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IV

(Notices)

NOTICES FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES AND AGENCIES

COUNCIL

Council conclusions on promoting young people's access to rights in order to foster their autonomy and participation in civil society

(2015/C 18/01)

THE COUNCIL,

RECOGNISING THAT:

1. The Council, in the framework of European Union Work Plan for Youth for 2014-2015 ⁽¹⁾, established the theme of youth empowerment as the overall priority of the trio presidency (IT, LV, LU), focusing on access to rights, autonomy, political participation and active citizenship.
2. Young people continue to be adversely affected by the economic and social crisis that has characterized the past few years. Demographic changes, youth unemployment and employment under precarious conditions, have consequently made it more difficult for them to achieve autonomy and exercise effectively their rights.
3. High levels of youth unemployment have contributed to the spread of poverty, marginality and social exclusion, health problems as well as a loss of confidence in the future. Research also shows that in some Member States an increasing number of young people are not in employment, education or training (NEETs) ⁽²⁾ and that there is a strong link between socioeconomic status and political participation: NEETs are less likely to vote ⁽³⁾, have less trust in political organisations and are less engaged in civic participation, compared to the rest of the young population.
4. Nevertheless, young people represent a valuable resource for society. Their skills, competences and creative and innovative capacity should constantly be taken into consideration when implementing strategies for youth policies at European, national, regional and local level.

AWARE:

5. That there are indications that young people are becoming autonomous ⁽⁴⁾ at a later age than in the past.
6. That the economic downturn has exacerbated intergenerational inequalities and might have long-lasting effects on the social cohesion and solidarity of our societies.

⁽¹⁾ Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on a European Union Work Plan for Youth (2014/C 183/02).

⁽²⁾ Study of Eurofound — 'NEETs — Young people not in employment, education or training: Characteristics, costs and policy responses in Europe': <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef1254.htm>

⁽³⁾ 'Descriptive statistics for people aged 15–29 years show that NEETs are substantially less engaged in politics than the rest of the young population' (Study of Eurofound — 'NEETs — Young people not in employment, education or training: Characteristics, costs and policy responses in Europe', p. 95) — <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef1254.htm>

⁽⁴⁾ Preliminary condition for youth autonomy implies that young people have the necessary support, resources and opportunities to choose to live independently, run their own lives, have full social and political participation in all sectors of everyday life, and be able to take independent decisions. The ability of young people to become autonomous is not only embodied in the work sphere, but it also covers the ability of young people to develop their potential, make their own choices and live in an independent way having the tools to participate in a critical and active way in the social, political and economic life of their own communities.

7. That the increasing youth mobility in Europe, also due to the search for employment in other countries, needs adequate attention, in order to make it a real opportunity for the personal and professional development of young people. In this regard, the Erasmus+ programme can play an important role in promoting both greater autonomy and participation in social life for young people through mobility as well as improving skills and competences important for employability and citizenship.
8. Of the joint conclusions ⁽¹⁾ of the EU Youth Conference, 13-15 October 2014, Rome ⁽²⁾.

RECOGNISING THE FOLLOWING KEY CHALLENGES:

9. The combined action of the factors caused by the economic and social crisis, such as income reduction, lack of jobs and greater job instability, have diminished young people's capacity to become autonomous ⁽³⁾.
10. It is now therefore necessary to develop appropriate measures and policies to support young people's autonomy and their transition to adulthood. This involves not only acting on policies that favour young people's transition from education to employment, but also on related areas such as access to financing, health and well-being and political and civic participation, in order to provide the necessary tools to help young people to become autonomous and participate in social life.
11. With the aim of ensuring young people's access to rights, the EU needs to focus, inter alia, on combating youth unemployment, fostering active citizenship and diminishing the mismatch between the skills and competences that young people acquire and those required by the labour market while enabling them to contribute to the sustainable creation of new jobs by promoting high quality education as well as improving the communication of graduate skills and competences to employers.

