

## OTHER ACTS

## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

**Publication of an application pursuant to Article 50(2)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs**

(2016/C 108/08)

This publication confers the right to oppose the application pursuant to Article 51 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council <sup>(1)</sup>.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

**'ISTARSKO EKSTRA DJEVIČANSKO MASLINOVO ULJE'**

EU No: HR-PDO-0005-01358 – 30.7.2015

PDO (X) PGI ( )

1. **Name(s)**

'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje'

2. **Member State or Third Country**

Croatia

3. **Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff**3.1. *Product type*

Class 1.5. Oils and fats (butter, margarine, oils, etc.)

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

'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje' is an extra virgin olive oil obtained directly from the fruit of the olive tree (*Olea europaea*, L.) solely by mechanical means.

When the product is placed on the market, it must have the following physico-chemical and organoleptic characteristics:

- free fatty acid content expressed as oleic acid:  $\leq 0,4\%$ ,
- peroxide value:  $\leq 6$  mmol O<sub>2</sub>/kg,
- K232:  $\leq 2,25$ ,
- K270:  $\leq 0,20$ ,
- Delta-K:  $\leq 0,01$ ,
- aroma: moderately to heavily pronounced aroma of fresh olives, fruit, vegetables or other green vegetation, such as green leaves, green grass, etc. (median of fruitiness on a continuous linear scale  $> 3,0$ ),
- taste: of healthy and fresh olives, with bitterness and sharpness of the following values:
  - bitterness: mildly, moderately or heavily pronounced (median on a continuous linear scale  $\geq 2,0$ ),
  - sharpness: mildly, moderately or heavily pronounced (median on a continuous linear scale  $\geq 2,0$ ).

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

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

The following olive varieties may be used to produce 'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje': istarska belica, buža, karbonaca, črnica, žižolera, rošinjola, puntoža, leccino, frantoio, moraiolo, pendolino and picholine. In a given quantity of 'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje', at least 80 % of the oil must come from one or more of the above varieties.

Other olive varieties may also be used to produce 'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje', but their share must not exceed 20 %.

In monovarietal oils, at least 80 % of the oil must come from a single olive variety.

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

All stages in the production of 'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje', from growing to processing the olives, must take place within the geographical area defined in point 4.

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

The oil must be packaged within the geographical area defined in point 4 in order to preserve its specific characteristics and quality. Packaging the oil within the production area minimises the risk of the quality of the product becoming impaired through transport and multiple decanting, when it could become exposed to fluctuations in temperature, atmospheric oxygen and light. Moreover, limiting packaging to the production area allows the relevant inspection authorities to conduct compliance checks in the presence of the interested producers, who traditionally bottle the oil themselves. Compliance certification and the right to use a designation of origin are of paramount importance to these producers, as they reinforce consumer trust, provide a competitive advantage and, ultimately, result in higher profits.

Packaging the oil within the production area greatly facilitates traceability and quality control, which would be difficult to carry out outside the production area.

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

The product name 'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje' must be clearly distinguishable from any other inscription by the size, type and colour of the letters (typography). The size of the producer's inscription may not exceed 70 % of the size of the designation of origin.

It is permissible to use the names of agricultural holdings or of family farms ('stancija', pl. 'stancije') etc., and their specific locations, to mention the toponyms or refer to bottling on the holding or at an association of holdings located in the production area, only if the product is produced exclusively from olives harvested in olive groves on the agricultural holding in question, i.e. olive groves on the location indicated on the label.

No terms other than those set out in the product specification may accompany the name 'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje'. The labelling may contain accurate and documented statements that serve to highlight any specific procedures adopted by individual producers, e.g. 'monovarietal', 'hand-picked', etc.

The harvest year must also be indicated on the label.

At the time of placing on the market, each package must bear an adhesive stamp featuring the common symbol and the unique packaging number, ensuring traceability and compliance with the product specification.

All users of the designation of origin who place the product on the market in accordance with its specification have the right to use the stamp, under the same conditions.

The design of the common symbol is shown below.



The common symbol comprises a vertical ellipse with the inscription 'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje' running along its outer edge. The inside of the symbol features the Istrian Peninsula, with an outline of the production area. A stylised drop of oil is seen emanating from the southern tip of the peninsula.

#### 4. Concise definition of the geographical area

'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje' may be produced only within the administrative borders of Istria County and part of Primorje-Gorski Kotar County. In Istria County 'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje' may be produced in the territory of the following towns and municipalities: Buje, Buzet, Labin, Novigrad, Pazin, Poreč, Pula, Rovinj, Umag, Vodnjan, Bale, Barban, Brtonigla, Cerovlje, Fažana, Funtana, Gračišće, Grožnjan, Kanfanar, Karolja, Kaštelir-Labinci, Kršan, Lanišće, Ližnjan, Lupoglav, Marčana, Medulin, Motovun, Oprtalj, Pićan, Raša, Sveta Nedjelja, Sveti Lovreč, Sveti Petar u Šumi, Svetvinčenat, Tar-Vabriga, Tinjan, Višnjan, Vižinada, Vrsar and Žminj. In Primorje-Gorski Kotar County 'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje' may be produced in the territory of the following towns and municipalities: Mošćenička Draga, Lovran, Opatija, Matulji and Kastav.

#### 5. Link with the geographical area

##### *Specificity of the area*

In terms of its geological, topographic and, to some extent, climatic characteristics, the Istrian Peninsula is composed of three distinct parts: the small mountainous edge to the north and north-east, the hilly central part with flysch deposits, and the limestone plateau along the southern and western coast. The southern, western and central parts, which have a Mediterranean climate, are the most important in terms of olive growing. Although the Istrian Peninsula is located at the edge of the latitude suitable for olive growing, it enjoys a milder climate compared to other areas lying on the same latitude, owing to its shape and orientation. In the south, the climate exhibits EU-Mediterranean features, with a strong maritime influence, a pronounced dry summer season, an average annual temperature of around 16 °C and total annual precipitation of around 820 mm. The areas to the west and north-west are characterised by a EU-Mediterranean climate where the dry summer season is not as pronounced, average annual temperatures hover around 14 °C and total annual precipitation peaks at around 1 000 mm.

