

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 6 December 2018

on the publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union* of the application for approval of an amendment, which is not minor, to a product specification referred to in Article 53 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council for the name 'Liquirizia di Calabria' (PDO)

(2018/C 449/07)

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 November 2012 on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs⁽¹⁾, and in particular Article 50(2)(a) in conjunction with Article 53(2) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Italy has sent an application for approval of an amendment, which is not minor, to the product specification of 'Liquirizia di Calabria' (PDO) in accordance with Article 49(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.
- (2) In accordance with Article 50 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 the Commission has examined that application and concluded that it fulfils the conditions laid down in that Regulation.
- (3) In order to allow for the submission of notices of opposition in accordance with Article 51 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012, the application for approval of an amendment, which is not minor, to the product specification, as referred to in the first subparagraph of Article 10(1) of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 668/2014⁽²⁾, including the amended single document and the reference to the publication of the relevant product specification, for the registered name 'Liquirizia di Calabria' (PDO) should be published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Sole Article

The application for approval of an amendment, which is not minor, to the product specification, referred to in the first subparagraph of Article 10(1) of Implementing Regulation (EU) No 668/2014, including the amended single document and the reference to the publication of the relevant product specification, for the registered name 'Liquirizia di Calabria' (PDO) is contained in the Annex to this Decision.

In accordance with Article 51 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012, the publication of this Decision shall confer the right to oppose to the amendment referred to in the first paragraph of this Article within three months from the date of publication of this Decision in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

Done at Brussels, 6 December 2018.

For the Commission

Phil HOGAN

Member of the Commission

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 668/2014 of 13 June 2014 laying down rules for the application of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs (OJ L 179, 19.6.2014, p. 36).

ANNEX

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF A NON-MINOR AMENDMENTS TO THE PRODUCT SPECIFICATION OF A PROTECTED DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN/PROTECTED GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION

Application for approval of amendments in accordance with the first subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012

‘Liquirizia di Calabria’

EU No: PDO-IT-00644-AM02 — 10.5.2018

PDO (X) PGI ()

1. Applicant group and legitimate interest

Consorzio di tutela della Liquirizia di Calabria DOP (Liquirizia di Calabria PDO Protection Association)
Corso Luigi Fera, 79
87100 Cosenza
ITALIA

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The Consorzio di tutela della Liquirizia di Calabria DOP is entitled to submit an amendment application in accordance with Article 13(1) of Decree No 12511 of the Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policy of 14 October 2013.

2. Member State or Third Country

Italy

3. Heading in the product specification affected by the amendment(s)

- ☐ Product name
- ☒ Product description
- ☐ Geographical area
- ☐ Proof of origin
- ☒ Production method
- ☐ Link
- ☐ Labelling
- ☒ Other [Inspection body; updating of references to legislation]

4. Type of amendment(s)

- ☒ Amendments to the product specification of a registered PDO or PGI not to be qualified as minor in accordance with the third subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.
- ☐ Amendments to the product specification of a registered PDO or PGI for which a Single Document (or equivalent) has not been published and which cannot be qualified as minor in accordance with the third subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012

5. Amendment(s)

Description of product

Article 2 of the product specification — Point 3.2 of the Single Document

— For the fresh root variety, the following values:

- ‘— Moisture: between 48 % and 52 %,
- Glycyrrhizin: between 0,60 % and 1,40 %’

have been amended as follows:

- ‘— Moisture: ≤ 52 %,
- Glycyrrhizin: ≤ 1,40 %’

The amendment aims to include within 'Liquirizia di Calabria' PDO liquorice of the fresh root variety whose moisture levels and glycyrrhizin content are below the minimum limit formerly prescribed.

The amendment of moisture levels for the fresh root variety is linked to the extreme variability of climate conditions, which affect the moisture of liquorice roots at the time of harvest. For this reason, it was deemed appropriate to remove the minimum value for moisture, while leaving the permitted maximum percentage unchanged.

The glycyrrhizin content amendment aims to include within 'Liquirizia di Calabria' PDO those specimens of fresh root with a glycyrrhizin content lower than 0,60 %. This amendment is in line with the specific character of the product, which distinguishes itself on the market by its lower levels of glycyrrhizin compared with liquorice roots grown in other regions.

