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Information and Notices

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(Continued overleaf)

EN

[1] Text with EEA relevance

I

(Resolutions, recommendations and opinions)

OPINIONS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

COMMISSION OPINION

of 23 November 2010

relating to the plan to modify the disposal of radioactive waste arising from the Comurhex II conversion facility, located at Malvési in France, in accordance with Article 37 of the Euratom Treaty

(Only the French text is authentic)

(2010/C 319/01)

On 11 May 2010, the European Commission received from the French Government, in accordance with Article 37 of the Euratom Treaty, General Data relating to the plan to modify the disposal of radioactive waste arising from the Comurhex II conversion facility at Malvési.

On the basis of these data and additional information requested by the Commission on 8 June 2010 and provided by the French authorities on 29 July 2010, and following consultation with the Group of Experts, the Commission has drawn up the following opinion:

1. The distance between the facility and the nearest point on the territory of another Member State, in this case Spain, is 80 km. The next nearest Member State is Italy at a distance of some 340 km.

2. Under normal operating conditions, the discharges of liquid and gaseous effluents will not cause an exposure liable to affect the health of the population in another Member State.

3. Solid radioactive waste is temporarily stored on site before transfer to licensed treatment or disposal facilities located in France.

4. In the event of unplanned releases of radioactive effluents that may follow an accident of the type and magnitude considered in the General Data, the doses received in another Member State will not be liable to affect the health of the population.

In conclusion, the Commission is of the opinion that the implementation of the plan to modify the disposal of radioactive waste in whatever form arising from the Comurhex II conversion facility located at Malvési in France, both in normal operation and in the event of an accident of the type and magnitude considered in the General Data, is not liable to result in the radioactive contamination of the water, soil or airspace of another Member State.

Done at Brussels, 23 November 2010.

For the Commission
Günther OETTINGER
Member of the Commission

IV

(Notices)

NOTICES FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES AND AGENCIES

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Euro exchange rates [1]

23 November 2010

(2010/C 319/02)

1 euro =

	Currency	Exchange rate		Currency	Exchange rate
USD	US dollar	1,3496	AUD	Australian dollar	1,3789
JPY	Japanese yen	112,50	CAD	Canadian dollar	1,3799
DKK	Danish krone	7,4553	HKD	Hong Kong dollar	10,4711
GBP	Pound sterling	0,84795	NZD	New Zealand dollar	1,7626
SEK	Swedish krona	9,3865	SGD	Singapore dollar	1,7713
CHF	Swiss franc	1,3338	KRW	South Korean won	1 576,84
ISK	Iceland króna		ZAR	South African rand	9,5464
NOK	Norwegian krone	8,2070	CNY	Chinese yuan renminbi	8,9680
BGN	Bulgarian lev	1,9558	HRK	Croatian kuna	7,3970
CZK	Czech koruna	24,680	IDR	Indonesian rupiah	12 129,30
EEK	Estonian kroon	15,6466	MYR	Malaysian ringgit	4,2365
HUF	Hungarian forint	275,30	PHP	Philippine peso	59,848
LTL	Lithuanian litas	3,4528	RUB	Russian rouble	42,3040
LVL	Latvian lats	0,7096	THB	Thai baht	40,576
PLN	Polish zloty	3,9543	BRL	Brazilian real	2,3388
RON	Romanian leu	4,3113	MXN	Mexican peso	16,7259
TRY	Turkish lira	1,9920	INR	Indian rupee	61,5200

[1] *Source*: reference exchange rate published by the ECB.

NOTICES FROM MEMBER STATES

Information communicated by Member States regarding closure of fisheries

(2010/C 319/03)

In accordance with Article 35(3) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 of 20 November 2009 establishing a Community control system for ensuring compliance with the rules of the common fisheries policy [1], a decision has been taken to close the fishery as set down in the following table:

Date and time of closure	18.9.2010
Duration	18.9.2010-31.12.2010
Member State	The Netherlands
Stock or Group of stocks	PLE/03AN.
Species	Plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*)
Zone	Skagerrak
Type(s) of fishing vessels	—
Reference number	606518

Web link to the decision of the Member State:

http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/fishing_rules/tacs/index_en.htm

[1] OJ L 343, 22.12.2009, p. 1.