IN THIS REGARD CONSIDERS THAT:

12. In the context of cross-sectoral cooperation in youth policy, the EU and Member States, within their respective spheres of competence and with due regard for the principle of subsidiarity, could promote measures, where appropriate, addressing the following issues:
 - supporting young people's autonomy and well-being and tackling and preventing all forms of discrimination faced by many young people;
 - investing in raising awareness among young people of their rights and how to assert them;
 - supporting the involvement of young people in the decision-making process at all levels and through the recognition of youth organisations as an important channel for participation and the development of active citizenship;
 - continuing the path taken towards the recognition of youth work as an instrument to encourage participation and the acquisition of skills and competences important for achieving autonomy;
 - boosting the opportunities for participation and their contribution to community life, also through media and information technology, particularly with regard to decisions that concern young people directly;
 - supporting media and digital literacy education as a means of cultivating young people's critical minds and active citizenship;
 - supporting recognition and validation of skills and competencies acquired through informal and non-formal learning such as voluntary activities and fostering young people's participation in civic, social and political life;

⁽¹⁾ Doc. 14429/14.

⁽²⁾ These joint conclusions were adopted by the EU Youth Conference in Rome which is a recurring informal event organised by the Team Presidency countries with the support of the European Commission as an integral part of the structured dialogue as adopted by the Council through the Resolution (2009/C 311/01) on the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field and the Resolution (2014/C 183/01) on the overview of the structured dialogue process including social inclusion of young people.

⁽³⁾ <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef1404.htm>

INVITES THE MEMBER STATES, WITH DUE REGARD FOR THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY, TO:

13. Progress towards the identification of barriers to the participation of young people in social and political life, considering the possible introduction of measures to address these barriers.
14. Endeavour to promote that young people have access to quality jobs with a fair wage and social protection, allowing them to be autonomous and have a secure and dignified life.
15. Promote equal opportunities and gender equality for young people, including in the areas of social, economic and political life. Consider taking steps to ensure that young people are able to reconcile work and private life.
16. Invest in prevention and intervention measures for reducing early school leaving, especially by framing policies aimed at providing equal access to quality education and offering targeted support to improve school environments. Attention should also be paid to removing obstacles to young people achieving their full potential in education.
17. Promote youth work, taking into account the findings of the study on the value of youth work ⁽¹⁾, as a fundamental tool in allowing young people to develop their own initiatives and supporting the transition of young people to adulthood.
18. Consider promoting the development of social housing schemes ⁽²⁾ that focus in particular on young people with low incomes, such as students and trainees and unemployed youth.
19. Consider ways to promote the establishment of schemes for young people with the aim of supporting their entrepreneurial projects.
20. Support the development of youth friendly information services that can help inform young people about their access to rights.
21. Support young people's access to cultural life with a view to helping them to contribute to the construction of a more cohesive society.

INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE SPHERES OF COMPETENCE AND WITH DUE REGARD FOR THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY, AND WHILE RESPECTING MEMBER STATES' RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUTH POLICIES, TO:

22. Continue investing in the promotion of autonomy for young people through the development and support of youth policies and youth work and, where appropriate, through adequate support and funding for independent and youth/youth-led organisations.
23. Promote the principle that the autonomy and participation of young people be regarded as an important aspect to be taken into account in the development of social and economic strategies in the EU.
24. Support campaigns and educational programmes aimed at raising awareness about human rights (including civil and political, economic, social and cultural rights) and on how young people can fully enjoy such rights, using also existing networks. Special emphasis should be placed on young people with fewer opportunities.
25. Promote the use of existing opportunities within the Erasmus+ programme, including those relating to the training for teachers and youth workers on human rights (including civil and political, economic, social and cultural rights) so that they can act as multipliers in their education and training institutions.
26. Ensure that the EU Work Plan for Youth is implemented promptly via genuine cross-sectoral cooperation.

⁽¹⁾ 'Working with young people: the value of youth work in the EU' (European Commission, 2014, http://ec.europa.eu/youth/library/study/youth-work-report_en.pdf).

⁽²⁾ Housing solutions that the local government provides, which can be rented for a small amount of money.

27. Use the Youth Guarantee as an instrument to promote structural reform in Member States and the exchange of good practices among the Member States, especially concerning the monitoring of the implementation in relation to young people's transition from education to employment.
28. Establish an exchange of best practice in the framework of existing structures to analyse and discuss the situation of young people regarding their autonomy, their participation in civil society and their well-being and develop the necessary improvements at all levels.

