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II

*(Information)*INFORMATION FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES
AND AGENCIES

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Non-opposition to a notified concentration**(Case M.9254 — MUTB/CFSGAM)****(Text with EEA relevance)**

(2019/C 114/01)

On 20 March 2019, the Commission decided not to oppose the above notified concentration and to declare it compatible with the internal market. This decision is based on Article 6(1)(b) of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 ⁽¹⁾. The full text of the decision is available only in English and will be made public after it is cleared of any business secrets it may contain. It will be available:

- in the merger section of the Competition website of the Commission (<http://ec.europa.eu/competition/mergers/cases/>). This website provides various facilities to help locate individual merger decisions, including company, case number, date and sectoral indexes,
- in electronic form on the EUR-Lex website (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html?locale=en>) under document number 32019M9254. EUR-Lex is the on-line access to European law.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1.

IV

(Notices)

NOTICES FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES AND AGENCIES

COUNCIL

Council conclusions on the revised EU list of non-cooperative jurisdictions for tax purposes

(2019/C 114/02)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION:

1. RECALLS the Council Conclusions of 25 May 2016 on an external taxation strategy and measures against tax treaty abuse, the Council Conclusions of 8 November 2016 on the criteria for and process leading to the establishment of the EU list of non-cooperative jurisdictions for tax purposes, and the Council Conclusions of 5 December 2017 on the EU list of non-cooperative jurisdictions for tax purposes;
2. WELCOMES the work that the Code of Conduct Group on Business Taxation ("Code of Conduct Group"), supported by the General Secretariat of the Council and with the assistance of the European Commission services, has carried out in monitoring the implementation of commitments taken by jurisdictions to implement tax good governance principles and in taking stock of the work achieved by the relevant OECD fora;
3. WELCOMES the fact that most of these jurisdictions have engaged in an open and constructive way with the Code of Conduct Group and resolved the deficiencies that had been identified in the areas of tax transparency, fair taxation and implementation of anti-BEPS standards by enacting the necessary measures within the agreed deadline;
4. REGRETS at the same time that a number of jurisdictions have not enacted by the end of 2018 all the measures to which they had committed, whilst some jurisdictions have not committed to implement any or some of the tax good governance principles for which it was determined that they are not compliant;
5. ENDORSES, accordingly, the revised EU list of non-cooperative jurisdictions for tax purposes set out in Annex I;
6. CONSIDERS that reasons put forward by some jurisdictions for not fully enacting all of the measures to which they had committed, despite tangible efforts, could in some cases be viewed as justified and AGREES therefore that the deadline for meeting their commitments should be extended as set out in Annex II;
7. TAKES THE VIEW, in particular, that:
 1. certain developing countries should be given more time to reform their harmful preferential tax regimes covering manufacturing activities and similar non-highly mobile activities considering the heavier economic impact of these reforms on such countries;
 2. jurisdictions that faced genuine institutional or constitutional issues that prevented them from fulfilling their commitments in 2018 should also be given a reasonable deadline extension to complete their reforms subject to the jurisdiction having provided adequate draft legislation;
 3. jurisdictions that evidenced litigation risks in relation to the abolition of certain harmful preferential tax regimes should be granted an extended grandfathering period;
 4. jurisdictions that are rated as partially compliant for exchange of information on request and are waiting for a supplementary review by the Global Forum should be granted an extension until the revised rating is available;