— For the dried root variety, the following values:

‘— Moisture: between 6 % and 12 %,

— Glycyrrhizin: between 1,2 % and 2,4 %’

have been amended as follows:

‘— Moisture: $\leq$ 12 %,

— Glycyrrhizin: $\leq$ 5 % of dry matter’

The amendment aims to include within 'Liquirizia di Calabria' PDO those specimens of dried root with humidity levels lower than the minimum limit formerly prescribed. It also aims to redefine the glycyrrhizin content, replacing a range of values with a single maximum permitted value, calculated as a percentage of dry matter.

The request to amend the moisture limit stems from the fact that moisture levels in dried root are strongly linked to environmental and process conditions, as well as packaging and storage methods. Therefore, a restriction based on the minimum level of moisture puts unnecessary limitations on the production system for 'Liquirizia di Calabria'.

The glycyrrhizin limit needs to be amended in order for it to be consistent with the reported data about fresh root. Experimental evidence has shown that the glycyrrhizin value given in the existing specification for dried root is not in line with the prescribed levels for fresh root. This error needs to be rectified in order for the information given in the product specification to be correct.

The introduction of a single maximum permitted value for glycyrrhizin, and of an increase in that value, does not invalidate the information about the product's specific character contained in the single document and on which the registration of the designation 'Liquirizia di Calabria' is based. The maximum content of glycyrrhizic acid in roots themselves — from which dried root is derived — is still in line with the existing value of 1,40 %, which is not being changed.

— For the root extract variety, the following value:

‘— Glycyrrhizin content: between 3 % and 6 %’

has been amended as follows:

‘— Glycyrrhizin: $\leq$ 6 % of dry matter’

Besides specifying that glycyrrhizin levels should be calculated as a percentage of dry matter, the amendment takes into account the results of a recent study conducted as part of a project financed by the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research using funds from NOP R&C 2007-2013 and based on data from the last 17 years. The study revealed that in the last 17 years the concentration of glycyrrhizic acid in liquorice root extract produced in Calabria has progressively decreased.

Therefore, it was deemed appropriate to remove the minimum glycyrrhizin value laid down in the product specification. The amendment further confirms the specific character of the geographical area of cultivation, which allows 'Liquirizia di Calabria' PDO to stand out thanks to its clearly lower glycyrrhizin content compared with liquorice grown in other areas.

Method of production

Article 5 of the product specification

The following sentence:

‘This process takes place in open, sunlit, well-ventilated spaces, in closed but still well-ventilated spaces, or in ventilated ovens. Care is taken not to subject the product to temperatures over 50 °C, which would alter its characteristics.’

is amended as follows:

'This process takes place in open, sunlit, well-ventilated spaces, in closed but still well-ventilated spaces, or in ventilated ovens and special dryers. Care is taken not to subject the product to temperatures over 60 °C, which would alter its characteristics'.

The possibility has also been added to broaden the drying process to include the new generation of dryers (solar ones), in order to keep the product specification up to date with new food technology.

The amendments made in this article further specify the temperature limit for drying liquorice roots before they are placed on the market, in order to guarantee the quality of the product and the health of the plants.

Regarding the latter point, it should be noted that liquorice roots dried and stored in warehouses and sometimes on market stalls can be attacked by the furniture beetle, *Anobium punctatum*.

Specific studies have been conducted on 'Liquirizia di Calabria' with the twofold aim of monitoring the active substances at 30 °C, 40 °C, 50 °C and 60 °C to guarantee the quality of the product, and identifying the ideal temperature limit and maximum exposure time for killing the parasites mentioned above.

The results of the research showed that drying liquorice roots at temperatures up to 60 °C does not result in specific changes in their composition that could affect the quality of the product. The study demonstrated that the parasites are most tolerant to heat in the larval stage, but that even very brief exposures (5 mins) to temperatures over 52 °C lead to death in 100 % of larvae. Such an outcome is necessary to prevent beetles developing again from larvae in batches placed on the market.

Other

Inspection body

The name, address and contact details of the inspection body accountable for checking the product specification have been included in Article 7 of the product specification.

Updating of legal references

References to Regulation (EEC) No 510/2006 have been replaced with references to Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'Liquirizia di Calabria'

EU No: PDO-IT-00644-AM02 — 10.5.2018

PDO (X) PGI ()

1. Name

'Liquirizia di Calabria'

2. Member State or Third Country

Italy

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff

3.1. Type of product

Class 1.8. Other products of Annex I to the Treaty (spices etc.)