CALLS ON YOUTH ORGANISATIONS AND STAKEHOLDERS TO:

29. Make the fullest use of the opportunities afforded by the Erasmus+ programme and promote this programme in order to equip young people with relevant skills and competences, supporting their autonomy and encouraging them to take part actively in society.
30. Inform young people about their access to rights in general and more specifically within the context of their activities and establish concrete initiatives such as information services in order to raise awareness on the issues related to their autonomy and access to rights.

INVITES THE COMMISSION TO:

31. Analyse, within the instruments of the renewed framework, the situation and barriers faced by young people in accessing their rights on the basis of the voluntary contributions from Member States and involving also experts, policy makers, representatives of youth and other civil society organisations. In addition, this analysis should be regularly reviewed so that it would also help Member States to exchange experiences and good practices.
 32. Reinforce the cross-sectoral approach to youth policy and make sure that the Commission takes into account young people's access to rights in the development of policies and programmes, where relevant.
 33. Raise awareness on issues related to young people's participation, including autonomy and access to rights, through the European Youth Portal.
 34. Propose possible measures aimed at encouraging the participation of young people in democratic life in Europe. In this regard, consideration should be given to the work conducted by the Council of Europe and the 'Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth'.
 35. Take into account the work on social inclusion — with a focus on outreach, access to social rights, and fighting new forms of xenophobia and discrimination — underway in the agreed framework for the 'Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth'.
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EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Euro exchange rates ⁽¹⁾

20 January 2015

(2015/C 18/02)

1 euro =

Currency	Exchange rate	Currency	Exchange rate		
USD	US dollar	1,1579	CAD	Canadian dollar	1,3910
JPY	Japanese yen	137,37	HKD	Hong Kong dollar	8,9772
DKK	Danish krone	7,4351	NZD	New Zealand dollar	1,5014
GBP	Pound sterling	0,76370	SGD	Singapore dollar	1,5502
SEK	Swedish krona	9,4297	KRW	South Korean won	1259,61
CHF	Swiss franc	1,0087	ZAR	South African rand	13,4621
ISK	Iceland króna		CNY	Chinese yuan renminbi	7,1948
NOK	Norwegian krone	8,8015	HRK	Croatian kuna	7,7015
BGN	Bulgarian lev	1,9558	IDR	Indonesian rupiah	14535,84
CZK	Czech koruna	27,849	MYR	Malaysian ringgit	4,1771
HUF	Hungarian forint	317,53	PHP	Philippine peso	51,632
PLN	Polish zloty	4,3275	RUB	Russian rouble	75,3825
RON	Romanian leu	4,5093	THB	Thai baht	37,845
TRY	Turkish lira	2,7010	BRL	Brazilian real	3,0378
AUD	Australian dollar	1,4123	MXN	Mexican peso	16,9308
			INR	Indian rupee	71,4500

⁽¹⁾ Source: reference exchange rate published by the ECB.

V

(Announcements)

OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Publication of an amendment 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

(2015/C 18/03)

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

AMENDMENT APPLICATION

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs ⁽²⁾

AMENDMENT APPLICATION ACCORDING TO ARTICLE 9

‘UVA DE MESA EMBOLSADA DEL VINALOPÓ’

EC No: ES-PDO-0117-01032-22.8.2012

PGI () PDO (X)

1. Heading in the product specification affected by the amendment

- Name of product
- Description of product
- Geographical area
- Proof of origin
- Method of production
- Link
- Labelling
- National requirements
- Other (to be specified)

2. Type of amendment

- Amendment to Single Document or Summary Sheet.
- Amendment to Specification of registered PDO or PGI for which neither the Single Document nor the Summary Sheet have been published.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12. Replaced by Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

- Amendment to Specification which does not require amendments to the published Single Document (Article 9(3) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006).
- Temporary amendment to Specification as a result of the imposition of sanitary or phytosanitary measures by the public authorities (Article 9(4) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006).

3. Amendments

(1) The first amendment is the inclusion of new varieties of grape: the white grapes Doña María, Dominga and Victoria and the black grape Red Globe.