8. EXPRESSES its satisfaction that many jurisdictions under criterion 2.2 have enacted the required reforms in 2018 and are therefore removed from Annex II, but ASKS the Code of Conduct Group to monitor the proper enactment of their legislative and enforcement provisions on an annual basis;
9. ACKNOWLEDGES that further work will be needed to define acceptable economic substance requirements for collective investment funds under criterion 2.2 and INVITES the Group to continue the dialogue and provide further technical guidance to the jurisdictions concerned by mid 2019;
10. NOTES WITH CONCERN the replacement of harmful preferential tax regimes by measures of similar effect in certain jurisdictions, REGRETS that one of these jurisdiction has not taken a sufficient commitment to amend or abolish these measures by the end of 2019 and STRESSES that no further replacement with measures of similar effect or delays will be accepted when assessing at the beginning of 2020 whether the requested commitments will have been implemented;
11. NOTES the Code of Conduct Group will continue seeking commitments from the jurisdictions that have not yet committed to address the deficiencies identified;
12. NOTES that the Code of Conduct Group will continue monitoring the effective implementation by end 2019 of the commitments made by developing countries without a financial centre in respect of tax transparency and implementation of anti-BEPS minimum standards, as well as the implementation of the relevant transparency and anti-BEPS minimum standards in jurisdictions that cannot or do not wish to join the Global Forum or OECD BEPS Inclusive Framework;
13. WELCOMES the work of the Code of Conduct Group in reviewing newly identified preferential regimes in some jurisdictions and in monitoring the commitments taken by these jurisdictions to remove the harmful features of these regimes;
14. ENDORSES the state of play with respect to commitments taken by cooperative jurisdictions to implement tax good governance principles, as set out in Annex II;
15. INVITES the Code of Conduct Group and its Chair, supported by the General Secretariat of the Council and with the technical assistance of the Commission services, to continue the interactions and dialogues with the relevant jurisdictions, including with respect to the end of the general 'two out of three' approach at the end of June 2019;
16. Recalling paragraph 11 of the Council Conclusions of 5 December 2017 on the EU list of non-cooperative jurisdictions for tax purposes, CONFIRMS that the Code of Conduct Group should recommend to the Council to update at any time, and at least once a year, the EU list set out in Annex I as well as the state of play set out in Annex II on the basis of any new commitment taken or of the implementation thereof; but, as from 2020 onwards, such updates of the EU list should be done no more than twice a year, leaving sufficient time, where appropriate, for Member States to amend their domestic legislation;
17. RECALLS the extensions of the geographical scope of the EU screening exercise to other jurisdictions agreed in 2018 and INVITES the Code of Conduct Group to review the economic data used for selecting jurisdictions in 2020, for application as from 2021;
18. CONFIRMS the start of application of criterion 3.2 (implementation of the country by country reporting – CbCR minimum standard), and REITERATES its invitation to the Code of Conduct Group to finalise discussions in respect of future criterion 1.4 (transparency of ultimate beneficial ownership);
19. WELCOMES the fact that Annex I of these Council conclusions is being taken into account by the European Commission in the implementation of EU financing and investment operations, as well as the agreements reached in respect of coordinated defensive measures in the non-tax area vis-à-vis the non-cooperative jurisdictions since the Council conclusions of 5 December 2017 ⁽¹⁾;

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2017/2402 on a general framework for securitisation, Regulation (EU) 2017/2396 on the European Fund for Strategic Investments, Regulation (EU) 2017/2396 on the European Fund for Strategic Investments and on the European Investment Advisory Hub, Decision (EU) 2018/412 on granting an EU guarantee to the European Investment Bank against losses under financing operations supporting investment projects outside the EU, and Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 on the financial rules applicable to the EU general budget.

20. REITERATES at the same time its invitation to the Code of Conduct Group to finalise discussions on further coordinated defensive measures, without prejudice to Member States' obligations under EU and international law;
 21. INVITES the EU institutions and Member States, as appropriate, to take the revised EU list of non-cooperative jurisdictions for tax purposes set out in Annex I into account in foreign policy, economic relations and development cooperation with the relevant third countries, to strive for a comprehensive approach as regards to the issue of compliance with the Criteria, without prejudice to the respective spheres of competence of the Member States and of the Union as resulting from the Treaties;
 22. REITERATES that the Code of Conduct Group, supported by the General Secretariat of the Council and with the technical assistance of the European Commission services, should continue to conduct and oversee the EU screening, listing and monitoring processes, in coordination with the High Level Working Party on tax issues (HLWP).
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ANNEX I

The EU list of non-cooperative jurisdictions for tax purposes**1. American Samoa**

American Samoa does not apply any automatic exchange of financial information, has not signed and ratified, including through the jurisdiction they are dependent on, the OECD Multilateral Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance as amended, did not commit to apply the BEPS minimum standards and did not commit to addressing these issues.

2. Aruba

Aruba has not yet amended or abolished one harmful preferential tax regime.

3. Barbados

Barbados has replaced a harmful preferential tax regime by a measure of similar effect and did not commit to amend or abolish it by the end of 2019.

4. Belize

Belize has not yet amended or abolished one harmful preferential tax regime.

Belize's commitment to amend or abolish its newly identified harmful preferential tax regime by the end of 2019 will be monitored.

5. Bermuda

Bermuda facilitates offshore structures and arrangements aimed at attracting profits without real economic substance and has not yet resolved this issue.

Bermuda's commitment to addressing the concerns relating to economic substance in the area of collective investment funds by the end of 2019 will be monitored.

6. Dominica

Dominica does not apply any automatic exchange of financial information, has not signed and ratified the OECD Multilateral Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance as amended, and has not yet resolved these issues.

7. Fiji

Fiji has not yet amended or abolished its harmful preferential tax regimes.

Fiji's commitment to comply with criteria 1.2, 1.3 and 3.1 by the end of 2019 will continue to be monitored.