Class 2.3. Bread, pastry, cakes, confectionery, biscuits and other baker's wares

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

'Liquirizia di Calabria' Protected Designation of Origin is reserved exclusively for fresh or dried liquorice and its extract. This liquorice must come from cultivated or wild *Glycyrrhiza glabra* plants (family: *Leguminosae*), specifically the 'typica' variety known in Calabria as 'Cordara'.

When released for consumption 'Liquirizia di Calabria' PDO must have the following characteristics:

fresh root:

- colour: straw yellow,
- flavour: sweet, aromatic, intense and lasting,
- moisture: $\leq 52\%$,
- glycyrrhizin: $\leq 1,40\%$;

dried root:

- colour: straw yellow to ochre yellow,
- flavour: sweet, fruity and slightly astringent,
- moisture content: $\leq 12\%$,
- glycyrrhizin: $\leq 5\%$ of dry matter;

root extract:

- colour: dark terracotta brown to black,
- flavour: bittersweet, aromatic, intense and lasting,
- moisture: between 9% and 15% ,
- glycyrrhizin: $\leq 6\%$ of dry matter

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

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

All production stages, from growing to harvesting, as well as drying and processing, must take place in the area defined in point 4.

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

'Liquirizia di Calabria' PDO is marketed in packaging made of cardboard, glass, metal, ceramic, polypropylene, high-density polyethylene and all materials permitted under the laws in force concerning the packaging of food-stuffs. Packages may weigh between 5 g and 25 kg. All packages must be sealed in such a way that opening the package breaks the seal.

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

The label must feature the logo of the designation, the serial number assigned by the inspection body and the date of packaging of the products contained in the individual packages. The logo of 'Liquirizia di Calabria' PDO is a stylised rhombus with equal sides and 90° angles. The minimum printing size of the whole logo is 0,5 cm high and wide. The logo may be printed in any colour.



4. Concise definition of the geographical area

The production area for 'Liquirizia di Calabria' includes all the municipalities set out in detail in the production specification, where *Glycyrrhiza glabra* plants of the 'typica' variety, known in Calabria as 'Cordara', grow wild or are cultivated, up to an altitude of 650 m above sea level. The area is bounded to the north and separated from the Basilicata region by the Pollino Massif, which slopes down gently to Rocca Imperiale in the northeast. The area covers the lands in the Crati Valley on the right and left banks of the river, which runs south to north and flows into the Ionian Sea to the northeast after crossing the Sibari Plain. On the Tyrrhenian side, the areas included are those which, moving from north to south, are situated between the municipalities of Falconara Albanese and Nicotera. On the Ionian side, the areas included, starting from the north, comprise the broad Sibari Plain in Crotona province and reach as far as Calabria's furthest tip.

5. Link with the geographical area

Historically the production area for liquorice was coastal Calabria, in particular the main area comprising the municipalities of Villapiana, Cerchiara di Calabria, Cassano Jonio-Sibari, Corigliano Calabro and Rossano, all in the Sibari plain. This was due to the natural condition of the plain's soils, which are stony, contain siliceous substances and have a neutral pH. The climate of the Sibari Plain, where most liquorice production is still concentrated, produces favourable conditions for the plant to grow widely, owing to the proximity of the mountains and a lack of winds due to the natural barrier of the surrounding Pollino and Sila Massifs. The liquorice plants grow wild and are cultivated along the coasts. They range from the plains on the coasts of the Tyrrhenian Sea (Lamezia Terme, Falerna, Nocera Tirenese, etc.) and the Ionian Sea (Crotona, Isola Capo Rizzuto, Chiaravalle, Badolato, Roccella Ionica, etc.) to the hilly inland areas. By way of Calabria's main river valleys, they reach these uplands, which, thanks to their specific configuration, enjoy the beneficial effects of the sea. This means that the liquorice is present with the same characteristics even at a distance of some kilometres from the coast.

The climate, which is decidedly Mediterranean, with long, hot, dry summers and mild winters, means that the 'typica' ('Cordara') variety of *Glycyrrhiza glabra* is evenly spread throughout the area in question.