The fact that the soil and climate of Istria favour olive growing was recognised as far back as Ancient Roman times. Hence, for the past 2 000 years or more, olives and olive oil have been not just an important economic factor, but also Istria's trademark. Some of the amphorae discovered still bear the inscriptions *Olei Histrici* (Istrian oil) and *Olei flos* (first-press oil), showing that dedicated labelling was in place for quality oils at the time. Istrian olive oil was transported through trade routes to northern Italy, Noricum and Pannonia.

In the second half of the 20th century, olive growing in Istria began developing at a faster pace. With the help of scientific and professional institutions, new olive groves were planted, some of the assortment was expanded, and new olive production and processing techniques were introduced. The ancient tradition of olive growing and the emergence of new trends gradually led to increasing specialisation among Istrian olive growers and processors. Led by their unquenchable curiosity, propensity to innovate and competitive drive, they soon took advantage of the new opportunity to perfect the knowledge and skills passed down through generations.

##### *Specificity of the product*

'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje' is prized for and distinguished by its high quality and organoleptic characteristics that result from a number of factors. The oil has a moderate to intense aroma of fresh olives, often overlapping with notes of fruit, vegetables or green vegetation (e.g. green leaves, green grass, etc.) of differing intensities. The taste of 'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje' is harmonious, reminiscent of the healthy fresh olive and usually moderately bitter and sharp.

'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje' is rich in C6 and C5 volatiles that are linked with its green aromas, its bitterness and sharpness. However, the bitterness and sharpness of 'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje' are not related solely to the high content of volatiles, but also to the high proportion of phenolic substances, which, in addition to enhancing the oil's organoleptic properties, also positively affect its nutritional properties and stability, making it more resistant to oxidation.

Furthermore, years of research on Istrian extra virgin olive oils have scientifically proven their nutritional value and confirmed that in addition to being rich in phenolic substances, they also have a high oleic acid content. On average, 'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje' will have a high oleic acid content (most often over 74 %), while the proportion of linolenic acid will be below 10 %. This specific chemical composition of 'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje', i.e. the high proportion of oleic and linolenic acids (> 7), in combination with a high phenolic content, enhances its oxidation stability.

Another distinctive feature of 'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje' is its very low free fatty acid content and low peroxide value.

*Causal link between the area and the product*

Since the Istrian Peninsula lies at the very northern boundary of the olive growing region, it may appear that the conditions there do not favour olive growing. However, Istria has been recognised as an ideal place for producing olives and high quality olive oil ever since Roman times. Direct proof of this is the wide variety of olive varieties grown there. The fact that 'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje' always meets the organoleptic and chemical criteria set out in point 3.2, irrespective of its varietal composition, indicates that the pedo-climatic conditions in the Istrian Peninsula contribute greatly to the quality and characteristics of the olives grown there and to the chemical and organoleptic properties of the oil.

The main consequence of the specific climatic conditions in Istria is the high proportion of mono-unsaturated oleic acid among all fatty acids in 'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje'. This is because olive trees adapt to colder climates by producing more oleic acid (Pannelli et al., 1993, in O. Koprivnjak, I. Vrhovnik, T. Hladnik, Ž. Prgomet, B. Hlevnjak and V. Majetić *Germek: Obilježja prehrambene vrijednosti djevičanskih maslinovih ulja sorti Buža, Istarska bjelica, Leccino i Rosulja, Hrvatski časopis za prehrambenu tehnologiju, biotehnologiju i nutricionizam* No 7, (2012), p. 174).

The rich chemical composition of the volatiles in 'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje', which affect the green aromas — some even accounting for its bitterness and sharpness — is due not only to the assortment and the climatic conditions, but also to the production processes adopted by olive growers, i.e. picking olives when they are just ripe and applying good practice when keeping and processing the fruit and storing the oil. Hence, the expertise and skills in olive growing and oil making and storage accumulated and perfected by local olive growers and processors through generations play a key role in ensuring the quality of the product.

An early harvest, which takes place when the fruits are still green or mottled and firm, greatly affects the oil's characteristics. This production practice has become a mainstay among Istrian olive growers. In addition to helping avoid low temperatures, which could cause the fruit to freeze, an early harvest prevents infestation by the second and third generations of the olive fruit fly, either of which could severely affect the quality of the oil. Moreover, an early harvest is known to directly improve the chemical quality indicators and the specific characteristics in the taste and aroma of 'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje'; it is linked to low levels of free fatty acids, a low peroxide value and low K-numbers, and a high intensity of positive organoleptic properties in terms of taste and aroma (K. Brkić Bubola, O. Koprivnjak, B. Sladonja, D. Škevin, I. Belobrajčić: *Chemical and sensorial changes of Croatian monovarietal olive oils during ripening, European Journal of Lipid Science and Technology*, vol. 114 (2012), p. 1400).

The interaction of the various local natural and human factors mentioned above confer the product bearing the 'Istarsko ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje' PDO with its distinctive character, i.e. a harmonious taste, and a balance between the sharpness, bitterness and fruitiness of the olive fruit.

**Reference to publication of the product specification**

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

<http://www.mps.hr/UserDocsImages/HRANA/ISTARSKO%20ED%20MASLINOVO%20ULJE/2015-12-23-IEDMU%20-%20Izmljenjena%20Specifikacija%20proizvoda.pdf>

---