8. Guam

Guam does not apply any automatic exchange of financial information, has not signed and ratified, including through the jurisdiction they are dependent on, the OECD Multilateral Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance as amended, did not commit to apply the BEPS minimum standards and did not commit to addressing these issues.

9. Marshall Islands

Marshall Islands facilitates offshore structures and arrangements aimed at attracting profits without real economic substance and has not yet resolved this issue.

Marshall Islands' commitment to comply with criterion 1.2 will continue to be monitored: it is waiting for a supplementary review by the Global Forum.

10. Oman

Oman does not apply any automatic exchange of financial information, has not signed and ratified the OECD Multilateral Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance as amended, and has not yet resolved these issues.

11. Samoa

Samoa has a harmful preferential tax regime and did not commit to addressing this issue.

Furthermore, Samoa committed to comply with criterion 3.1 by the end of 2018 but has not resolved this issue.

12. Trinidad and Tobago

Trinidad and Tobago has a 'Non-Compliant' rating by the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes for Exchange of Information on Request.

Trinidad and Tobago's commitment to comply with criteria 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 2.1 by the end of 2019 will be monitored.

13. United Arab Emirates

United Arab Emirates facilitates offshore structures and arrangements aimed at attracting profits without real economic substance and has not yet resolved this issue.

14. US Virgin Islands

US Virgin Islands does not apply any automatic exchange of financial information, has not signed and ratified, including through the jurisdiction they are dependent on, the OECD Multilateral Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance as amended, has harmful preferential tax regimes, did not commit to apply the BEPS minimum standards and did not commit to addressing these issues.

15. Vanuatu

Vanuatu facilitates offshore structures and arrangements aimed at attracting profits without real economic substance and has not yet resolved this issue.

ANNEX II

State of play of the cooperation with the EU with respect to commitments taken to implement tax good governance principles**1. Transparency****1.1. *Commitment to implement the automatic exchange of information, either by signing the Multilateral Competent Authority Agreement or through bilateral agreements***

The following jurisdictions are committed to implement automatic exchange of information by end 2019:

Palau and Turkey.

1.2. *Membership of the Global Forum on transparency and exchange of information for tax purposes ('Global Forum') and satisfactory rating in relation to exchange of information on request*

The following jurisdictions, which committed to have a sufficient rating by end 2018, are waiting for a supplementary review by the Global Forum:

Anguilla and Curaçao.

The following jurisdictions are committed to become member of the Global Forum and/or have a sufficient rating by end 2019:

Jordan, Namibia, Palau, Turkey and Vietnam.

1.3. *Signatory and ratification of the OECD Multilateral Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance (MAC) or network of agreements covering all EU Member States*

The following jurisdictions are committed to sign and ratify the MAC or to have in place a network of agreements covering all EU Member States by end 2019:

Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Cabo Verde, Eswatini, Jordan, Maldives, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, North Macedonia, Palau, Serbia, Thailand and Vietnam.

2. Fair Taxation**2.1. *Existence of harmful tax regimes***

The following jurisdictions, which committed to amend or abolish their harmful tax regimes covering manufacturing activities and similar non-highly mobile activities by end 2018 and demonstrated tangible progress in initiating these reforms in 2018, were granted until end 2019 to adapt their legislation:

Costa Rica and Morocco.

The following jurisdictions, which committed to amend or abolish their harmful tax regimes by end 2018 but were prevented from doing so due to genuine institutional or constitutional issues despite tangible progress in 2018, were granted until end 2019 to adapt their legislation:

Cook Islands, Maldives and Switzerland.

The following jurisdiction is committed to amend or abolish the identified harmful tax regimes by 9 November 2019:

Namibia.

The following jurisdictions are committed to amend or abolish harmful tax regimes by end 2019:

Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Curaçao, Mauritius, Morocco, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Seychelles.

The following jurisdictions are committed to amend or abolish harmful tax regimes by end 2020:

Jordan.

2.2. Existence of tax regimes that facilitate offshore structures which attract profits without real economic activity

The following jurisdictions, which committed to addressing the concerns relating to economic substance in the area of collective investment funds, have engaged in a positive dialogue with the Group and have remained cooperative, but require further technical guidance, were granted until end 2019 ⁽¹⁾ to adapt their legislation:

Bahamas, British Virgin Islands and Cayman Islands.

3. Anti-BEPS Measures

3.1. Membership of the Inclusive Framework on BEPS or commitment to implementation of OECD anti-BEPS minimum standards

The following jurisdictions are committed to become member of the Inclusive Framework on BEPS or implement OECD anti-BEPS minimum standards by end 2019:

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Eswatini, Jordan, Montenegro, Morocco and Namibia.

