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# C 287



English edition

## Information and Notices

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<sup>(1)</sup> Text with EEA relevance.

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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.11172 – PLD / NBIM / VEGHEL)****(Text with EEA relevance)**

(2023/C 287/01)

On 8 August 2023, 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 <sup>(1)</sup>. 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 policy’ website of the Commission (<https://competition-cases.ec.europa.eu/search>). 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 32023M11172. EUR-Lex is the online point of access to European Union law.

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1.

## IV

(Notices)

## NOTICES FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES AND AGENCIES

## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Euro exchange rates <sup>(1)</sup>

14 August 2023

(2023/C 287/02)

1 euro =

Currency			Exchange rate		
Currency			Exchange rate		
USD	US dollar	1,0930	CAD	Canadian dollar	1,4700
JPY	Japanese yen	158,68	HKD	Hong Kong dollar	8,5458
DKK	Danish krone	7,4515	NZD	New Zealand dollar	1,8305
GBP	Pound sterling	0,86215	SGD	Singapore dollar	1,4813
SEK	Swedish krona	11,8405	KRW	South Korean won	1 459,40
CHF	Swiss franc	0,9608	ZAR	South African rand	20,7881
ISK	Iceland króna	144,70	CNY	Chinese yuan renminbi	7,9356
NOK	Norwegian krone	11,4340	IDR	Indonesian rupiah	16 732,99
BGN	Bulgarian lev	1,9558	MYR	Malaysian ringgit	5,0464
CZK	Czech koruna	24,038	PHP	Philippine peso	62,132
HUF	Hungarian forint	382,78	RUB	Russian rouble	
PLN	Polish zloty	4,4395	THB	Thai baht	38,474
RON	Romanian leu	4,9418	BRL	Brazilian real	5,3764
TRY	Turkish lira	29,5675	MXN	Mexican peso	18,6209
AUD	Australian dollar	1,6853	INR	Indian rupee	90,8180

<sup>(1)</sup> Source: reference exchange rate published by the ECB.



## V

*(Announcements)*PROCEDURES RELATING TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPETITION  
POLICY

## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

**Prior notification of a concentration****(Case M.11220 – MITSUI & CO / EUROPEAN ENERGY / KASSØ JV)****Candidate case for simplified procedure****(Text with EEA relevance)**

(2023/C 287/03)

1. On 8 August 2023, the Commission received notification of a proposed concentration pursuant to Article 4 of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 <sup>(1)</sup>.

This notification concerns the following undertakings:

- Mitsui & Co., Ltd. ('Mitsui', Japan), publicly listed and not controlled by any of its shareholders,
- EE PV Holding ApS, a wholly-owned subsidiary of European Energy A/S ('European Energy', Denmark) which is in turn controlled by Mr. Knud Erik Andersen,
- Kassø MidCo ApS ('Kassø' or 'JV', Denmark).

Mitsui and European Energy, jointly the 'Parties', will acquire within the meaning of Article 3(1)(b) and 3(4) of the Merger Regulation joint control of the Kassø.

The concentration is accomplished by way of purchase of shares.

2. The business activities of the undertakings concerned are the following:

- Mitsui is a trading, business management and project development company. Mitsui operates worldwide and is active in various sectors, including: (i) iron & steel products; (ii) mineral & metal resources; (iii) infrastructure projects; (iv) mobility; (v) basic chemicals; (vi) performance chemicals; (vii) energy; (viii) food resources; (ix) consumer services; and (x) IT & communication/ corporate development,
- European Energy provides green energy services by developing and operating infrastructure projects comprising of wind farms, solar parks and 'Power-to-X' facilities globally.

3. The business activities of Kassø are the production of electricity from a solar power generation plant and the production of e-methanol from a 'Power-to-X' facility near Kassø:

4. On preliminary examination, the Commission finds that the notified transaction could fall within the scope of the Merger Regulation. However, the final decision on this point is reserved.

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1 (the 'Merger Regulation').

Pursuant to the Commission Notice on a simplified procedure for treatment of certain concentrations under Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 <sup>(2)</sup> it should be noted that this case is a candidate for treatment under the procedure set out in the Notice.

5. 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. The following reference should always be specified:

M.11220 – MITSUI & CO / EUROPEAN ENERGY / KASSØ JV

Observations can be sent to the Commission by email or by post. Please use the contact details below:

Email: COMP-MERGER-REGISTRY@ec.europa.eu

Postal address:

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

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<sup>(2)</sup> OJ C 366, 14.12.2013, p. 5.

