OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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

(2022/C 167/10)

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

COMMUNICATION OF STANDARD AMENDMENT MODIFYING THE SINGLE DOCUMENT

'Vallegarcía'

PDO-ES-02085-AM01

Date of communication: 25.1.2022

DESCRIPTION OF AND REASONS FOR THE APPROVED AMENDMENT

1. **Alignment of the terminology used for the 'residual sugar' analytical parameter with the legislation in force**

DESCRIPTION:

The 'residual sugar' analytical parameter has been renamed 'total sugar expressed as glucose plus fructose'.

This amendment affects point 2.1.1 of the product specification but not the single document.

The amendment adapts the terminology used for the physical and chemical characteristics. It does not entail any change to the final product, which retains the characteristics and profile resulting from the interplay between natural and human factors, as described in the link. We therefore consider that it is a standard amendment, as it does not correspond to any of the types listed in Article 14(1) of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/33.

REASONS:

We have made this amendment to comply with Article 20 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/34 of 17 October 2018, which specifies that the total sugars expressed in terms of fructose and glucose must be measured.

2. **Revision of analytical parameters**

DESCRIPTION:

The minimum colour limit for red wines has been reduced from 12 to 10 AU.

Points 2 and 7 of the product specification and point 8 of the single document have been amended accordingly.

This amendment does not entail any change to the final product, which retains the characteristics and profile resulting from the interplay between natural and human factors, as described in the link. We therefore consider that it is a standard amendment, as it does not correspond to any of the types listed in Article 14(1) of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/33.

([1]) OJ L 9, 11.1.2019, p. 2.

REASONS:

Different grape varieties grow together in the production area for the 'Vallegarcía' DO. On the one hand, there is Cabernet Sauvignon, which naturally produces wines with a very high colour potential, while, on the other, there are Monastrell and Garnacha Tinta, which produce smoother wines with medium colour intensity.

In general, over the last decade, markets have been demanding fruitier wines, which appeal to new generations of consumers becoming familiar with wine.

Oenologists must have the tools necessary to produce wines that appeal to national and international markets while retaining the characteristics imparted by the production area and varieties.

Lowering the minimum colour intensity limit for red wines does not lead to a drop in quality; on the contrary, it broadens the range of options provided by the different grape varieties of the area, thereby allowing more subtle, complex and appealing wines to be produced.

Since the colour intensity and the colour intensity limit are mentioned in the section on the link, this wording has also had to be amended as a result of the change in the limit.

3. **Addition of varieties**

DESCRIPTION:

The following grape varieties used to make the wines have been added to the product specification: Garnacha Tinta, Mazuela or Cariñena and Monastrell.

Point 6 of the product specification and point 7 of the single document have been amended accordingly.

This amendment does not entail any change to the final product, which retains the characteristics and profile resulting from the interplay between natural and human factors, as described in the link. We therefore consider that it is a standard amendment, as it does not correspond to any of the types listed in Article 14(1) of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/33.

REASONS:

The above-mentioned varieties have been grown in Vallegarcía for a number of years, and it has been demonstrated that such varieties produce high-quality wines. The tasting committee for the 'Vallegarcía' DO has been monitoring the development and quality of these wines for years. It has been demonstrated that these grape varieties produce wines that attain the quality required by our specification, which means they can be included among the permitted varieties for the 'Vallegarcía' DO.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

1. **Name of the product**

Vallegarcía

2. **Geographical indication type**

PDO – Protected Designation of Origin

3. **Categories of grapevine product**

1. Wine

4. **Description of the wine(s)**

1. *White wine*

CONCISE TEXTUAL DESCRIPTION

White wine with an intense yellow colour and stone fruit, tropical fruit and white flower aromas of medium-high intensity. Aromas of aromatic herbs – lavender, rosemary – in the background, and a toasted finish. Smooth attack, unctuous, no edges, fresh and round. Pleasant on the mid-palate with aromas of stone fruit and a toasted and slightly bitter finish.

* The maximum total alcoholic strength by volume must be within the legal limits laid down in the relevant EU legislation.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	12,5
Minimum total acidity	4,1 grams per litre, expressed as tartaric acid
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	12,5
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	160

2. *Red wine*

CONCISE TEXTUAL DESCRIPTION

Red wine of an intense red colour, with garnet or ruby-garnet rim and a good robe. Medium-high intensity, red fruits and Mediterranean scrub and mineral aromas or balsamic touches of lavender and aromas of toasted wood. Rounded, with an easy attack, balanced, slightly tannic.

* The maximum total alcoholic strength by volume must be within the legal limits laid down in the relevant EU legislation.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	12
Minimum total acidity	4,2 grams per litre, expressed as tartaric acid
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	20
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	150

5. **Wine-making practices**

5.1. *Specific oenological practices*

1. Cultivation practice

The grapes are harvested entirely by hand and placed in crates. They are first sorted in the vineyard when the bunches are cut and a second time on the sorting table in the grape reception bay in the winery.