The following jurisdictions are committed to become member of the Inclusive Framework on BEPS or implement OECD anti-BEPS minimum standards if and when such commitment will become relevant:

Nauru, Niue and Palau.

⁽¹⁾ This deadline may be reviewed depending on the technical guidance to be agreed by the Group and ongoing dialogue with the jurisdictions concerned.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Euro exchange rates ⁽¹⁾

25 March 2019

(2019/C 114/03)

1 euro =

Currency			Exchange rate		
USD	US dollar	1,1325	CAD	Canadian dollar	1,5204
JPY	Japanese yen	124,65	HKD	Hong Kong dollar	8,8888
DKK	Danish krone	7,4646	NZD	New Zealand dollar	1,6413
GBP	Pound sterling	0,85638	SGD	Singapore dollar	1,5286
SEK	Swedish krona	10,4450	KRW	South Korean won	1 283,07
CHF	Swiss franc	1,1237	ZAR	South African rand	16,2997
ISK	Iceland króna	136,30	CNY	Chinese yuan renminbi	7,6015
NOK	Norwegian krone	9,6590	HRK	Croatian kuna	7,4170
BGN	Bulgarian lev	1,9558	IDR	Indonesian rupiah	16 058,85
CZK	Czech koruna	25,759	MYR	Malaysian ringgit	4,6081
HUF	Hungarian forint	316,84	PHP	Philippine peso	59,411
PLN	Polish zloty	4,2953	RUB	Russian rouble	72,7646
RON	Romanian leu	4,7553	THB	Thai baht	35,804
TRY	Turkish lira	6,3425	BRL	Brazilian real	4,4032
AUD	Australian dollar	1,5931	MXN	Mexican peso	21,6039
			INR	Indian rupee	78,0460

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

EUROPEAN FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY

Networking of organisations operating in the fields within the European Food Safety Authority's (EFSA's) mission

(2019/C 114/04)

Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 ⁽¹⁾, Article 36(2), provides that the European Food Safety Authority's 'Management Board, acting on a proposal from the Executive Director, shall draw up a list to be made public of competent organisations designated by the Member States which may assist the Authority, either individually or in networks, with its mission.'

The list was first drawn up by EFSA's Managements Board on 19 December 2006, and since then is:

- i. updated regularly, on the basis of proposals from EFSA's Executive Director, taking account of reviews or new designation proposals from the Member States (in accordance with Commission Regulation (EC) No 2230/2004, Article 2(4) ⁽²⁾);
- ii. made public on EFSA's website, where the latest updated list of competent organisations is published; and
- iii. made available through the Article 36 Search Tool to the organisations, providing contact details and the organisations' specific fields of competence.

This respective information is available on the EFSA website, under the following links:

- i. the latest amendment to the list of competent organisations by EFSA's Management Board on [20.3.2019] — [\[https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/mb190320\]](https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/mb190320);
- ii. the updated list of competent organisations — <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/assets/art36listg.pdf>; and
- iii. Article 36 Search Tool — <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/art36/search>

EFSA will keep this notification updated, specifically regarding the provided website links.

For more information please contact Cooperation.Article36@efsa.europa.eu.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety (OJ L 31, 1.2.2002, p. 1).

⁽²⁾ Commission Regulation (EC) No 2230/2004 of 23 December 2004 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 with regard to the network of organisations operating in the fields within the European Food Safety Authority's mission (OJ L 379, 24.12.2004, p. 64).

V

(Announcements)

OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Publication of the single document amended following the approval of a minor amendment pursuant to the second subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012

(2019/C 114/05)

The European Commission has approved this minor amendment in accordance with the third subparagraph of Article 6(2) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 664/2014 ⁽¹⁾.

The application for approval of this minor amendment can be found in the Commission's DOOR database.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'PROVOLONE VALPADANA'**EU No: PDO-IT-0021-AM02 – 20.4.2018****PDO (X) PGI ()****1. Name(s)**

'Provolone Valpadana'

2. Member State or Third Country

Italy

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff**3.1. Type of product**

Class 1.3. Cheeses

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

Semi-hard stretched-curd cheese from raw whole cows' milk with natural acidity from fermentation, collected in the area of origin within 60 hours, which can undergo:

— for the mild variety and for cheeses of the tangy variety weighing up to 6 kg, heat treatment until the cheese is fully pasteurised;

— for the tangy variety, heat treatment in the form of thermisation.

The maturation period can vary as follows:

up to 6 kg: minimum maturation period 10 (ten) days;

over 6 kg: minimum maturation period 30 (thirty) days;

over 15 kg and only for the tangy variety: minimum maturation period 90 (ninety) days;

over 30 kg labelled P.V.S. (Provolone Valpadana Stagionato), tangy variety: maturation period over 8 months.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 179, 19.6.2014, p. 17.