Information communicated by Member States regarding closure of fisheries

(2010/C 319/04)

In accordance with Article 35(3) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 of 20 November 2009 establishing a Community control system for ensuring compliance with the rules of the common fisheries policy [1], a decision has been taken to close the fishery as set down in the following table:

Date and time of closure	29.5.2010
Duration	29.5.2010-31.12.2010
Member State	Germany
Stock or Group of stocks	SRX/2AC4-C
Species	Skates and rays (*Rajidae*)
Zone	EU waters of IIa and IV
Type(s) of fishing vessels	—
Reference number	—

Web link to the decision of the Member State:

http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/fishing_rules/tacs/index_en.htm

[1] OJ L 343, 22.12.2009, p. 1.

V

(Announcements)

PROCEDURES RELATING TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPETITION POLICY

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Prior notification of a concentration

(Case COMP/M.6056 — DnB NOR Bank/Bank DnB NORD)

Candidate case for simplified procedure

(Text with EEA relevance)

(2010/C 319/05)

1. On 17 November 2010, the Commission received a notification of a proposed concentration pursuant to Article 4 of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 [1] by which the undertaking DnB NOR Bank ASA ('DnB NOR Bank', Norway), belonging to the DnB NOR group ('DnB NOR', Norway) acquires within the meaning of Article 3(1)(b) of the Merger Regulation control of the whole of Bank DnB NORD A/S ('Bank DnB NORD', Denmark) by way of purchase of shares.

2. The business activities of the undertakings concerned are:

— for DnB NOR Bank: banking services,

— for DnB NOR: banking and insurance services,

— for Bank DnB NORD: banking services.

3. On preliminary examination, the Commission finds that the notified transaction could fall within the scope of the EC Merger Regulation. However, the final decision on this point is reserved. Pursuant to the Commission Notice on a simplified procedure for treatment of certain concentrations under the EC Merger Regulation [2] it should be noted that this case is a candidate for treatment under the procedure set out in the Notice.

4. The Commission invites interested third parties to submit their possible observations on the proposed operation to the Commission.

Observations must reach the Commission not later than 10 days following the date of this publication. Observations can be sent to the Commission by fax (+32 22964301), by email to COMP-MERGER-REGISTRY@ec.europa.eu or by post, under reference number COMP/M.6056 — DnB NOR Bank/Bank DnB NORD, to the following address:

European Commission
Directorate-General for Competition
Merger Registry
J-70
1049 Bruxelles/Brussel
BELGIQUE/BELGIË

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[1] OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1 (the 'EC Merger Regulation').
[2] OJ C 56, 5.3.2005, p. 32 ('Notice on a simplified procedure').

OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Publication of an application pursuant to Article 6(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(2010/C 319/06)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006. Statements of objection must reach the Commission within six months of the date of this publication.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

'VINAGRE DEL CONDADO DE HUELVA'

EC No: ES-PDO-0005-0724-15.10.2008

PGI ( ) PDO (X)

1. **Name:**

'Vinagre del Condado de Huelva'

2. **Member State or third country:**

Spain

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.)

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

'Vinagre del Condado de Huelva' is a wine vinegar obtained by acetous fermentation of a wine certified by the Regulatory Board of the 'Condado de Huelva' Designation of Origin.

1. The values obtained in analyses of protected vinegars must be within the following limits:

   (a) Minimum total acetic acid content: 70 g/l.

   (b) Soluble dry extract: not less than 1,30 g/l and percentage point of acetic acid.

   (c) Ash content: between 1 g/l and 7 g/l.

   (d) Acetoin content: not less than 100 mg/l.

   (e) Proline content: not less than 300 mg/l.

2. The maximum quantities of the following shall be as indicated below:

   (a) Mercury: 0,05 ppm.

   (b) Arsenic: 0,5 ppm.

(c) Lead: 0,5 ppm.

(d) Copper and zinc: 10 mg/l.

(e) Iron: 10 mg/l.

(f) Sulphate: 2 g/l, expressed as potassium sulphate.

(g) Chloride: 1 g/l, expressed as sodium chloride.

3. Chromatic analysis using transmission colorimetry gives the following values:

(a) Maximum clarity value (L*): 93 %.

(b) Colour intensity, expressed by the chroma (Cab): greater than 20 units.

Types of vinegar

(a) Vinagre Condado de Huelva

Vinegar obtained by acetous fermentation of a wine certified by the 'Condado de Huelva' Designation of Origin, with residual alcohol from the wine used of not more than 0,5 % vol.

Organoleptic evaluation:

Appearance: Pale yellow to amber and light intensity, appropriate to a Condado de Huelva vinegar.

Aroma: Acetic aromas with hints of wine.