2. Relevant restriction on making the wines

The grapes are received at a level above that of the upper inlet of the tank, which means there is zero pressure in the piping and the grapes are subjected to less aggressive treatment.

During tanking, the pulp passes through a tubular heat exchanger, where the temperature is lowered. This leaves the tanks cold for a period of time that may vary at the discretion of the team of oenologists, where necessary. This pre-fermentation maceration allows all the aromas present in the grapes to be extracted into an aqueous solution and makes the colour more stable.

Following the cold maceration process, the white grapes are pressed and the resulting must is settled until an appropriate turbidity of 400-800 NTU is obtained. Once fermentation has begun, a variable proportion of the must is transferred to unused French oak barrels, where it ferments and is aged on lees for 4 to 6 months. Both natural yeast and selected yeast are used in the alcoholic fermentation of the white and red wines. The white wines ferment at low temperatures: min. 15 °C, max. 26 °C. The proportion of the must that is fermenting in barrels is also borne in mind. The red wines are fermented at a minimum temperature of 15 °C and a maximum temperature of 30 °C. The tanking and maceration times vary according to the technical assessments of the team of oenologists but range from 7 to 28 days.

3. Relevant restriction on making the wines

The red wines are devatted by hand. The marc enters into a pneumatic press by gravity, without the use of pumps, and is transferred to used barrels until tasting. Once all the types of wine have been obtained, both free-run and pressed, and malolactic fermentation is complete, all the wines are tasted by the committee of oenologists and the different blends are prepared. They are then aged in French oak barrels.

The wines are aged in the bottle for varying lengths of time before being placed on the market.

5.2. *Maximum yields*

1. Viognier, Cabernet Franc, Garnacha Tinta, Mazuela or Cariñena and Monastrell varieties

   11 500 kilograms of grapes per hectare

2.

   75 hectolitres per hectare

3. Syrah variety

   9 250 kilograms of grapes per hectare

4.

   60 hectolitres per hectare

5. Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon varieties

   8 500 kilograms of grapes per hectare

6.

   55 hectolitres per hectare

7. Petit Verdot variety

   14 600 kilograms of grapes per hectare

8.

   95 hectolitres per hectare

6. **Demarcated geographical area**

The geographical area corresponds to cadastral parcel 448 in zone 9 of the municipality of Retuerta del Bullaque, which is located in the province of Ciudad Real. It covers 1 521 hectares.

7. **Main wine grape variety(ies)**

CABERNET FRANC

CABERNET SAUVIGNON

GARNACHA TINTA

MAZUELA – CARIÑENA

MERLOT

MONASTRELL

PETIT VERDOT

SYRAH

VIOGNIER

8. **Description of the link(s)**

8.1. *Environment (natural and human factors)*

The features of the geographical area that have a decisive influence on the quality of the wines are as follows:

a) The geological substrate on which the vineyard is planted, known as *Raña del Fresno*, is a formation that is unique in the world and exclusive to this area. As a result, the grapes grown in the area have a number of unique characteristics (great intensity, aromatic quality and long on the palate). Furthermore, the high acidity and low pH of Vallegarcía's soils are unusual when compared with similar climate areas. Vallegarcía is a vineyard planted in soils whose edaphological classification is unique when compared with Castile-La Mancha's other vineyards. In a research project by the University of Castile-La Mancha (UCLM) entitled 'Winegrowing soils in Castile-La Mancha: influence on the composition of the grape', the profiles studied in Vallegarcía were classified as Typic Palexerult according to the Soil Taxonomy (Soil Survey Staff, 2006), and the Ultisol order was found to be typical of *raña* soils (Vidal et al., 2004). Of the winegrowing soils studied in the research project, only the three Vallegarcía profiles belong to that order. Under the FAO's classification system (2007), P1, P2 and P3 – the three profiles analysed in the UCLM's report – were classified as Cutanic Alisol (Ferric, Chromic), Cutanic Alisol (Ferric, Skeletic) and Cutanic Alisol (Ferric, Skeletic) respectively.

   Moreover, the wide variation in the pH of the soils makes them unique. Looking at the pH of each profile, what first stands out is the marked variation between the pH values. This is reflected in the pH levels of the wines and their balance on the palate.

   The low calcium content and the high silica, iron and aluminium content are completely uncharacteristic of Castile-La Mancha's winegrowing soils. It is interesting to compare these levels with those of the area's limestone soils, which are usually used for growing vines. According to data from Amorós et al. (2012b), the calcium content of Vallegarcía's soil is very different from the levels that can be found in topsoil layers of limestone soils (10,4 g•kg-1 versus 230 g•kg-1). Conversely, the levels of silicon (345,9 g•kg-1) and iron (26,5 g•kg-1) are considerably higher in the demarcated area's soils as compared with Castile-La Mancha's limestone winegrowing soils (127,5 and 16,65 g•kg-1 respectively). The level of aluminium present in the topsoil layer of a limestone soil is around 33.4 g•kg-1, while in Vallegarcía's soil the level is 57,8 g•kg-1. The low calcium content of the soil characterises Vallegarcía wines and gives them a different character from Castile-La Mancha's other wines.