The cheese may also be smoked.

The weight may vary according to shape.

The different shapes are: sausage shape, melon shape, truncated-cone shape and pear shape, sometimes with a 'fiaschetta' (round flask-shaped) top; the external surface may show small indents from the supporting cords.

The rind is smooth, thin, of a light yellow, golden colour and sometimes yellow-brown. The mild variety to be divided into portions may have no rind.

The cheese is generally compact with occasional small holes; some flaking of the cheese is common for those with a shorter maturation while a more marked flaking is typical of cheeses with a longer maturation period; it is generally of a pale yellow colour.

Up to a maturation of three months the cheese has a delicate taste that gradually becomes more tangy as the cheese matures further, or when goat or lamb rennet are used either alone or together.

The maximum water content must not exceed:

46 % for all cheeses of the mild variety and cheeses of the tangy variety weighing up to 6 kg;

43 % for cheeses of the tangy variety weighing more than 6 kg.

The fat in dry matter should be not less than 44 % and not more than 54 %.

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

At least 50 % of the basic feed for the dairy cattle, made up of fodder (fresh or dried), feed or feed-concentrates, must come from the area of origin and must be fed to lactating cows, dry cows and heifers over 7 months old. At least 75 % of the dry matter of the fodder in the daily ration should come from feed produced in the milk production area. The fodder allowed is: fresh fodder from permanent or temporary meadows, fodder crops, hay obtained from drying the crops in the field, straw from cereals, grass silage, chopped grass and hay silage. The feed allowed is: cereals and cereal products, corn mash, oilseeds and oilseed products, tubers and roots, dry fodder and products of the sugar industry such as molasses and/or derivatives, only as processing aids and flavours up to a limit of 2,5 % of dry matter in the daily ration. Also permitted are: legume seeds and dried locust beans and their derivatives, fats, mineral salts authorised by the legislation in force and additives such as vitamins, trace elements, amino acids, flavourings and antioxidants authorised by the legislation in force with the added requirement that any antioxidants and flavourings used must be natural or nature-identical. The use of inactivated yeasts is permitted.

Raw materials: milk, rennet, salt.

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

All steps in the production must take place in the identified geographical area.

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

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

All whole cheeses must bear the logo of the protected designation of origin 'Provolone Valpadana', which must be reproduced on a suitable tamper-proof support (metal, plastic).

The labelling must take place when the cheeses enter the maturing premises. For smaller sizes (up to 6 kg), the label may be affixed when the cheeses leave the maturing premises, provided they are clearly identified by appropriate means according to a system set up by the holding when they enter the premises.

Whole 'Provolone Valpadana' cheese can be customised before it is placed on the market using card strips, stickers, bags or similar. For each of the previously mentioned modes of customisation, the logo and explicit mention of the protected designation of origin 'Provolone Valpadana' must be shown on no less than one sixth of the surface area occupied by the commercial brand, with the exception of cheeses weighing less than 6 kg.

For labels using printed stamps, the name 'Provolone Valpadana' must be shown within the limits described, excluding the requirement to show the product logo.

Exclusively for the tangy variety and from the eighth month of maturation, holders of 'Provolone Valpadana' can request a fire marking of the initialism 'P.V.S.' which stands for 'Provolone Valpadana Stagionato'. In order to display the above-mentioned brand, the cheese must undergo a technical check by specialists that has been expressly requested by the holder and is at his own cost. The selective check concerns the external appearance of the cheese (which should not exhibit cracks, and on tapping the cheese, the sound must be uniform), the texture of the body of the cheese (with flaking, no holes and not elastic), the colour (white bordering on straw yellow), the flavour (the tangy variety should have a kick and not be salty) and the aroma (intense together with the odour).

The logo, including the name, must be reproduced on the packages intended for final consumers in proportion to the packaging used so as to take up no less than 10 % of the surface space available. The name 'Provolone Valpadana' should be shown in the same fashion. The indication 'Denominazione d'Origine Protetta' (Protected Designation of Origin) may be replaced by the EU logo.



The logo can also be used in a monochrome version.

4. Concise definition of the geographical area

The entire territory of the Provinces of Cremona, Brescia, Verona, Vicenza, Rovigo, Padova, Piacenza and adjoining municipalities of the Provinces of Bergamo, Mantova and Lodi and the Autonomous Province of Trento make up a single geographical area.