Taste: Mild vinous flavour, well-balanced as regards acidity. Long finish with hints of apple from the Zalema variety of grape used.

(b) Vinagre Viejo Condado de Huelva

'Vinagre del Condado de Huelva' is aged in oak casks or vats, enriched with liqueur wines and quality liqueur wines with the 'Condado' Designation of Origin, with a residual alcohol content from these wines of not more than 3 % vol.

(b)(1) Vinagre Viejo Condado de Huelva Solera.

This is a 'Vinagre del Condado de Huelva' aged using the traditional 'criaderas y soleras' method, for a period of no less than six months.

Organoleptic evaluation:

Appearance: Amber in colour with mahogany tones. Medium intensity.

Aroma: Acetic aromas with hints of dried fruit.

Taste: Vinous flavour, full and balanced on the palate.

(b)(2) Vinagre Viejo Condado de Huelva Reserva.

This is a 'Vinagre del Condado de Huelva' aged using the traditional 'criaderas y soleras' method, for a period of no less than two years.

Organoleptic evaluation:

Appearance: Mahogany in colour with amber highlights and very high intensity.

Aroma: Aggressive aroma, with high acetic intensity, hints of mature 'Condado de Huelva' wine, reminiscent of vanilla, dried figs and raisins.

Taste: Drying, very acidic taste on the palate.

(b)(3) Vinagre Viejo Condado de Huelva Añada.

This is a 'Vinagre del Condado de Huelva' aged in wooden casks for a period of no less than three years.

Organoleptic evaluation:

Appearance: Intense mahogany colour, reflecting the vinegar's silky body, very intense.

Aroma: Strong acetic aromas, hints of liqueur wines and touches of oak from the casks.

Taste: Full, acidic, with a rich balance on the palate and long and intense aftertaste. Reminiscent of dried fruits and spices.

3.3. *Raw materials (for processed products only):*

The raw material used to produce the vinegar is white wine or liqueur wine with the 'Condado de Huelva' Designation of Origin.

3.4. *Feed (for products of animal origin only):*

—

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

Not applicable.

3.6. *Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc.:*

Not applicable.

3.7. *Specific rules on labelling:*

Labels authorised by the Regulatory Board and the quality seals that certify that the product is authentic must bear the words 'Vinagre del Condado de Huelva'.

4. **Concise definition of the geographical area:**

The municipalities covered by the PDO 'Vinagre del Condado de Huelva' are Almonte, Beas, Bollullos Par del Condado, Bonares, Chucena, Gibraleón, Hinojos, La Palma del Condado, Lucena del Puerto, Manzanilla, Moguer, Niebla, Palos de la Frontera, Rociana del Condado, San Juan del Puerto, Trigueros, Villalba del Alcor and Villarrasa. The area extends along the plain of the lower Guadalquivir and borders on the Doñana National Park.

5. **Link with the geographical area:**

5.1. *Specificity of the geographical area:*

(a) Natural link

The characteristics of Condado de Huelva vinegars are a product above all of the natural environment in which they are produced and aged and they are influenced in a profound and unique way by the proximity of the Doñana National Park, considered to be one of the lungs of Europe. The Condado de Huelva area is known as the 'Entorno de Doñana' (the Doñana Region).

The Condado de Huelva lies in the Guadalquivir depression, situated in the south-east quadrant of the Province of Huelva, stretching from the foothills of the Sierra de Aracena to the coast and bordering on the Doñana National Park.

The landscape of the area in which the vinegar is produced and aged is flat or slightly undulating, with gradients nowhere above 17 %, at altitudes increasing from 50 to 180 m from south to north, with uniform soils because of the composition of the rich parent material.

The geographical location of the Condado de Huelva gives it a Mediterranean climate, although its exposure to the Atlantic, facilitated by the relief, brings oceanic influences. The climate is therefore relatively wet.

— The average maximum temperature is fairly stable at around 22,5 °C.

— Average minimum temperatures range from 9,8 °C to 11,9 °C.

— The average annual temperature varies between 15,8 °C and 16,9 °C.

— Precipitation is variable, ranging from 810 mm to 716 mm.

— The area receives an annual average of between 3 000 and 3 100 hours of actual sunshine.

— Relative humidity ranges between 60 % and 80 %.

(b) Human link

There are two types of vinegar produced in Condado de Huelva:

The first is obtained by acetous fermentation of white wine or liqueur wine with the 'Condado de Huelva' Designation of Origin, using the industrial method of submerged fermentation based on the presence of a bacterial culture in the wine being processed into vinegar, and involves constantly saturating the wine with fine air bubbles.