**Prior notification of a concentration**  
**(Case M.11132 – CONCENTRIX / WEBHELP)**

(Text with EEA relevance)

(2023/C 287/04)

1. On 8 August 2023, the Commission received notification of a proposed concentration pursuant to Article 4 of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 <sup>(1)</sup>.

This notification concerns the following undertakings:

- Concentrix Corporation ('Concentrix', USA),
- Webhelp S.A.S. ('Webhelp', France).

Concentrix will acquire within the meaning of Article 3(1)(b) of the Merger Regulation sole control of the whole of Webhelp.

The concentration is accomplished by way of purchase of shares.

2. The business activities of the undertakings concerned are the following:

- Concentrix is a customer experience services company active worldwide, which uses technology to provide outsourcing services to enable its clients to manage their end-customer and end-user experience. Concentrix offers IT services, with a focus on business process outsourcing ('BPO') services and in particular customer experience management BPO services ('CXM BPO') and, to a lesser extent, finance and accounting BPO services. Concentrix also offers other complementary services, including IT consulting services, and application implementation and managed services.
- Webhelp is a provider of BPO services active worldwide, which offers a broad service portfolio to provide end-to-end support for clients, including technical assistance for customers, customer loyalty services, customer claims management services, multichannel customer data collections, digital and marketing services and enterprise solutions. Webhelp is currently controlled by Groupe Bruxelles Lambert ('GBL', Belgium), a public investment holding company.

3. On preliminary examination, the Commission finds that the notified transaction could fall within the scope of the Merger Regulation. However, the final decision on this point is reserved.

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. The following reference should always be specified:

M.11132 – CONCENTRIX / WEBHELP

Observations can be sent to the Commission by email or by post. Please use the contact details below:

Email: COMP-MERGER-REGISTRY@ec.europa.eu

Postal address:

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

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1 (the 'Merger Regulation').

## OTHER ACTS

## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

**Publication of an application for registration of a name 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**

(2023/C 287/05)

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

## SINGLE DOCUMENT

**'Maraş Tarhanası'****EU No: PGI-TR-02611 – 1 June 2020****PDO ( ) PGI (X)****1. Name(s) [of PDO or PGI]**

'Maraş Tarhanası'

**2. Member State or Third Country**

Turkey

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

Class 2.3. Bread, pastry, cakes, confectionery, biscuits and other baker's wares

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

'Maraş Tarhanası' is a fermented food that is a dried mixture of cooked wheat, yogurt, thyme and salt, with black sesame, pepper, walnut and almond. Wheat, yogurt, salt and thyme are obligatory, and black sesame, pepper, walnut, almond are optional. After fermentation black sesame, pepper, spice, walnut, almond can be added according to personal preference. It is preferred according to personal taste. Thyme (obligatory) is added in the range of 0,1-0,3 %, black sesame (optional) is added in the range of 5-20 % and pepper, spice, walnut, almond are (optional) added in the range of 20-30 % per 100 kg. It has a flat shape and has thin sheets. It is crispy.

'Maraş Tarhanası' production is seasonal as it is dried under the sun but it can be eaten all year long. 'Maraş Tarhanası' can be eaten on its own or can be consumed in different ways (consumed by making soup, frying in oil, baking, soaking in broth).

The two main ingredients that comprise 'Maraş Tarhanası' are yogurt and cracked wheat.

'Maraş Tarhanası' has the nutritional content derived from naturally occurring metabolic elements found in yogurt and cracked wheat. In the process of making 'Maraş Tarhanası', the yogurt is not cooked; thus natural pro-biotic cultures are preserved. The natural fermentative yeasts derived from yogurt and wheat enrich the aromatic taste of 'Maraş Tarhanası'.

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

It has functional properties with its natural prebiotic additives coming from cracked wheat.

It provides a combination of vegetable and animal proteins, containing approximately 370 calories in every 100 grams of 'Maraş Tarhanası'.

'Maraş Tarhanası' is dried in the sun in paper-thin layers (in ovens if the weather conditions are not suitable).

Physical characteristics:

'Maraş Tarhanası' has a production standard of 1 mm to 3 mm as a stand-alone snack. It is crispy and dried. Those produced only for soup can be produced thicker upon request.