Reason: Since the Designation of Origin 'Uva embolsada del Vinalopó' was created in 1989, the region has been subject to many changes as a result of developments in growing techniques and changes and adaptations by consumers in response to the markets.

Initially Aledo, Italia or Ideal and Rossetti were grown. Although these varieties have continued to be grown, other varieties have been planted over several new hectares.

The same growing techniques have been used for these new varieties, as well as for the bagging technique. The area planted with these new varieties in the region is sufficiently large to be able to conclude that they have been able to adapt satisfactorily.

Indeed the fruits maintain virtually all of their bloom, and have a more accentuated colour and a skin which is free of defects.

In terms of organoleptic qualities, the varieties 'Victoria', 'Red Globe', 'Doña María' and 'Dominga' have a considerable degree of sweetness when harvested, which is consistent with the varieties originally covered ('Aledo', 'Italia/Ideal' and 'Rossetti'). In fact when harvested all of them have a minimum of 12,5 °Brix.

All these facts (sweetness, maintaining their bloom, an accentuated colour, skin free of defects, together with adaptation to their environment and the bagging technique) justify the application to include the new varieties in the PDO 'Uva de mesa embolsada del Vinalopó'.

Description of the varieties:

Victoria: the bunch is large, pyramid-shaped, and smaller at the bottom. The grape is a waxy-yellow colour and is large and elliptical in shape. The flesh is crisp, with a sweet neutral flavour. It endures transportation very well. It is grown on arbours and high espaliers. It may be harvested at the end of July and, where forcing methods are used, even in June. It is a variety which derives great advantages from being bagged, which provides protection from birds and insects and, above all, the bagging ensures quality produce. The variety tolerates it and good results are obtained.

Dominga: may be harvested from October until the end of November. It is always bagged, resulting in very uniform cane-yellow tones and high quality, and it is very palatable to the consumer.

Doña María: its bunches are large, conical in shape and very loose. Its berries are pale yellow in colour, very large and oval. Very sweet flavour. It ripens at the start of September until the end of October. It is grown on high arbours and double-cordoned high espaliers. The variety copes very well with bagging.

Red Globe: its bunches are very large, conical-cylindrical, winged, with medium to long wings, and semi-loose. Its berries may be red, red-wine coloured, pink or red-violet coloured, spherical in shape, very large, with a neutral flavour, crisp flesh, and skin which is thick, resistant and easy to peel. It is grown on high arbours and double-cordoned high espaliers. It is a variety which has adapted perfectly to the conditions of the region and to bagging.

(2) The second amendment is the deletion of the description of a cultural practice relating to pruning.

The following information is to be deleted:

'The espaliers are pruned "on the canes", that is using the Guyot two-arm pruning method, in other words 12 to 14 buds on each vine. The arbours have four arms, each with four to six spurs and two to four buds per spur'.

Reason: This information refers to pruning, spurs per arm and buds per spur, and is not relevant for obtaining 'Uva de mesa embolsada del Vinalopó' with its distinctive characteristics. Furthermore, since this file was submitted in 1996 and to date, with the experience that has been acquired in growing the product, it is not considered useful to restrict the type of pruning to the only type described in the original specification. As this involves a very particular practice, and as has already been said, it is not relevant for obtaining the product with its distinctive characteristics, we request that this information is not included in the new specification.

(3) The third amendment consists of deleting the description of the categories of grape 'Extra' and 'Class I'.

The following information is to be deleted:

'The grape categories "Extra" and "Class I" as defined in Regulation (EEC) No 1730/87 and in the Ministerial Order of 24 November 1982 (Official State Gazette of 27 November 1982)

"Extra" category:

Grapes in this category must be of superior quality. In shape and development, the bunches must be typical of the variety and have no defects.

They must be uniform in colour, with an overall pale waxy-yellow tone.

Berries must be firm, firmly attached, evenly spaced along the stalk and have their bloom virtually intact. Minimum bunch weight: 200 grams \pm 5 % weight of bunches not satisfying the requirements for the category, but meeting those for Class I.

A tolerance of 10 % by weight of bunches not satisfying the size requirements for the "Extra", but meeting the packaging requirements for "Class I" is allowed.

"Class I" category

Grapes in this category must be of good quality. In shape and development, the bunches must be typical of the variety. They must be uniform in colour, with an overall waxy-yellow tone.