To obtain this type of 'Vinagre Condado de Huelva' vinegar, fermentation is carried out at a temperature of between 28 and 33 °C and aeration must be adequate in terms of both quality and quantity.

A second type, 'Vinagre Viejo', is made from 'Vinagre del Condado de Huelva', and is produced in three varieties depending on the type and period of ageing used, 'Vinagre Viejo Solera', 'Vinagre Viejo Reserva' and 'Vinagre Viejo Añada'.

Both 'Vinagre Viejo Solera' and 'Vinagre Viejo Reserva' are aged using the traditional 'criaderas y soleras' system, which is a dynamic system in which the American Oak casks and vats are stacked in pyramids. The youngest vinegars are mixed with the oldest vinegars, by means of 'sprinkling' vinegar from the highest row of the stack, known as the 'criadera', to the lowest, known as the 'solera', from which extraction occurs. The space created in the casks or vats is then replenished with the next oldest vinegar and so on. This extraction and sprinkling action is known as 'correr escalas', and in this way a vinegar is obtained which is made up of various vintages of wines which account for the uniformity of the final product. A unique feature of 'Condado de Huelva' vinegar is that throughout the whole ageing process up to extraction the liqueur wine or quality liqueur wine with the Designation of Origin 'Condado de Huelva' is added to or used to enrich the vinegars, thereby facilitating oxidation during the ageing process, improving the bouquet of the vinegar through the formation of esters and nourishing the acetic bacteria in the alcohol which comes from these liqueur wines and quality liqueur wines, in order to prevent the acetic acid already formed from deteriorating.

'Vinagre Viejo Solera' is aged for a minimum of six months in oak casks or vats and 'Vinagre Viejo Reserva' for a minimum of twenty-four months.

'Vinagre Viejo Añada', in contrast to 'Vinagre Viejo Solera' and 'Vinagre Viejo Reserva' is aged using the traditional 'Añadas' method for a minimum period of thirty-six months. Here the vinegar is aged in casks or vats to which may be added only liqueur wine or quality liqueur wine. These vinegars are made from wines of a single vintage, as no blending is allowed, and the characteristics are inherent to the vintage in question. As with the system of 'criaderas y soleras', the addition of liqueur wine and quality liqueur wine during ageing lends the final product unique characteristics.

The architecture of the ageing rooms is so designed as to maintain a constant temperature of between 15 and 18 °C throughout the year, with the highest possible relative humidity (between 60 % and 80 %), good ventilation and a suitable orientation. This is achieved by means of high ceilings and correctly orientated windows and by sprinkling the clay floors with water during period of high temperatures, all intended to create the microclimate required to ensure the optimum ageing of our vinegars.

The casks and vats of American oak used in the Condado de Huelva play a fundamental role in improving the quality of the vinegars during the ageing process. The porosity of the oak allows the vinegar to come into contact with oxygen in the air, permitting oxidation, which promotes ageing. The volume of oxygen that passes through the wood is estimated to be 25 cm^3 per litre per year. This all depends on the thickness and nature of the wood.

During ageing, there are changes in the chemical composition of the vinegar and these bring about changes in the characteristics of the vinegar. The processes involved are:

— Evaporation

— Direct extraction from the wood

— Reactions between the components of the wood and the vinegar being aged

— Reactions between the components of the vinegar being aged

— Chemical processes such as oxidation and hydrolysis

5.2. *Specificity of the product:*

(a) Vinagre Condado de Huelva

Vinegar produced by the acetous fermentation of white wine or liqueur wine with the 'Condado de Huelva' Designation of Origin.

Organoleptic evaluation:

Appearance: Pale yellow to amber and light intensity, appropriate to a 'Vinagre del Condado de Huelva'.

Aroma: Acetic aromas with hints of wine with the 'Condado de Huelva' Designation of Origin.

Taste: Mild vinous flavour, well-balanced as regards acidity. Long finish with hints of apple from the native Zalema variety of grape used.

(b) Vinagre Viejo Condado de Huelva

'Vinagre del Condado de Huelva' is aged in oak casks or vats, and is unique in that during the ageing process the vinegar is enriched with liqueur wines and quality liqueur wines with the 'Condado de Huelva' Designation of Origin, which endows them with some unique characteristics, with a residual alcohol content from these wines of not more than 3 % vol.

There are three subcategories of this vinegar, which differ in their type and period of ageing.

