>1,4647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JPY Japanese yen</td>
<td>120,10</td>
<td>HKD Hong Kong dollar</td>
<td>8,5935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DKK Danish krone</td>
<td>7,4729</td>
<td>NZD New Zealand dollar</td>
<td>1,7106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GBP Pound sterling</td>
<td>0,84775</td>
<td>SGD Singapore dollar</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEK Swedish krona</td>
<td>10,6808</td>
<td>KRW South Korean won</td>
<td>1 319,12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHF Swiss franc</td>
<td>1,0672</td>
<td>ZAR South African rand</td>
<td>16,4806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISK Iceland króna</td>
<td>137,30</td>
<td>CNY Chinese yuan renminbi</td>
<td>7,7681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOK Norwegian krone</td>
<td>10,2590</td>
<td>HRK Croatian kuna</td>
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<tr>
<td>BGN Bulgarian lev</td>
<td>1,9558</td>
<td>IDR Indonesian rupiah</td>
<td>15 207,45</td>
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<tr>
<td>CZK Czech koruna</td>
<td>25,177</td>
<td>MYR Malaysian ringgit</td>
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<td>HUF Hungarian forint</td>
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<td>PHP Philippine peso</td>
<td>56,293</td>
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<td>PLN Polish zloty</td>
<td>4,2968</td>
<td>RUB Russian rouble</td>
<td>70,5988</td>
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<tr>
<td>RON Romanian leu</td>
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<td>THB Thai baht</td>
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<tr>
<td>TRY Turkish lira</td>
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<td>BRL Brazilian real</td>
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<td>AUD Australian dollar</td>
<td>1,6521</td>
<td>MXP Mexican peso</td>
<td>20,8183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>INR Indian rupee</td>
<td>79,0035</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) Rate applied to the most recent operation carried out before the indicated day. In the case of a variable rate tender, the interest rate is the marginal rate.

(2) Source: reference exchange rate published by the ECB.
(Announcements)

OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Publication of a communication of approval of a standard amendment to the product specification for a name in the wine sector referred to in Article 17(2) and (3) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/33

(2020/C 37/04)

This notice is published in accordance with Article 17(5) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/33 (1)

COMMUNICATION OF APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT

‘Muscadet’

PDO-FR-A0497-AM01

Date of communication: 8 November 2019

DESCRIPTION OF AND REASONS FOR THE APPROVED AMENDMENT

1. Editorial changes

In section II(2) of Chapter 1, ‘the indication’ has been replaced by ‘the indications’ and ‘this indication’ has been replaced by ‘these indications’.

This purpose of this amendment is to correct a drafting error.

The single document is not affected by the amendment.

2. Geographical area

Following a revision of the geographical area for the ‘Muscadet’ designation aimed at limiting it to vineyards having maintained quality winegrowing, seven municipalities (Bouguenais, Frossay, Mésanger, Rezé, Le Pellerin, Touvois and Varades) have been removed and seven parts of municipalities (Gétigné, Legé, Ligné, Vieillevigne, Villeneuve-en-Retz, Cugand et Saint Hilaire-de-Loulay) have been removed.

Moreover, some editorial changes have been made: the new list of administrative entities takes account of mergers of or other changes to administrative divisions since the specification was approved. For greater legal certainty, the list is based on the current version of the Official Geographical Code, updated yearly by the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE).

The single document has been amended accordingly with respect to the geographical area and the description of the link with the geographical origin.

3. Demarcated parcel area

In section IV(2) of Chapter 1 of the product specification, the words ‘and 20 June 2018’ have been added after ‘19 May 2011’.

The purpose of this amendment is to add the date on which the relevant national authority approved changes to the demarcated parcel area within the geographical area of production. Parcels are demarcated by identifying the parcels within the geographical area of production that are suitable for producing the product covered by the protected designation of origin.

The single document is not affected by this amendment.

4. **Area in immediate proximity**

The area in immediate proximity has been updated following the merger of certain municipalities and the revision of the geographical area. Some municipalities that belonged to the geographical area are now in the area in immediate proximity. The overall winemaking area for the designation has not changed.

The single document has been amended accordingly with respect to further conditions.

5. **Vineyard layout**

In section VI:

— paragraph 1(b), the words 'to the maximum number of buds allowed by the pruning rules' are replaced by 'to 14';
— paragraph 1(c):
  — the following is added after the words 'between the rows': 'when that distance is 1.50 metres or less';
  — the words 'the height of the foliage being measured' is replaced by 'the height of the foliage is measured'.

These changes are related to the increase in maximum yield.