5. Link with the geographical area

The geographical production area includes part of the Po Valley and is known for its high production of fodder, large quantities of available milk and climatic conditions that are particularly suited to feeding and breeding dairy cattle breeds. Thanks to these environmental factors, the production area enjoys ideal conditions for producing 'Provolone Valpadana' cheese.

'Provolone Valpadana' is a stretched-curd cheese, and this type of cheese, despite originating in the south of Italy, has established itself in northern Italy thanks to the cheese-making tradition of the Po valley, which was never lacking in technical expertise and had an abundance of raw materials to work with. The use of natural whey inoculum derived from whey residues from earlier processing, the know-how of dairy producers from the area in skilfully using different lamb, goat and calf rennets, and the artisan expertise in the kneading and working of the cheese are of particular importance in the production of 'Provolone Valpadana'.

'Provolone Valpadana' is known for its delicate flavour in cheeses which have matured for up to three months, which gradually becomes more tangy with the passing of time and according to the type of rennet used. 'Provolone Valpadana' also comes in different shapes such as a sausage shape, melon shape, truncated-cone shape and pear shape, and in sizes which can exceed 30 kg. The cheese is compact but not dry, unlike stretched-curd cheeses from southern Italy which, because of their smaller size, can mature and become tangy just by drying and turning into grating cheeses.

'Provolone Valpadana' has been produced in the specified geographical area since the second half of the 19th century. Although the stretched-curd cheese originates from southern Italy, in the 20th century it established itself in northern Italy, as witnessed by the works of Besana (1916) and Fascetti (1923).

The expansion of the production of 'Provolone Valpadana' was aided by the technical cheese-making skills of producers in the Po Valley, which developed over time thanks to the particularly suitable conditions in the geographical area for breeding cows producing a large quantity of milk for processing. Among the typical characteristics of the method used to produce 'Provolone Valpadana' is the use of whey from earlier processing as a whey-starter for further processing. This process forms a very characteristic part of the production of 'Provolone Valpadana' in terms of both territory and method, since it is rarely used in cheese production. Refining the production techniques has had an effect on the commercial characteristics of 'Provolone Valpadana' cheese, such as its shape and size, without changing its essential characteristics. The different shapes and sizes of 'Provolone Valpadana' are the result of the ability of the cheese-makers in the geographical area, through the kneading operation, to make the cheese malleable enough to be able to work it into different shapes and quite significant sizes. These commercial characteristics can be attributed to the geographical production area since this is where they have been developed and passed down. The coexistence of the two varieties, mild and tangy, is the result of the dairy producers' capabilities in using different rennets which allow 'Provolone Valpadana' cheese to have the delicate or tangy flavours that are typical of the product. This is achieved using a similar process to produce, respectively, smaller cheeses with a shorter maturation period and heavier cheeses with a longer maturation period, with a texture that is compact but never so dry as to require grating as is the case for more typical stretched-curd cheeses from the south of Italy.

Reference to publication of the specification

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

The consolidated text of the product specification can be consulted on the following website:

<http://www.politicheagricole.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/3335>

or alternatively:

by going directly to the homepage of the Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policy (www.politicheagricole.it) and clicking on 'Qualità' (at the top right-hand side of the screen), then on 'Prodotti DOP, IGP e STG' and then 'Disciplinari di Produzione all'esame dell'UE' (Specifications submitted for examination by the EU).

Publication of the amended single document following the approval of a minor amendment pursuant to the second subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012

(2019/C 114/06)

The European Commission has approved this minor amendment in accordance with the third subparagraph of Article 6(2) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 664/2014⁽¹⁾.

The application for approval of this minor amendment can be consulted on the Commission's DOOR database.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'ECHALOTE D'ANJOU'

EU No: PGI-FR-01253-AM01 – 11.9.2018

PDO () PGI (X)

1. Name(s)

'Echalote d'Anjou'

2. Member State or Third Country

France

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 'Echalote d'Anjou' is a monocot falling exclusively within the *Aggregatum* group of the *Allium cepa* species, belonging to the Liliaceae family.

It is a pinkish-coloured 'traditional' shallot (resulting from vegetative propagation) of the Jersey varietal type which is sold fresh.

It is produced from varieties registered on the list of varieties recognised by the producer group, which the latter keeps up to date. New varieties are registered in accordance with a procedure enabling both technical criteria (in particular yield, rate of division, conservability, cultivation method, adaptability to environment, resistance to pathogens, nutritional requirements, rate of waste, suitability for mechanisation, picking and transportation on chains to the collection point) and the main characteristics of the 'Echalote d'Anjou' (size, shape, appearance, length, skin colour, dry-matter content) to be checked.

The list of authorised varieties is distributed to producers, the inspection body and the competent inspection authorities each time it is amended.