Organoleptic evaluation:

Vinagre Viejo Condado de Huelva Solera.

Appearance: Amber in colour with mahogany tones. Medium intensity.

Aroma: Acetic aromas with hints of dried fruit.

Taste: Vinous flavour, full and balanced on the palate.

Vinagre Viejo Condado de Huelva Reserva.

Appearance: Mahogany in colour with amber highlights and very high intensity.

Aroma: Aggressive aroma, with high acetic intensity, hints of mature Condado de Huelva wine, reminiscent of vanilla, dried figs and raisins.

Taste: Drying, very acidic taste on the palate.

Vinagre Viejo Condado de Huelva Añada.

Appearance: Intense mahogany colour, reflecting the vinegar's silky body, very intense.

Aroma: Strong acetic aromas, hints of liqueur wines and touches of oak from the casks.

Taste: Full, acidic, with a rich balance on the palate and long and intense aftertaste. Reminiscent of dried fruits and spices.

Chromatic analysis of the vinegars with the Protected Designation of Origin 'Vinagre del Condado de Huelva' using transmission colorimetry gives the following values as distinguishing characteristics:

(a) Maximum clarity value (L*): 93 %.

(b) Colour intensity, expressed by the chroma (Cab): greater than 20 units.

5.3. *Causal link between the geographical area and the quality or characteristics of the product (for PDO) or a specific quality, the reputation or other characteristic of the product (for PGI):*

The distinguishing characteristics of 'Vinagre del Condado de Huelva' are mainly due to the raw material from which it is made, a wine with the 'Condado de Huelva' Designation of Origin, which owes its unique characteristics to the native Zalema variety of grape, which is native and exclusive to the defined geographical area, and to its production and ageing in Condado de Huelva.

Additionally, thanks to the geographical location of the area covered by the Designation of Origin, oxidation is favoured by the high relative humidity, mild temperatures and a higher oxygen content in the air on account of the proximity of the Atlantic Ocean and the Doñana National Park.

The flat or slightly undulating landscape facilitates the arrival of these currents of air. The orientation and architecture of the ageing rooms allow good ventilation, and favour the transfer of oxygen through the oak of the casks and vats.

The climatic conditions affect the production of the 'Vinagre Viejo', and also allow the vinegar to be aged in the enclosed courtyards of the producers' installations.

The value of the parameters determines the characteristics of the vinegars.

— The residual alcohol content is the result of enriching the vinegars with liqueur wine and quality liqueur wine certified by the Regulatory Board of the 'Condado de Huelva' Designation of Origin and may be up to 3 % vol.

— The porosity of the wood used to make the casks and vats allows the vinegar to come into contact with oxygen, facilitating acetous fermentation and giving a minimum volatile acid content of 70 g/l.

— During ageing, the volume of the vinegar is reduced by evaporation, which increases the quantity of dry extract, which is further increased as substances are extracted from the wood and the components of the wood and vinegar react together.

— Sprinkling the clay floors with water is a practice used in the vinegar ageing rooms in order to control the relative humidity and the temperature and ensure that they remain stable throughout the ageing process, promoting the mellowing of the vinegars and reducing losses through evaporation.

— During ageing, the lignin content of the wood is reduced by a process of hydrolysis caused by the ethanol and the water. Hydrolysis is the principal route by which substances pass from the cask or vat to the vinegar, influencing the aroma and colour of the vinegars that undergo ageing.

Reference to publication of the specification:

(Article 5(7) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

(*Boletín Oficial de la Junta de Andalucía* No 184 of 16 September 2008, page 29.)

http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/agriculturaypesca/portal/opencms-cap/opencms/handle404?exporturi=/agriculturaypesca/portal/export/sites/default/comun/galerias/galeriaDescargas/cap/industrias-agroalimentarias/denominacion-de-origen/Pliegos/Pliego_Vinagre_Condado.pdf&exporturi=/agriculturaypesca/portal/export/sites/default/comun/galerias/galeriaDescargas/cap/industrias-agroalimentarias/denominacion-de-origen/Pliegos/Pliego_Vinagre_Condado.pdf

Publication of an application pursuant to Article 6(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(2010/C 319/07)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006. Statements of objection must reach the Commission within six months from the date of this publication.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

'VINAGRE DE JEREZ'

EC No: ES-PDO-0005-0723-15.10.2008

PGI ( ) PDO (X)

1. **Name:**

'Vinagre de Jerez'

2. **Member State or third country:**

Spain

3. **Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff:**

3.1. *Type of product:*

Class 1.8. Other products listed in Annex I to the Treaty (spices, etc.)