The single document is not affected by this amendment.

6. **Maximum crop load per parcel**

The average maximum crop load per parcel has been increased to 12,000 kg per hectare.

This amendment goes hand in hand with the increase in the maximum yield for the designation.

The single document is not affected by this amendment.

7. **Yield**

The yield for the designation has increased to 70 hectolitres per hectare, while the upper yield limit has been raised to 83 hectolitres per hectare.

The purpose of increasing the yield and raising the upper yield limit is to help enhance the aromas of thiols and freshness that are traditionally and specifically associated with 'Muscadet' wines. Moreover, it emerged during the revision of the parcel area that parcels exclusively reserved for producing 'Muscadet' wines are more fertile.

The single document has been amended accordingly with respect to the yield.

8. **Heat treatment**

The ban on subjecting the wine to heat treatment at temperatures of more than 40 °C has been removed. This amendment is intended to allow operators to use all the technical means available to manage the effects of difficult years that typically cause sensory alterations such as an earthy-musty taste. The technique of heating the must, known as 'thermovinification', has proved to be much less damaging in terms of producing wines lacking in structure and body than using mesoporous oenological carbon.

The single document has been amended accordingly with respect to specific oenological practices.

9. **Separation from the lees**

In section IX(c), it has been specified that the wines must be separated from their fine winemaking lees no later than on 31 July in the year following the harvest.

The period of ageing on the lees has been shortened to ensure the wines' freshness.
The single document has been amended accordingly with respect to specific oenological practices and the description of the link with the geographical origin.

10. **Circulation of wines**
   In section IX(4)(b) of Chapter 1 concerning the date from which the wines can be circulated between authorised warehouses has been deleted.
   The single document is not affected by this amendment.

11. **Transitional measure**
   The following has been added in section XII(2): 'As a transitional measure until and including the 2019 harvest, the wines may be kept on their fine winemaking lees after 31 July of the year following the harvest.
   The single document is not affected by this amendment.

12. **Reporting requirements**
   The time limit for submitting a claim statement has changed from 15 to 31 December.
   The declarations referred to in section I(2) and (3) of chapter II have also been amended.
   The single document is not affected by these amendments.

13. **Records**
   Editorial changes have been made with regard to record keeping.
   — In section II(2) of Chapter II:
     — point (b), the words "until the date of submitting the claim statement" and "the acidity of the must" have been deleted;
     — point (c), the word "book" has been replaced by "records";
     — point (d), the word "book" has been replaced by "records" and the words "or marketing wines of the registered designation of origin unbottled" have been deleted.

   Furthermore, a requirement has been added stating that the date on which the wine is separated from the lees must be entered in the winery records.
   The single document is not affected by this amendment.

14. **Compliance checklist**
   Chapter 3 has been updated to harmonise the wording of the main points to be checked across specifications from the Nantes area.
   The single document is not affected by this amendment.

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**SINGLE DOCUMENT**

1. **Name of the product**
   Muscadet

2. **Geographical indication type**
   PDO - Protected Designation of Origin

3. **Categories of grapevine product**
   1. Wine

4. **Description of the wine(s)**
   The wines in question are still, dry white wines.
   The wines have:
   — a minimum natural alcoholic strength by volume of 9.5%;
   — a maximum fermentable sugar content (glucose and fructose) of 5 grams per litre;
— a maximum volatile acid content of 10 milliequivalents per litre;
— a maximum total alcoholic strength by volume, after enrichment, of 12%;
— a total acidity content of between 61 and 112 milliequivalents per litre for wines with a fermentable sugar content (glucose and fructose) of between 3 and 5 grams per litre.

The wines’ total sulphur dioxide content and the total acidity content of wines with a fermentable sugar content (glucose and fructose) of less than 3 grams per litre, as well as the wines’ total actual alcoholic strength, must comply with the thresholds laid down in EU legislation. The wines in question are still, dry white wines.

They have delicate aromas, mostly fruity or floral, and a sensory balance essentially dominated by freshness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General analytical characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum total acidity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. **Winemaking practices**

   a. **Essential oenological practices**

   **Growing method**

   The minimum vine planting density is 6,500 plants per hectare.

   The distance between the rows is 1.50 metres or less, and the spacing between plants in the same row is between 0.90 and 1.10 metres.

   The vines are pruned with a maximum of 14 buds per plant:
   — either by means of short pruning with a maximum of 5 spurs per plant;
   — or by means of simple or double Guyot.

   Pruning is carried out before the budding stage or stage 5 on the Eichhorn et Lorenz scale.