Physical characteristics

- (a) The bulbs must be: firm and compact, free of hollow or tough stems, and virtually free of root tufts. However, the following minor defects may be allowed provided they do not affect the general appearance, quality, conservability and presentation of the product: a slight defect in shape, surface cracks on the outer skins, provided the flesh is protected.
- (b) Shape: the 'Echalote d'Anjou' is of a regular and slightly long, thin shape with a diameter of between 20 mm and 55 mm and a ratio of length to average diameter (*) of more than 1,2.

(*) average diameter = (large equatorial diameter + small equatorial diameter)/2.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 179, 19.6.2014, p. 17.

- (c) The skins of the bulbs are thin and shiny; they are light red/yellow or pale yellow in colour, with an increasingly copper-coloured appearance depending on their maturity, the extent to which they have dried out and how long they are stored before being dispatched.

Chemical property

The high dry-matter content is equal to or greater than 16 %.

Organoleptic characteristics

The 'Echalote d'Anjou' has the following organoleptic properties: it is firm to the touch, and its flesh is pinkish in colour and of soft consistency. It takes on a distinctive aromatic intensity with a significant sharpness in smell and taste.

Presentation of the product

The 'Echalote d'Anjou' comes in two forms:

- the early or half-dry shallot dispatched at the very beginning of the season;
- the preserved or dry shallot dispatched throughout the rest of the year, characterised by the dry appearance of the root collar.

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

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

The bulbs are planted, harvested and field dried in the geographical area.

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

Initial storage, preparation, sorting, final sizing and approval of the 'Echalote d'Anjou' take place within the geographical area.

These operations allow the physical and chemical properties and appearance to be checked and, therefore, the specific characteristics of the 'Echalote d'Anjou' to be maintained.

The know-how of operators in carrying out these operations follows a well-established process involving manual preparation, sorting and final sizing before the product is eventually approved. This allows the shallots to be handled in optimum fashion so as to ensure the best possible management throughout the year of the process of drying the products intended for marketing or export. This know-how is an additional guarantee of quality, ensuring that the characteristics of the 'Echalote d'Anjou' are maintained. This requires these operations to be carried out in the geographical area in which the 'Echalote d'Anjou' is produced.

The 'Echalote d'Anjou' is marketed throughout the year, in individual packs where all or part of the product remains visible, or in protective packaging that allows the shallots to be sold loose to the final consumer. These may weigh up to 20 kg maximum.

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

All packaging or sales units must display the following:

- the registered name of the product and the European Union PGI logo in the same visual field;
- the commercial category;
- the certifying body.

4. Concise definition of the geographical area

The geographical area comprises the territory of the following areas of the Department of Maine-et-Loire (49):

Allonnes, Artannes-sur-Thouet, Beaufort-en-Anjou, Blaison-Saint-Sulpice, Blou, Bois d'Anjou (Les), Brain-sur-Allonnes, Brézé, Brissac-Loire-Aubance (*former territory of the delegated communes of Alleuds (Les), Charcé-Saint-Ellier-sur-Aubance, Chemellier, Coutures, Saint-Rémy-la-Varenne, Saint-Saturnin-sur-Loire, Saulgé-l'Hôpital*), Chacé, Cornillé-les-Caves, Denezé-sous-Doué, Distré, Doué-en-Anjou (*former territory of the delegated commune of Meigné*), Epieds, Fontevraud-l'Abbaye, Gennes-Val-de-Loire, Jarzé-Villages (*former territory of the delegated communes of Chaumont d'Anjou, Jarzé et Lué-en-Baugeois*), Loire-Authion, Longué-Jumelles, Louresse-Rochemenier, Mazé-Milon, Ménitré (La), Montsoreau, Neuillé, Parnay, Rosiers-sur-Loire (Les), Rou-Marson, Saint-Clément-des-Levées, Saint-Cyr-en-Bourg, Saint-Martin-de-la-Place, Saint-Philbert-du-Peuple, Sarrigné, Saumur, Sermaise, Souzay-Champigny, Tuffalun, Turquant, Ulmes (Les), Varennes-sur-Loire, Varrains, Vernantes, Verrie, Villebernier, Vivy.

5. Link with the geographical area

The 'Echalote d'Anjou' PGI rests upon natural and human factors that give the product its regular, elongated shape, its sharp organoleptic profile and its good keeping quality. These specific characteristics have helped boost the reputation of the 'Echalote d'Anjou' well beyond the region.

The geographical area of the 'Echalote d'Anjou' is situated on the edge of the Paris basin and is crossed from east to west by the Loire Valley, where clay-limestone alluvial deposits and sedimentary soils predominate. These soils are relatively light and are made up of fine particles. Subsoils provide a large water reserve.