Thickness: 1 mm to 3 mm

Length: There is no absolute length range. Dried tarhana is broken and shortened.

Form: According to its fracture, it is a structure with edges of an undefined shape.

Color: Varies from light cream to dark cream

Organoleptic characteristics:

'Maraş Tarhanası' has a more pronounced sour taste than average due to the fermentation process of the yogurt it contains. Depending on the temperature when it has been produced it can be more or less sour.

'Maraş Tarhanası' has a pleasant scent arising from the mixture of dried fermented yogurt and thyme.

Chemical characteristics:

Composition of 100 grams of 'Maraş Tarhanası':

Parameters	Maximum	Minimum
Protein	16,77 %	13,23 %
Fat	4,99 %	1,7 %
Moisture	9,13 %	6,24 %
Salt	3,00 %	0,00 %
pH	3,7	2,79
Acidity	40,85 %	17,75 %
Lactic Acidity	7 %	0,5 %

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

Ingredients of 'Maraş Tarhanası':

— Cracked Wheat (obligatory)

— Yogurt (obligatory)

Yogurt is added to the cooked wheat on a ratio of at least one-to-two.

— Thyme (obligatory)

— Salt (obligatory)

Salt is added in the range of 0 % - 3 %.

Thyme is added in the range of 0,1 %-0,3 %

Black sesame (optional in the range of 5 % - 20 %.)

Pepper, spice, walnut, almond (optional in the range of 20 % - 30 %.)

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

All steps in the production processes must take place within the defined geographical area specified in point 4.

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*

Labels must include the following:

- The name of the designation 'Maraş Tarhanası',
- Trade name and address or short name and address or registered mark of the producer,
- European Union PGI logo,
- The contents of the product, ratio of components net amount of the product, recommended consumption date, storage and usage information, serial number or batch number, production authorization date
- Drying method

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

The area of production is the whole Kahramanmaraş province.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

*Specificities of the product*

The production of 'Maraş Tarhanası' has conditions specific to the geographical border and requires mastery skills. For this reason, all production stages of 'Maraş Tarhanası', which has a reputation with the province, take place within the specified geographical limit.

The causal link is based on the product characteristics due to the natural factors and human factors of the geographical origin and its reputation.

'Maraş Tarhanası' has particular characteristics due to its origin. Unlike other Tarhanas, 'Maraş Tarhanası' has an exclusive regional way of production as it includes yogurt in its preparation after cooking the cracked wheat and just before the drying process. This way of production gives it a sour taste and a long conservation time. Fermented and pro-biotic identity of the product and being able to be consumed alone are its characteristic features. The most important feature that distinguishes 'Maraş Tarhanası' from other tarhanas is that yogurt is not cooked and it is consumed solely. A symbiotic character is formed with the combination of the prebiotic character from the crack and the probiotic from the yogurt. This fermentation brings out the unique smell and taste of the food, namely its aroma.

'Maraş Tarhanası' is laid on 'çiğ'(mats) and dried in the sun (in ovens if the weather conditions are not suitable).

Although not preferred, when the weather conditions are not suitable it can be dried in ovens on unsunny and very cloudy days. This has been a necessity for sudden weather changes on sunny days, especially considering climate change. Otherwise, the laid product must be discarded. The drying method of the product must be indicated on the package label. This method is a drying technique by passing over a conveyor belt with air circulation and tunnel system. The maximum drying temperature must be maximum 60 degrees celsius. Above 70 degrees celsius, all yogurt bacteria die and the product does not consist of any prebiotic specification. The only difference between tarhana dried in the sun and on a conveyor belt with suitable conditions is its vitamin D content. 'Maraş Tarhanası', which is dried only in the sun, contains D vitamins. Generally, tarhana that does not dry in the sun is not preferred, so the drying method of the product must be stated on the package label.

'Maraş Tarhanası' has a high content in lactobacilli and therefore 'Maraş Tarhanası' have a medium to strong sour taste.

'Maraş Tarhanası' also has a particular shape consisting of thin sheets.

'*Maraş Tarhanası*' is prepared with a different method specific to Kahramanmaraş. Its chemical identity, production and the ways of consumption make it different from other regions' tarhana.

'*Maraş Tarhanası*' is different with its special taste, shape, way of preparation and gathering from all tarhanas in Turkey.