Berries must be firm, firmly attached and, as far as possible, have their bloom intact. They may, however, be less evenly spaced along the stalk than in the "Extra" category, with slight defects of shape and colouring allowed.

Minimum bunch weight: 150 grams'.

Reason: The definition of the categories 'Extra' and 'Class I', and their tolerances, as stated in the file requesting registration of the PDO 'Uva de mesa embolsada del Vinalopó', was included in Commission Regulation (EEC) No 1730/87 of 22 June 1987 laying down quality standards for table grapes⁽³⁾, which has been repealed. In addition, rules of this type are general and apply to all grapes; and not to specific grapes, i.e. to the grapes of the PDO 'Uva de mesa embolsada del Vinalopó'. Lastly, it should be remembered that rules of this type may be subsequently amended, and therefore there is no sense in reflecting them in the detailed description for the category.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs⁽⁴⁾

'UVA DE MESA EMBOLSADA DEL VINALOPÓ'

EC No: ES-PDO-0117-01032-22.8.2012

PGI () PDO (X)

1. Name

'Uva de mesa embolsada del Vinalopó'

⁽³⁾ OJ L 163, 23.6.1987, p. 25.

⁽⁴⁾ Replaced by Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

2. Member State or Third Country

Spain

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff

3.1. Type of product

Class 1.6. Fruit, vegetables and cereals, fresh or processed.

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

The varieties suitable for inclusion under the Protected Designation of Origin are solely the following:

— White varieties:

Aledo: The bunches are large and loose. The grape is ellipsoidal in shape, and waxy-yellow in colour. Thick and crisp skin. Late ripening, from November to December.

Italia or Ideal: The bunches are medium-sized, with large berries which are golden-yellow in colour and elliptical in shape, with crisp flesh and a slight flavour of Muscat. Harvesting takes place from September to October.

Rosetti: The bunches are large and cylindrical-conical or pyramidal in shape. The berries are waxy-yellow to golden-yellow in colour. The grape is large, with a neutral flavour but very sweet, with crisp flesh. Its skin is fine, with a pruinose consistency. Harvesting takes place from the beginning of September to the end of October.

Victoria: The bunches are large, with a pyramid-shape, and smaller at the bottom. The grape is a waxy-yellow colour and is large and elliptical in shape. The flesh is crisp, with a sweet neutral flavour. It is a resistant variety which can be grown on an arbour and a high espalier. It may be harvested at the end of July and, where forcing methods are used, even in June.

Dominga: May be harvested from October until the end of November. Its individual grapes are very uniform cane yellow in colour, of high quality and it is very palatable to the consumer.

Doña María: Its bunches are large, conical in shape and very loose. Its berries are pale yellow in colour, very large and oval. Very sweet flavour. Ripens at the start of September until the end of October. It is grown on high arbours and double-cordoned high espaliers.

— Black varieties:

Red Globe: Its bunches are very large, conical-cylindrical, winged, with medium to long wings, and semi-loose. Its berries may be red, red-wine coloured, pink or red-violet coloured, spherical in shape, very large, with a neutral flavour, crisp flesh, and skin which is thick, resistant and easy to peel. It is grown on high arbours and double-cordoned high espaliers.

These varieties are characterised by a high degree of sweetness, with a minimum of 12,5 °Brix.

The fruit, which belongs to the 'Extra' and 'Class I' categories, must be:

- sound,
- clean,
- free of any foreign matter,
- free from signs of damage by pests or diseases,
- free from all visible traces of mould,
- free of abnormal external moisture,
- free of foreign smell and/or taste.

Individual grapes must be:

- well formed,

- normally developed,
- attached to the stalk.

The 'Uva de mesa embolsada del Vinalopó' maintains virtually all of its bloom, has a more accentuated colour and a skin which is free of defects.

3.3. Raw materials (for processed products only)

—

3.4. Feed (for products of animal origin only)

—

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

Production and harvesting

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

—

3.7. Specific rules concerning labelling

Inscriptions, marking or labels identifying 'Uva de mesa embolsada del Vinalopó' must include the official European symbol for protected designations of origins, together with the words 'Protected Designation of Origin' and 'Uva de mesa embolsada del Vinalopó'.