   Regardless of the pruning method, the vines can be pruned with four additional buds per plant on condition that, at the phenological stage corresponding to 11 or 12 leaves, there are no more than 14 fruit-bearing branches for the year per plant.

   **Specific oenological practice**

   Any heat treatment of the harvest at a temperature below -5 °C is prohibited.

   After enrichment, the wines’ total alcoholic strength by volume must not exceed 12%.

   The wines must be separated from their fine winemaking lees no later than on 31 July in the year following the harvest.

   In addition to the above, the oenological practices for these wines must meet the requirements laid down at EU level and in the Rural and Maritime Fishing Code.

   b. **Maximum yields**

   83 hectolitres per hectare

6. **Demarcated geographical area**

   All stages of the production must take place within the geographical area approved by the National Institute of Origin and Quality at the meeting of the relevant national committee on 15 June 2017. The perimeter of this area, on the date of approval of this specification by the relevant national committee, comprises the territory of the following municipalities, based on the 2018 Official Geographic Code:

— Department of Maine-et-Loire: Mauges-sur-Loire (delegated municipalities of La Chapelle-Saint-Florent and Saint-Florent-le-Vieil only), Orée d'Anjou (delegated municipalities of Bouzillé, Champtocéaux, Drain, Landemont, Liré and La Varenne only), Sèvremoine (delegated municipalities of Saint-Crépin-sur-Moine and Tillières only).

— Department of Vendée: Cugand (partly), Rocherservière, Saint-Hilaire-de-Loulay (partly), Saint-Philbert-de-Bouaine.

7. Main wine grape varieties

Melon B

8. Description of the link(s)

Description of the natural factors relevant to the link

The geographical area has a landscape characterised by slopes and hillocks planted with vines alternating with valleys of wooded meadows. The most scenic spots are home to old mills or country houses built by the local aristocracy or bourgeoisie on the outskirts of Nantes in the 18th century (known as ‘follies nantaises’). The vineyards are located mainly on hillsides south and east of the city of Nantes on the land of the Loire, Sèvre and Maine rivers, the Goulaine marshes, the Grandlieu lake and their tributaries. The location of the geographical area near the shores of the Atlantic means it is geographically linked to the Loire Valley and has historical links with Brittany. It covers 81 municipalities in the departments of Loire-Atlantique, Maine-et-Loire and Vendée.

The geographical area benefits from an oceanic climate characterised by low annual temperature variations due to the large bodies of water in its vicinity (the ocean, the Loire estuary, Lake Grandlieu and the Goulaine marshes). Temperatures are particularly mild in winter, while the sea breezes keep summers cool. During the vine’s growing season rainfall is rather scarce, with plenty of sunshine for this latitude, although there are sometimes heavy rain showers during the high tides of autumn.

The geographical area is geologically complex. In the Precambrian and Paleozoic eras, orogenesis led to the formation of plutonic rock (granite, gabbro) and metamorphic rock (gneiss, mica schist, eclogite, amphibolite). Locally, this bedrock is covered by tertiary sediments (clay and pebbly sand). Wind-blown silts deposited in the region in the Quaternary era are generally scoured by erosion. Despite this geological diversity, the soils that have formed on these layers are mostly healthy brown, sandy soils that are rich in pebbles. The well-established parcel area where the grapes are harvested follows the contours of hillsides forming open landscapes mainly or traditionally planted with vines. The parcels have well-filtered soils with a good heat-retaining capacity, a limited water-holding capacity and moderate chemical fertility.

Description of the human factors relevant to the geographical link

Winegrowing in the ‘Muscadet’ geographical area dates back to the first centuries A.D. As a seaport on the Loire estuary, Nantes soon established itself as an important hub from which wines were shipped to the British Isles and Northern Europe. Various documents testify to the wines’ growing renown in the Middle Ages. The vineyards around Nantes gradually started specialising in the production of white wines and spirits, driven in particular by trade with Holland. Taxation rules encouraged the planting of vines, as Brittany wines were taxed at a lower rate than those made further upstream on the Loire river.
The winegrowing area really earned a name for itself with the development of the Melon B variety. The first written records of the name ‘Muscadet’ being used for this ‘Burgundy plant’ date back to the mid-17th century. After the harsh winter of 1709, which largely destroyed the Nantes vineyards, the region’s best locations were mostly replanted with the Melon B variety, which is more resistant to frost. The 1793 counter-revolutionary wars, during which vineyards were devastated, followed by the phylloxera crisis from 1884 onwards, merely delayed its rise. The restoration of vineyards by grafting provided an opportunity to adapt traditional growing methods to new techniques (planting in rows, Guyot pruning). Since then, production know-how is well consolidated with winegrowers using Melon B as the sole variety, maintaining a high planting density, checking the vines’ growth and limiting their yield, and harvesting the grapes once fully ripened. Following regulation through case-law in the 1920s, these practices were validated by the recognition, in 1936, of the ‘Muscadet Sèvre et Maine’ and ‘Muscadet Coteaux de la Loire’ registered designations of origin, followed by ‘Muscadet’ in 1937. To produce richer and more complex wines, the operators adopted a particular technical winemaking procedure known as the Nantes method, which consists in keeping the wines on fine winemaking lees for at least one winter without any racking. This knowhow stems from the winegrowers’ habit of keeping a barrel of their best wine on the lees to celebrate family events the following spring.