Compared with chemically and physically similar varieties, 'Liquirizia di Calabria' PDO is decidedly different in that it contains secondary metabolites, including glycyrrhizin, the active substance behind its commercial and pharmacognostic qualities. Glycyrrhizin is a saponin present in 'Liquirizia di Calabria' in percentages on average lower than those in similar species and varieties. This is why the product is in demand on the market. The findings of recent studies have further highlighted the difference between 'Liquirizia di Calabria' and liquorice from neighbouring regions as regards its glycyrrhizic acid content (which, as stated, is distinctly lower than that found in roots from other regions) as well as its lower sugar content. Another study, carried out into the volatile fraction of the root, showed a clear difference between the composition of 'Liquirizia di Calabria' and that of liquorices from other parts of Italy and from abroad. Lastly, a comparison with liquorice extracts from other countries showed that the phenolic compounds present in 'Liquirizia di Calabria' differed in quality and quantity.

In particular, it revealed very small percentages of liquiritigenin and isoliquiritigenin, but significant percentages of licochalcone A, which in other samples is either absent or present in combination with licochalcone B.

Calabria is a region with totally unique characteristics as compared to the rest of Italy, owing to its configuration and topography. The furthest extension of the Italian peninsula, Calabria is itself a long, narrow peninsula with 800 km of coastline, in some ways comparable with Puglia but in others completely different from it.

Calabria is split lengthways by high Apennine mountain chains, a feature which is unique among Italian regions. Calabria's configuration and topography are responsible for its biological, soil and climate conditions, which make it unique and distinctive within Italy in terms of average temperatures, temperature range, humidity, rainfall, wind, sunshine, solar radiation and therefore soil temperature. These factors have been amply demonstrated in numerous scientific studies.

Over the centuries, this distinctive habitat has put strong selective pressure on the species to adapt, influencing its composition and nutritional and aromatic qualities to create a specific chemotype, 'Liquirizia di Calabria'.

This particular type of liquorice is identified with the Calabria region and was already well known in the 17th century, as attested to by many documents, including the famous *Trattato di terapeutica e farmacologia*, Vol. I (1903). This text states that 'The species from which it originates is *Glycyrrhiza glabra* (Leguminosae, Papillonaceae), native to south-west Europe. The medicinal root is sometimes known as Calabrian liquorice (Liquirizia di Calabria) to distinguish it from Russian liquorice, which is lighter in colour and produced from *Glycyrrhiza glandulifera* or *echinata*, found in southeast Europe'. In addition, the fourteenth edition of the famous *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1928) states that 'The preparation of the juice is a widely extended industry along the Mediterranean coast but the quality best appreciated in Great Britain is Made in Calabria'. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica*'s assessment is supported by a US Department of State report entitled 'The Licorice Plant' (1985).

The designation 'Liquirizia di Calabria' refers to a complex 'product' which is the result of interaction with human activities that have been handed down over the centuries and attained the status of a Calabrian tradition. This much is evident from Saint-Non's painting of the late 18th century, Vincenzo Padula's *Stato delle persone in Calabria — I concari* (1864), the SVIMEZ (Association for the Development of Industry in Southern Italy) document *Piante officinali in Calabria: presupposti e prospettive* (1951), *Pece e liquirizia nei casali cosentini del Settecento: forma d'industrie e forze di lavoro* (Augusto Placanica, 1980), *I 'Conci' e la produzione del succo di liquerizia in Calabria* (Gennaro Maticena, 1986), *La dolce industria. Conci e liquirizia in provincia di Cosenza dal XVIII al XX secolo* (Vittorio Marzi et al., 1991), and many other texts published between 1700 and 2000. In the second half of the 18th century, liquorice growing in Calabria extended all along the Ionian coast, in particular along the northern border with Basilicata and on the vast Sibari Plain, where it grew abundantly, as far as Crotona and Reggio Calabria. However, it was also abundant in the Crati Valley, which runs from Cosenza to the Sibari Plain, as well as along wide stretches of the Tyrrhenian coast.

Reference to publication of the specification

(the second subparagraph of Article 6(1) of this Regulation)

The full text of the product specification is available on the following website: <http://www.politicheagricole.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/3335>

or alternatively

by going directly to the home page of the Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policy (www.politicheagricole.it) and clicking on 'Qualità' (at the top right of the screen), then on 'Prodotti DOP IGP STG' (on the left-hand side of the screen) and finally on 'Disciplinari di Produzione all'esame dell'UE'.