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

Vinagre de Jerez is the product that results from the acetous fermentation of suitable wines made in the production area, produced and aged through the traditional practices described in Section 3.5, with the organoleptic and analytical characteristics described below.

The specific analytical characteristics of the protected vinegars are the following:

— its residual alcohol content must not exceed 3 % in volume, except in the case of Pedro Ximénez and Moscatel vinegars, in which it must not exceed 4 % in volume,

— total acetic acid content must be at least 70 grams/litre, except in the case of Pedro Ximénez and Moscatel vinegars, which may have 60 grams/litre, and in the case of the Gran Reserva vinegars, total acetic acid content must be at least 80 grams/litre,

— it must have a minimum of 1,3 grams/litre and degree of acidity in the dry matter, the minimum for the Vinagre de Jerez Gran Reserva being 2,3 grams/litre and degree of acidity,

— an ash content of between 2 and 7 grams/litre, except for Vinagre de Jerez Gran Reserva, which must have between 4 and 8 grams/litre,

— a maximum sulphate content of 3,5 grams/litre,

— the Pedro Ximénez and Moscatel categories must contain at least 60 grams/litre of reducing material from these types of wine.

The vinegars included in the Designation of Origin 'Vinagre de Jerez' present a colour between gold and mahogany and a dense and oily appearance. Its aroma is intense, lightly alcoholic, with notes of wine and wood predominating. Its taste is pleasant, despite the acidity, with a lingering aftertaste.

The following categories can be distinguished on the basis of the vinegars' different ageing periods:

(a) Vinagre de Jerez: the vinegar covered by this designation, with a minimum ageing period of six months;

(b) Vinagre de Jerez Reserva: the vinegar covered by this designation, with a minimum ageing period of two years;

(c) Vinagre de Jerez Gran Reserva: the vinegar covered by this designation, with a minimum ageing period of 10 years.

In addition, depending on the variety of wine used, there are the following types of semi-sweet Vinagre de Jerez, which may belong to any of the categories described in the previous point:

— Vinagre de Jerez al Pedro Ximénez: the vinegar covered by this designation to which Pedro Ximénez wines are added during the production process,

— Vinagre de Jerez al Moscatel: the vinegar covered by this designation to which Pedro Moscatel wines are added during the production process.

3.3. *Raw materials (for processed products only):*

The vinegars covered by the Designation 'Vinagre de Jerez' are obtained exclusively from the acetous fermentation of 'suitable wines'.

The raw materials for the production of Vinagre de Jerez are therefore the 'suitable wines'. These wines come from producers located in the Vinegar Production Area, which coincides with the production area corresponding to the Designations of Origin 'Jerez-Xérès-Sherry' and 'Manzanilla — Sanlúcar de Barrameda' and may be:

(a) the wines of the year sent at their natural volumetric alcoholic grading;

(b) mature wines that have completed the average ageing periods set in their specifications.

These wines are produced in accordance with the product specifications for their designations, complying with the requirements concerning the provenance of the grape from the PDO area and the wine-growing practices specified in the implementing regulation.

3.4. *Feed (for products of animal origin only):*

Not applicable.

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

(a) Denaturation

All consignments of suitable wine must undergo denaturation through partial acidification on entering the facilities of the registered producers, using for this purpose vinegar from their stocks in sufficient quantity such that the resulting mixture reaches a minimum grading of 1° of acetic acid content.

(b) Acidification

Acidification consists in transforming the alcoholic content of the wine into acetic acid through the action of acetic bacteria. There are two possible ways of producing Vinagre de Jerez.

1. The process used by establishments known as *Bodegas de Elaboración de Vinagre (Vinegar Production Cellars)*: industrial facilities that own acidifiers in which the raw material — the suitable wine — is transformed through a process of controlled acetic fermentation into vinegar.

2. The process used by establishments known as *Bodegas de Crianza y Expedición de Vinagres* (Vinegar Maturing and Supply Cellars) through a process of acidification inside the wooden container in which ageing takes place.

(c) Ageing or maturation

The special system of ageing or maturation necessary for obtaining protected vinegars may be by way of either the classic *criaderas y solera* system or the *añadas* system, to which the vinegars are subjected during the period of time necessary to achieve the organoleptic and analytical qualities of their respective categories.