It is an ageing method that makes for round and unctuous wines, as they are enriched, in particular, with mannoproteins and other compounds resulting from the autolysis of yeast cell walls. Moreover, this method based on letting the wines rest and keeping them in a carbon dioxide-rich atmosphere allows the wines to preserve aromas formed during the alcoholic fermentation until spring or even longer, by strongly limiting oxidation and the release of volatile compounds. Rules concerning the traditional term ‘sur lie’ (‘aged on the lees’) were laid down in 1977 and have, since 1994, led to the practice of bottling the wine directly in the winery so as to keep any racking and decanting to a minimum. In 2009 some 840 producers were making wine with the ‘Muscadet’ registered designation of origin on just over 11,300 hectares of vineyards. Most of the wine is produced by private wineries, with traders buying grapes by the kilo and making them into wine accounting for approximately 25% and cooperatives for almost 10%. Wines with the ‘Muscadet’ registered designation of origin are still, white wines. They have delicate aromas, mostly fruity or floral, and a sensory balance essentially dominated by freshness.

Wines qualifying for the indication ‘aged on the lees’ have a balanced taste that tends to be rounder with more complex aromas, and may be slightly effervescent due to residual carbon dioxide formed during alcoholic fermentation. They are protected from oxidation during ageing to preserve their freshness, rich aromas and naturally occurring carbon dioxide. The wines are bottled, their carbon dioxide content being too high for them to be packed in flexible containers, and particular care is required during bottling. In his ‘Étude des vignobles de France’ (Study of vineyards in France), Volume II, Paris, 1876, Jules Guyot wrote that ‘the Loire-Inférieur [as Loire-Atlantique was then called] may have excellent soil, but its climate is wonderful’. Indeed, the geographical area benefits from soils well suited to winegrowing, combined with a climate suited to bringing out the aromatic character of white grape varieties. Specifically, the coarse texture of the soils ensures an early start to the vine’s growth cycle as well as checking its growth. The mild winters also contribute to early ripening with the summer sun and sea winds keeping the plants healthy. Furthermore, the soil of the geographical area has low water reserves and fracturing allowing the plants to grow deep roots as well as providing them with a regular, moderate supply of water that ensures good ripening. Lastly, the mild summer temperatures are ideal for preserving the freshness and delicate aromas that linger in wines made from grapes of the Melon B variety.

Heirs to an age-long winegrowing tradition, producers in the geographical area have for over three centuries reserved the best slopes for growing this unique and rare variety. They have optimised their winemaking practices to ensure a harvest of healthy, ripe grapes, with a subtle balance between richness and acidity that is reflected in the wines.

Made in line with local practice, the wines are often aged on fine winemaking lees without any racking, which allows the flavour molecules formed during fermentation to linger in the wine. The geographical area’s mild winter temperatures, which favour interaction with the lees, allow the wines to continue to improve during ageing, growing richer on the palate from the very next spring. Wines with the ‘Muscadet’ registered designation of origin labelled ‘aged on the lees’, which are bottled the year following the harvest, are more complex yet maintain their characteristic freshness, enhanced by a light effervescence due to residual carbon dioxide formed during vinification. To preserve the qualities obtained by ageing and to avoid any oxidation, operators have acquired specific expertise in packing the wines, with bottling taking place directly at the winery. This traditional practice, which minimises handling, is perfectly suited to preserving the delicate aroma compounds of the wines.
Since the mid-20th century, 'Muscadet' has been a household name in France, where brand recognition and market penetration currently put wines with this registered designation of origin in second place among white wines. Exports picked up again during the 1980s and now account for almost 40% of the volumes sold. Tourism has played an important part in this, as the winegrowing area is located close to the seaside and the wines go well with seafood and fish. By area in production, in 2010 the 'Muscadet' winegrowing area was one of the world's largest for white wines planted with a single variety.