A conformity mark, known as a secondary label, must also be included which is identified by means of an alphanumeric key applied during packaging and subject to checks to ensure that it is not reused and to enable traceability. These secondary labels must include the words 'Protected Designation of Origin Uva de mesa embolsada del Vinalopó' and its logo.

4. Concise definition of the geographical area

The production area for the grapes covered by the Protected Designation of Origin 'Uva de mesa embolsada Vinalopó' include the parcels listed in the Register of parcels of the PDO managing body, and are located in the following municipalities of the province of Alicante: Agost, Aspe, Hondón de los Frailes, Hondón de las Nieves, Monforte del Cid, Novelda and La Romana.

5. Link with the geographical area

5.1. Specificity of the geographical area

Natural factors

The Mid Vinalopó area is a meeting point for three climate types which, as part of the Mediterranean climate, originate in the province of Alicante (maritime, temperate and sub-tropical).

This means that the region rarely has temperatures lower than 0 °C, with the greatest risk of frost existing in the low areas facing north and north-west.

There are stark contrasts in terms of precipitation: both droughts and floods, and also a great level of variation in precipitation patterns from one year to the next, as well as in periods of drought.

The soil is limey and its lithology includes terraced gravel deposits resulting from continental sediments, marine sediments, molasses and limestone and arsenic and limey marls. All the soils in the Valley have a high calcium carbonate content and low levels of organic materials.

The topography of the region is conditioned by the Vinalopó and adjacent valleys which make up a narrow NE-SE passageway which cuts across the slope of the 'Prebético' mountain range through which the River Vinalopó flows.

Human factors

The bagging of the table grape is a special technique which is carried out 'exclusively' in the Mid Vinalopó area, in the abovementioned municipalities. This practice began in the municipality of Novelda around 1920, in order to protect the bunches against the bunch moth by using paper 'bags'.

It consists of placing each bunch inside a protective paper bag where it remains until it is packaged.

5.2. *Specificity of the product*

The PDO 'Uva embolsada del Vinalopó' maintains virtually all of its bloom. Its berries are distinctive as they have a more accentuated colour and a skin which is free of defects.

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)*

'Uva de mesa embolsada del Vinalopó' has distinctive features arising from a combination of natural and human factors:

The protected area has a Mediterranean climate, whose gentle temperatures throughout the year endow the berries with a more accentuated colour.

The topography of the Vinalopó district, which is characterised by interconnected valleys forming a passageway, keeps it free from frosts and thereby helps the fruit to obtain a stronger colour.

The bagging technique protects the grape, allowing the berries to maintain virtually all of their bloom and a skin which is free of defects.

Bagging is a special technique and over time the importance of selecting the right paper has been highlighted: the paper used, which is made of long cellulose fibres containing melanine to protect against humidity, and is satiny and cane-coloured, is also partly responsible for the stronger colour of the grapes.

This paper also lasts longer and repels more rainwater, which helps prevent the berries from developing skin defects, although it can lead to some grapes at the top of the bunch burning if temperatures are very high when the bag is placed on the bunch. Knowledge of the climatology of the area is fundamental for carrying out bagging correctly.

Reference to the publication of the specification

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

http://www.agricultura.gva.es/pc_uvavinalopo

⁽⁵⁾ See footnote 4.

Publication of an amendment 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

(2015/C 18/04)

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

AMENDMENT APPLICATION

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs ⁽²⁾

AMENDMENT APPLICATION ACCORDING TO ARTICLE 9

‘PECORINO TOSCANO’

EC No: IT-PDO-0217-01228-16.5.2014

PGI () PDO (X)

1. Heading in the product specification affected by the amendment

- Name of product
- Description of product
- Geographical area
- Proof of origin
- Method of production
- Link
- Labelling
- National requirements
- Other (to be specified)

2. Type of amendment

- Amendment to Single Document or Summary Sheet
- Amendment to Specification of registered PDO or PGI for which neither the Single Document nor the Summary Sheet has been published
- Amendment to Specification that requires no amendment to the published Single Document (Article 9(3) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)
- Temporary amendment to Specification resulting from imposition of obligatory sanitary or phytosanitary measures by public authorities (Article 9(4) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

3. Amendment(s)

Type of product

Description of product

It is specified that the soft cheese is ‘Pecorino Toscano tenero’ (soft Pecorino Toscano) and the hard cheese is ‘Pecorino Toscano stagionato’ (mature Pecorino Toscano).