(a) Ageing containers

All the vinegar stocks that undergo the maturing process must be stored in wooden containers that have previously been used for ageing wine and whose capacity does not exceed 1 000 litres. The Regulatory Board may also grant ad hoc approval for the use of wooden containers whose capacity is more than 1 000 litres for the maturing of wines, provided that they are historic in nature and that their use has been registered as such in the Regulatory Board prior to the publication of the Product Specification.

(b) Minimum average age

The vinegars must all have an average age of at least six months in order to be released for consumption. In the case of 'Vinagre de Jerez Reserva', the minimum average age is two years and in the case of 'Vinagre de Jerez Gran Reserva', it is 10 years.

Vinegars that are entirely from a single year and therefore mature without ever being mixed with previous vinegars from different harvests may add the word *Añada* provided that their age is at least two years. This labelling shall be compatible with the other labels mentioned in Section 3.2, provided that the wine complies with the characteristics required in each case.

3.6. *Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc.:*

The bottles that contain Vinagre de Jerez for direct consumption shall be made of glass or other materials that do not compromise the specific properties of the product and shall have the nominal capacities that are authorised for this product from time to time.

Vinagre de Jerez shall be bottled:

1. in bottling facilities owned by the firms entered in the register of *Vinegar Maturing and Supply Cellars*, or,

2. in bottling facilities authorised by the Regulatory Board and owned by economic operators located inside or outside the production area, which purchase Vinagre de Jerez in bulk from registered firms and are involved only at the bottling stage.

In both cases, to be authorised, these bottling facilities must demonstrate to the Regulatory Board compliance with the legal requirements that are in force in each region for the activity of bottling vinegar, and must have in place a quality control system that ensures the total traceability of the appropriate handling of the product that they purchase from registered producers for bottling.

3.7. *Specific rules on labelling:*

The words Designation of Origin 'Vinagre de Jerez' must figure prominently on the labels and back labels as well as the type of vinegar and, in general, all the information stipulated by the relevant legislation. Furthermore, they shall be provided with quality seals by the Regulatory Board or with back labels bearing the distinctive symbol of the Designation of Origin as well as an identifying alphanumeric code, in accordance with the standards set by the Regulatory Board.

The Regulatory Board shall verify that the labels that bear the protected name 'Vinagre de Jerez' comply with the requirements of the Product Specification and the labelling regulation specific to the Designation of Origin.

4. **Concise definition of the geographical area:**

The production area for Vinagre de Jerez comprises the land located in the municipalities of Jerez de la Frontera, El Puerto de Santa María, Sanlúcar de Barrameda, Trebujena, Chipiona, Rota, Puerto Real and Chiclana de la Frontera, and in the provinces of Cádiz, Lebrija and Seville, located to the east of 5° 49′ West and to the south of 36° 58′ North.

The production area described above coincides with the production area for the Designations of Origin 'Jerez-Xérès-Sherry' and 'Manzanilla — Sanlúcar de Barrameda'.

5. **Link with the geographical area:**

5.1. *Specificity of the geographical area:*

The specificity of the production area of Vinagre de Jerez is based on historical, natural and human reasons.

(a) Historical factors

Wine growing and wine and vinegar production have been part of the backbone of the Jerez district for thousands of years, dating back to Phoenician times. The geographical location of the Jerez area, near to important commercial ports such as Cadiz and Seville, with great historical significance, ensured that the local wines and vinegars were frequently included in the cargo of ships sailing for the Americas or for markets in the north of Europe, and further ensured that for the ageing of wines and vinegars the containers that were used were made overseas, from oak from the New World. Likewise, the system of *Criaderas y Soleras*, a traditional aspect of Jerez wine growing, has a clear historical origin that dates back to the 17th century and to the need to satisfy the demand of the markets for wines and vinegars of consistent quality, that do not depend on the vicissitudes of every harvest.

(b) Natural factors

The production area is characterised by flat or gently undulating land, with slopes of between 10 % and 15 %, where the prevalent soil type is known as *albariza*, a soft, white, loam soil with a large capacity for retaining moisture. Its main components are calcium carbonate, clay and silica. The climate is warm, with minimum temperatures in winter around 5 °C and maximum temperatures in summer around 35 °C. The production area enjoys more than 300 days of sunshine per year and an average annual rainfall of approximately 600 litres per square metre, with the bulk of precipitation occurring in November, December and March. In any case, this factor must be considered in combination with the area's characteristic *albariza* soil, with its capacity to retain moisture and prevent evapo-transpiration. Lastly, it is worth noting the important climactic influence of the region's prevailing winds: the Levanter, which comes from the interior of the country and is hot and dry, and the Poniente, which comes from the Ocean bringing a high degree of humidity and acts as an important moderating factor, especially in summer.