9. **Essential further conditions (packaging, labelling, other requirements)**

   **Area in immediate proximity**

   **Legal framework:**

   **National legislation**

   **Type of further condition:**

   **Derogation concerning production in the identified geographical area**

   **Description of the condition:**

   The area in immediate proximity, defined by derogation, for making and processing the wines and for making, processing, ageing and bottling wines that may be labelled 'aged on the lees', comprises the territory of the following municipalities, based on the 2018 Official Geographic Code:

   — **Department of Loire-Atlantique:** La Bernerie-en-Retz, Bouguenais, Boussay, Chaumes-en-Retz, Chauvé, Cheix-en-Retz, Frossay, Gétigné (partly), Legé (partly), Ligné (partly), Loireauxence (delegated municipalities of La Chapelle-Saint-Sauveur and Varades only), Machecoul-Saint-Même, La Marne, Mésanger, Montrelais, Les Moutiers-en-Retz, Paulx, Le Pellerin, Pornic, Rezé, Rouans, Saint-Étienne-de-Mer-Morte, Saint-Hilaire-de-Chaléons, Saint-Père-en-Retz, Saint-Viaud, Touvois, Vieillevigne (partly), Villeneuve-en-Retz (delegated municipalities of Bourgneuf-en-Retz (partly) and Fresnay-en-Retz only), Veu.

   — **Department of Maine-et-Loire:** Beaupréau-en-Mauges (delegated municipalities of Beaupréau and Gesté only), Ingrandes-Le Fresne sur Loire (delegated municipality of Fresne-sur-Loire only), Mauges-sur-Loire (delegated municipality of Marillais only), Montrevault-sur-Èvre (delegated municipalities of La Boissière-sur-Èvre, La Chaussaire, Le Fief Sauvin, Le Fullet, Montrevault, Le Puiset-Doré, Saint-Pierre-Montlimart and Saint-Rémy-en-Mauges only), Orée d'Anjou (delegated municipalities of Saint-Christophe-la-Couperie, Saint-Laurent-des-Autels and Saint-Sauveur-de-Landemont only), Sèvremoine (delegated municipalities of Montfaucon-Montigné and Saint-Germain-sur-Moine only).

   — **Department of Vendée:** Cugand (partly), Montaigu, Saint-Étienne-du-Bois, Saint-Hilaire-de-Loulay (partly).

   **Legal framework:**

   **National legislation**

   **Type of further condition:**

   **Packaging in the demarcated area**

   **Description of the condition:**

   Wines that may be labelled ‘aged on the lees’ must be bottled within the demarcated area. They are bottled at the winery, so as to keep decanting to a minimum, between 1 March and 30 November of the year following the harvest to preserve the qualities obtained using specific winemaking and ageing methods, in particular their freshness and complex aromas, some of which develop after bottling, and a slight effervescence due to their naturally occurring carbon dioxide content.

   This specific ageing method makes for round and unctuous wines as they are enriched, in particular, with mannoproteins and other compounds resulting from the autolysis of yeast cell walls. The method is based on letting the wines rest and keeping them in a carbon dioxide-rich atmosphere, which strongly limits oxidation and the release of volatile compounds.

   The operators have acquired special expertise in protecting the wines from oxidation in the vat and bottling them with care, so that their fragrances can continue to be released as long as possible, making for more complex wines.
The wines are bottled, their carbon dioxide content being too high for them to be packed in flexible containers, and particular care is required during bottling.

Legal framework:
National legislation
Type of further condition:
Additional provisions relating to labelling
Description of the condition:
The name of the registered designation of origin may be followed by the indication ‘sur lie’ (aged on the lees) in accordance with the specific rules laid down in the product specification.
The name of the registered designation of origin may be followed by the indication ‘primeur’ (‘early’) or ‘nouveau’ (‘new’) in accordance with the specific rules laid down in the product specification.
The name of the registered designation of origin may be followed by the geographical name ‘Val de Loire’ in accordance with the specific rules laid down in the product specification.
The words ‘sur lie’, ‘primeur’ and ‘nouveau’ and the geographical name ‘Val de Loire’ must be written in letters smaller than or of the same size (in height, width and thickness) as the letters forming the name of the registered designation of origin.
For wines labelled ‘sur lie’, ‘primeur’ and ‘nouveau’, the vintage must also appear on the label.

Link to the product specification

https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/gedei/site/ba-agri/document_administratif-700bf077-91e7-46a4-9d50-0617becbef1f