The Anjou region has a maritime climate. The common expression 'douceur angevine' [mild Anjou climate] is often used to describe it. It is characterised by moderate temperatures, a narrow temperature range over the year (of about 15 °C), regular and moderate rainfall (approximately 650 mm) and low wind speeds. The cultivation of shallots in the Department was mentioned in the 'Statistique horticole du Maine-et-Loire' (Horticultural Statistics for Maine-et-Loire) in 1842.

In 1962, producers in the region of Mazé became organised and gradually developed the production of Jersey-type shallots.

From 1975-1980 onwards, the cultivation of long shallots grew significantly. As a result, a specific typology of farms producing shallots emerged in Anjou. These are characterised by a fairly large land area, allowing shallots to be cultivated over 3 ha to 4 ha on average, together with other specialised crops.

The methods currently used are based on traditional labour-intensive cultivation practices and methods, including: selection of the varieties used and plant propagation (systematic warm-water treatment), crop rotation, mulching of the soil, manual planting and harvesting, transport from drying in the field to storage, preparation of batches of shallots (tailing), sorting (visual checking), and sizing before approval. These steps allow a high-quality product to be sold for almost a year until the following harvest.

The 'Echalote d'Anjou' is more specifically characterised by the following:

- its longer and thinner shape, which presents customers and consumers with a more appealing external appearance; its red/yellow colouring, which becomes more of a pale yellow when it is presented whole;
- its chemical profile: a high dry-matter content of at least 16 %;
- its organoleptic profile: firm to the touch, with a pinkish flesh and soft consistency, it takes on a distinctive aromatic intensity with a significant sharpness in smell and taste, which distinguishes it from shallots grown in other regions, thereby making it more appealing for cooking;
- its conservability; the fact that it is harvested when fully mature means that it can be stored for several months in proper conditions and that the bulbs remain very firm while minimising weight loss;
- its regular composition; since they are produced from vegetative propagation, all of the bulbs harvested are completely identical genetically, which is not the case for plants obtained by sexual propagation (echalion and shallot seedlings).

Its morphology, texture and colour distinguish it from the same product grown in other regions. The 'Echalote d'Anjou' also benefits from a good reputation which extends well beyond the region and indeed France.

The definition of the geographical area is based on an interaction between natural and human factors which determine the specific characteristics of the 'Echalote d'Anjou' (long shape, high dry-matter content, organoleptic profile, conservability and regularity) and allow it to be distinguished from other shallot products.

The soils are made up of fine, regular particles, enabling easy and deep rooting of the shallots and, ultimately, the harmonious development of a bulb characterised by its regularity and shape.

The abundance of water in the geographical area ensures that the plant receives a regular supply; the slightly higher rainfall in May coincides perfectly with the needs of the 'Echalote d'Anjou' during its bulbing phase.

The mildness of the Anjou climate is well-suited to the 'Echalote d'Anjou' and protects it from physiological burning, which might affect its organoleptic quality.

The specific characteristics of the 'Echalote d'Anjou' also stem from the know-how of producers resulting from long-standing local practices going back to the 19th century, which gradually became regulated and developed from the 1960s.

The selection of varieties and plants on specialised farms has always been the focus of particular attention and technical monitoring. Warm-water treatment before planting allows the bulbs to be protected against parasites in the soil.

After the soil has been painstakingly prepared, the bulbs are planted manually so as to ensure, in particular, that they are planted at the correct depth. This allows for the most harmonious development possible of the 'Echalote d'Anjou'. Manual harvesting draws on the know-how of producers, who are able to assess the appropriate maturity of the plants.

Finally, natural drying in the field allows a high dry-matter content to be obtained and the aromas of the 'Echalote d'Anjou' to be concentrated, thus giving it its characteristic sharpness.

The 'Echalote d'Anjou' enjoys a national reputation which has now extended beyond France. Indeed, almost 40 % of current production of the 'Echalote d'Anjou' is sold in certain northern European countries or exported to the United States, Canada and South-East Asia.

Geared as it is toward sale in large retail outlets, the 'Echalote d'Anjou' reaches a broad specialised clientele that has long held the product in high esteem, in particular for its regularity and keeping qualities. Popular events such as the 'Grande fête de l'Echalote' shallot festival organised in Chemellier by the 'Confrérie des amis de l'Echalote d'Anjou' [Friends of the 'Echalote d'Anjou'] also help to foster and develop the product's reputation with the public at large.

Publication reference of the specification

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

https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/gedei/site/bo-agri/document_administratif-e6b6e010-dc41-48c8-99e1-3080eb6d5cf2