   The high average quantity of elements classified as rare earth elements (cerium, lanthanum and neodymium) in Vallegarcía's soil (83,5, 44,5 and 36,5 mg•kg-1 respectively) as compared with the average levels regionally (57,7, 23,5 and 21,6 mg•kg-1 respectively) and globally (55, 35.5 and 30.5 mg•kg-1 respectively) is worth noting. In general, the levels of these elements are higher in acid soils than in limestone soils (Amorós et al., 2012a).

b) The influence of the Bullaque river and the streams that feed it, which surround the demarcated area, the freshness of the valleys and the protection from the north winds provided by the mountains create a microclimate for the vineyard which moderates the extreme conditions both in winter and in summer. This favours the correct and complete ripening of the grapes.

c) The wide variation in temperature between day and night, which is due to Vallegarcía's altitude above sea level, combined with the high rainfall in the area compared to other parts of the region, helps give the grapes an excellent tannic structure which increases the wines' suitability for ageing in the barrel and the bottle.

8.2. *Description of the wine*

Vallegarcía wines are characterised by their roundness and lack of edges. They also have an excellent tannic structure which gives them an exceptional capacity to evolve and keep over time. They can attain polyphenol values greater than 50 meq/l and a colour intensity greater than 10 AU.

The intensity and aromatic quality of the wines is defined by intense Mediterranean scrub (rockrose, heather) and balsamic (thyme, rosemary, lavender) aromas, as well as a high level of minerals (black slate, quartzite). They leave a bitter aftertaste at the back of the throat which prolongs the taste of the wine.

8.3. *Link*

The geological substrate on which the vineyard is planted, known as *raña*, is a formation that is unique in the world. The high acidity and low pH of the demarcated area's soils are also unusual. This combination gives the wines a bitter aftertaste at the back of the throat which prolongs the taste of the wine.

The freshness of the valleys and the protection from the north winds provided by the mountains have a moderating influence and help give the wines their roundness and lack of edges. The wide variation in temperature between day and night, which is due to the demarcated area's altitude above sea level, combined with the high rainfall, helps give the grapes an excellent tannic structure that allows the wines to attain polyphenol values greater than 50 meq/l and a colour intensity greater than 10 AU.

Even though the demarcated area is surrounded by the 'Castilla' PGI area, its characteristics are significantly different from the neighbouring demarcated area on account of the following:

NATURAL FACTORS:

The geological substrate known as *raña*, which is unique in the world and is characterised by its high acidity and low pH, as well as the freshness of the valleys, the high rainfall and the protection that the mountains offer from the north winds create a microclimate that is very different from the neighbouring area.

The wide variation in the pH of the topsoil and subsoil layers, with a maximum variation of 4,1 points in profile 2 (pH = 8,9 in Ap and pH = 4,8 in Btg1), as well as the low calcium content, the high silica, iron and aluminium content and the presence of large quantities of rare earth elements make Vallegarcía different from the rest of Castile-La Mancha.

HUMAN FACTORS:

The most obvious differences between the production method for 'Vallegarcía' wines and that used in the neighbouring areas, which are covered by the 'Castilla' PGI, are as follows:

'CASTILLA' PGI	VALLEGARCÍA	DIFFERENCES
White wines: ≥ 9 % vol.	≥ 12 % vol.	Higher alcohol content
Red wines: ≥ 10 % vol.	≥ 12 % vol.	Higher alcohol content
Red wines: ≤ 18 meq/l	≤ 20 meq/l	Higher volatile acidity
White wines: ≤ 16 000 kg/ha	≤ 11 500 kg/ha	Lower production per hectare
Red wines: ≤ 16 000 kg/ha	≤ 14 600 kg/ha	Lower production per hectare
—	> 50 meq/l	More polyphenols
—	> 10 AU	More colour

The area was demarcated on the basis of its environment (the geological substrate known as *raña*, with its high acidity and low pH, as well as the protection provided by the mountains). There is only one winery producing wine in the area, which is owned by the applicant.

It should be noted that the demarcated area covers 1 521 hectares and the only vines and wineries located there are those belonging to the applicant.

Moreover, other producers may use the registered name if they set up in the demarcated geographical area in the future, provided that they meet the conditions set out in the specification. This scenario is entirely plausible as the demarcated area covers 1 521 hectares and thus has room for more wineries.

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

Legal framework:

In national legislation

Type of further condition:

Packaging within the demarcated geographical area

Description of the condition:

The wines must be bottled in the production area because in all cases the process is concluded with a second stage of ageing in bottles. A process of reduction occurs in this period, which enhances the quality of the wines and rounds out their flavour. They are ready for consumption when they attain the organoleptic characteristics set out in the specifications for each type of wine.

Link to the product specification

http://pagina.jccm.es/agricul/paginas/comercial-industrial/consejos_new/pliegos/AM_01_PC_Vallegarcia_20210820.pdf