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12. Replaced by Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

The following sentence is added: 'In order to limit the amount of processing waste, provided that the above weight and height requirements are complied with, "Pecorino Toscano" may be produced in a shape other than the cylindrical shape, but only when intended for pre-packaging (in slices, cubes or as grated cheese).'

Only if 'Pecorino Toscano' is to be pre-packaged in slices, cubes or as grated cheese may its outer appearance be modified.

Indeed, this does not affect its interior characteristics because the weight/height ratios remain unaltered, as it is only the diameter of its circular shape that changes in respect of the side of the parallelepiped. This does not alter the natural maturation processes, but does considerably limit processing waste linked to cutting.

Method of production

The possibility is added of using vegetable rennet, a long-standing practice in Tuscany for the production of Pecorino (already mentioned in the national registration application submitted in 1985). This practice has been taken up again in the last few years both as practice that is typical of the territory and for the production of Kosher cheeses.

The dry salting option, which had already been provided for in the previous text thanks to the wording 'by directly adding salt' is described in more detail.

In the details on maturation, the word 'rooms' is replaced by 'suitable environment', the maximum temperature is raised from 12 °C to 15 °C, and the maximum relative humidity level is increased from 90 % to 95 %.

The purpose of this amendment is to have a slightly broader range of temperatures and relative humidity levels of the environments intended for the maturation of 'Pecorino Toscano' so as to include those such as cellars and caves, either natural or modified by man, but having no external system for controlling the air temperature and relative humidity. Amongst the numerous caves and cellars considered suitable for the maturation of 'Pecorino Toscano' insomuch as they enable the production of cheeses that fully comply with the product standards, it has been measured that some of these environments may register, in the course of the year, temperatures (15 °C max) and relative humidity (95 % max) that are slightly higher than those provided for by the specification until now. Moreover, the use of cellars and caves for maturation is quite typical of the dairy industry and not exclusive to 'Pecorino Toscano'. The possibility of using such environments increases both the product's potential appeal and energy efficiency.

Labelling

The mark to be affixed on the labels is being modified so that the name 'Pecorino Toscano' stands out more on the actual logo.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs⁽³⁾

'PECORINO TOSCANO'

EC No: IT-PDO-0217-01228-16.5.2014

PGI () PDO (X)

1. **Name**

'Pecorino Toscano'

2. **Member State or Third Country**

Italy

⁽³⁾ Replaced by Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

3. Description of agricultural or food product

3.1. Type of product

Class 1.3. Cheeses

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

'Pecorino Toscano' is a soft ('Pecorino Toscano tenero') or semi-hard ('Pecorino Toscano stagionato') cheese made of whole sheep's milk coming from the production area. It has a distinctive texture, is matured for a short or long period depending whether it is intended as table cheese or for grating and has a cylindrical shape with flat faces and a slightly convex heel. Its size varies as follows: face diameter between 15 and 22 cm, heel height between 7 and 11 cm, weight between 0,75 and 3,50 kg. 'Pecorino Toscano' may be produced in shapes other than cylindrical, but only if is to be pre-packaged (in slices, cubes or as grated cheese). The fat content in dry matter is no less than 40 % for semi-hard cheeses and no less than 45 % for soft cheeses. The rind is yellow of varying hues up to deep yellow. The colour of the rind may depend on the treatments the cheese has undergone. The colour of the body of the cheese is white tending slightly towards straw-coloured for the soft type and between light straw-coloured and straw-coloured for the semi-hard type. The latter type has a compact consistency and is firm when cut, possibly with unevenly distributed small eyes. The strong, fragrant flavour is typical of the special production processes used. The minimum maturing period is 20 days for soft cheese and no less than four months for the semi-hard type.

3.3. Raw materials (for processed products only)

'Pecorino Toscano' is produced with whole sheep's milk from the area of origin indicated in the specification, which may either be raw or undergo thermal treatment, including pasteurisation. Only indigenous milk enzymes from the strain collection are allowed.