(c) Human factors

The *criaderas y solera* system, that is prevalent in the ageing of Vinagre de Jerez, is a traditional maturing system in the production area, as is the use of the *bota*, a traditional barrel made of oak from the Americas and intensely impregnated with the flavour of the wine. Architecture also plays an important role in the special nature of the vinegars of the Designation of Origin 'Vinagre de Jerez'. The cellars used for ageing vinegar tend to have gabled roofs and high ceilings, which help to ensure a large volume of air inside, which lessens the effects of temperature variations outside. The walls tend to be thick enough to provide insulation and the windows are high in order to allow air to circulate to take advantage of the fresh night breezes of the Poniente, while avoiding light falling directly on the barrels.

5.2. *Specificity of the product:*

The specificity of Vinagre de Jerez must primarily be attributed to the raw material from which it is made: the suitable wines. The production area is also the origin of certain wines that have an extraordinarily authentic character and some of their characteristics are clearly discernible in the Vinagre de Jerez: the range of colours between gold and mahogany and the lightly alcoholic aromas, with dominant notes of wine and wood.

Furthermore, the climatic conditions of the area and the architectural characteristics of the cellars, which help to create a specific microclimate inside the cellars, ensure a level of concentration of the components of the vinegar through the maturing process, resulting in a lingering aftertaste.

5.3. *Causal link between the geographical area and the quality or characteristics of the product (for PDO) or a specific quality, the reputation or other characteristic of the product (for PGI):*

All the orographical, soil and climate characteristics mentioned above give the grapes of the production area distinctive characteristics that define many of the specificities of the suitable wines and, in turn, of Vinagre de Jerez. The influence of natural factors on the suitable wines obtained from the varieties of grape used (palomino, muscatel, and pedro ximénez) is decisive. In hot regions like the production area of Vinagre de Jerez, grapes ripen very quickly and their juice, which is very sweet, tends to have relatively low acidity values. The total incidence of light in the production area during the active period for wine growing is particularly high, which allows the fruit to develop and ripen well. Furthermore, the production area is characterised by the dryness of its summers, coinciding with the period between ripening and the harvest, and the prevalence of the Levanter, which is extremely hot and dry. In this context, the Poniente, arriving from the Atlantic Ocean, with its distinctive thermal character, brings frequent night breezes in summer, which produce intense showers, compensating the water deficit that may be exacerbated by the area's strong sun. The *albariza* soil also plays a decisive role in this regard, since its capacity to retain moisture ensures that water reserves are available in the subsoil.

Furthermore, the characteristics due to the cultures of yeast that have been selected since time immemorial and linked to the environmental conditions of the area are of great importance. The metabolisation of the alcohols and poly-alcohols of the wine by the alcohol-producing yeast which occur in the area known as the 'Marco de Jerez' results in a conjunction of secondary elements and an alteration of the primary components of the wine: a reduction in the glycerine content and an increase in the acetaldehyde content and in the products of esterification. In turn, the resulting acetaldehydes give rise to acetoin, which in the presence of higher alcohols gives Vinagre de Jerez its characteristic aroma. The presence of a considerable quantity of alcohol is also of enormous importance for the quality and personality of Vinagre de Jerez, because it gives rise to esterified compounds (essentially ethyl acetate) that structure the vinegar, giving it greater complexity and balancing the first aromas of the acidification.

Maturing in oak barrels and the particular microclimatic conditions of the cellars moreover ensure that the vinegar acquires some very particular characteristics during the maturing pr ocess. The type of barrel used has a capacity for micro-oxygenation which is ideal for the slow development of the vinegars and allows the gradual release of components during ageing, which help to stabilise the colouring substances, form polymer groups and give the characteristic tones between amber and mahogany, the notes of vanilla and the aromas of white coffee and high roast coffee. Furthermore, the hemicellulose of the wood allows the water content to be gradually lost through evaporation, which increases the dry matter, mineral salt and vinegar ash content.

The *criaderas y soleras* system, being the commonest maturing system in the area, favours a significant homogenisation of the vinegars by moderating the effects of the various *añadas*. Lastly, the architectural structure of the cellars of the Jerez area, by maintaining the microclimate conditions, not only facilitates the slow oxygenation of the vinegars, but also keeps the barrels in perfect condition, which enables the maturing of 'Vinagre de Jerez'.

Reference to publication of the specification:

(Article 5(7) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

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