3.4. Feed (for products of animal origin only)

Sheep must mainly be fed with green or dried fodder from local natural pastures, possibly supplemented with hay and concentrated straight feedingstuffs.

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

All the phases of the production of milk and 'Pecorino Toscano' must take place in the area of origin until the cheese reaches its marketable level of maturation after 20 days for 'Pecorino Toscano tenero' and four months for 'Pecorino Toscano stagionato'.

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

'Pecorino Toscano' may be marketed whole, in portions cut from the wheel or grated.

3.7. Specific rules concerning labelling

Each wheel of 'Pecorino Toscano' must be marked with the PDO identifying logo in ink for 'Pecorino Toscano tenero' and hot-marked for 'Pecorino Toscano stagionato'. The logo consists of the wording 'Pecorino Toscano D.O.P.', a stylised image of a P and a T as well as the identification number of the producing dairy/maturer or authorised packager in the area of origin. If the packager is not active in the area of origin, the number must identify the dairy or the maturer.



The cheeses, cheese portions, slices or grated cheese packages must bear a label with the wording 'Pecorino Toscano D.O.P.' or 'Pecorino Toscano D.O.P. stagionato' standing out in respect of other wording on the label in terms of size, font and position. In accordance with Article 5 of the Product Specification, the mark, in colour, must be affixed one or more times and its diameter measure at least 15 mm.



4. Concise definition of the geographical area

The production area of 'Pecorino Toscano' PDO comprises the whole of the Region of Tuscany, the whole of the municipalities of Alleronia and Castiglione del Lago, in the Region of Umbria, and the whole of the municipalities of Acquapendente, Onano, San Lorenzo Nuovo, Grotte di Castro, Gradoli, Valentano, Farnese, Ischia di Castro, Montefiascone, Bolsena and Capodimonte in the Region of Lazio.

5. Link with the geographical area

5.1. Specificity of the geographical area

As regards natural factors, note should be taken of the special characteristics of the areas used for rearing the sheep, which almost exclusively live freely in the wild, using natural pastures rich in wild plants giving distinctive qualities to the milk used for cheese-making.

As regards human factors, beside their historically proven economic importance, the farms involved play an important social role by using 'marginal' land, which would otherwise be progressively abandoned with the subsequent impoverishment of natural resources.

Alongside the production method, which, from processing temperatures to the maturation method, respects all the qualities of sheep's milk, the rearing method and the plants, either wild or cultivated, that constitute the animals' main fodder, give the milk and the finished product the special characteristics that have always helped defining 'Pecorino Toscano' as a 'mild' cheese.

5.2. Specificity of the product

Yellow rind.

The taste is mild, never salty or strong.

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)

This cheese of ancient origin, whose existence in Etruscan times is the object of extensive historical evidence, has spread over the centuries in the 'Maremma' area, most of which lies in Tuscany. Traditionally, the product was designated by names referring to its geographical origin or by the more general term 'toscano' (Tuscan). Over time, given its largely common features, a single production standard and a designation related in etymological terms to its historical and geographical characteristics were established.

The special characteristics of 'Pecorino Toscano' derive from both sheep's milk and the production method. Fed on pastures almost all year around, the animals get from wild and cultivated plants the flavours and fragrances that are characteristics of the climate of the area of origin, which are both mild and distinctive. The mostly strong flavour of sheep's milk is made milder by the quality of the climate and pastures, which have a positive impact on animals' life and therefore their production. These characteristics are kept during the processing method by using the same temperatures as those of milk inside the sheep's udders, the traditional use of veal's rennet, minimum salting and maturation temperatures respecting the enzymes' natural activity. In line with the Tuscan tradition, the cheese keeps that distinctive albeit not exaggerated flavour, mild and never strong, that enables 'Pecorino Toscano' to please all palates.

Publication reference of the specification

(Article 5(7) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 ⁽⁴⁾)

The Ministry has launched the national objection procedure with the publication of the amendment application regarding 'Pecorino Toscano' PDO in Official Gazette of the Italian Republic No 74 of 29 March 2014.

⁽⁴⁾ See footnote 2.

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

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