Other tarhanas in Turkey except '*Maraş Tarhanası*' are in powder form and this powdered variety of tarhana is usually made from flour and yogurt and they are only used to make tarhana soup, and can not be eaten solely, but '*Maraş Tarhanası*' can be.

#### *Natural factors*

The ever present breeze in Kahramanmaraş during the months of July and August plays an essential role in the drying process in the production of tarhana, adding an original factor to the product. Appropriate weather conditions are followed for the making of tarhana. Because dry air and rainless is also important to have wind to act as an air conditioner in the process.

The direction and strenght of the winds is an important requirement in the production of authentic '*Maraş Tarhanası*'.

In Turkey, the Kahramanmaraş province receives a higher than average amount of sunshine, which is another important factor in tarhana production.

- A constant breeze during the months of summer to early Autumn
- No rain and dry air helping the wind to act as a natural dryer

#### Monthly Average Humidity (2020):

Kahramanmaraş:	July 46,61 % - August 41,56 % (Kahramanmaras Provincial Directorate of Meteorology)
Turkey:	July 51,7 % - August 47,7 %

- Direction and strength of the winds

#### Monthly Average Wind Speed (2020):

Kahramanmaraş:	July 5,7 (m/sn) - August 6,28 (m/sn)
Turkey:	July 1,8 (m/sn) - August 2,1 (m/sn)

- High amount of sunshine

#### Monthly Average Sunshine Intensity (2020):

Kahramanmaraş:	July 668,3 (cal/cm <sup>2</sup> ) - August 632,7 (cal/cm <sup>2</sup> )
Turkey:	July 535,7 (cal/cm <sup>2</sup> ) - August 483,2 (cal/cm <sup>2</sup> )

- High temperatures

#### Monthly Average Temperature (2020):

Kahramanmaraş:	July 30,25 °C - August 29,25 °C
Turkey:	July 25,6 °C - August 24,8 °C

#### *Human factors*

Throughout Turkey, '*Maraş Tarhanası*' is associated to the province of Kahramanmaraş. It is a food product special to Kahramanmaraş, where it holds an important place as a traditional food.

'*Maraş Tarhanası*', prepared with a different method specific to Kahramanmaraş has become an indispensable food for the people of Kahramanmaraş. In Kahramanmaraş, tarhana has an important place in city life as a different cultural element. '*Maraş Tarhanası*' has not only a historical accumulation but also continues to remain the ethnic-cultural element of the region.

After the first cooking and once the mixture is cooled, the yogurt is added and it is laid for fermentation. During this production step, lactobacilli develops. Then '*Maraş Tarhanası*' is laid on *çiğ* (mats) in order to let dry in the sun. A long experience is necessary to spread the mixture properly on the mats as it needs to be equal in density and thickness. All these experiences have been transferred from generation to generation.

In every region of Turkey, milled wheat and flour are used in local products called 'tarhana'. '*Maraş Tarhanası*' is special in terms of its ingredients, production process and the different ways in which it is eaten. The specific wheat type, the shape of the tarhana (thin sheets) and the natural drying process are all identifying characteristics of authentic '*Maraş Tarhanası*'.

The addition of thyme and black sesame (optional) imparts an aromatic herbal flavour gives further distinguishing from the other tarhanas.

The process of making '*Maraş Tarhanası*' is also product-specific. In the production of tarhana made in other localities, lactobacilli, which are the pro-biotic microorganisms in yogurt, are destroyed during the cooking stage, losing all of its beneficial vitality. In the production of '*Maraş Tarhanası*', yogurt is not added during the cooking stage, but after the cooked cracked wheat is cooled. If used, this is also when thyme and black sesame, pepper, spice, walnut, almond (optional) are added to the mixture, which is then allowed to ferment in cloth-lined baskets for about 10-12 hours before being spread on mats to dry.

It is a typical traditional food which involves a lot of skilled manpower. During the elaboration phase, the mixing process of cracked wheat with boiled water, which is called 'küreklemeye' also requires a lot of expertise as the mixture should not burn. Küreklemeye has its own method. It is done with a tool called tarhana küreği, which is carved from wood between 120-150 cm.

The tarhana küreği should be held and moved in a way that the paddle can rotate freely in hand so that the hand of the person who will do the mixing does not swell. People do the mixing work in order not to let the mixture burn at the bottom of the caldron and the shovel should be wetted from time to time and küreklemeye should be continued. In order to dry the cooked tarhana, mastery and experience are required in the spreading process. Küreklemeye process has been mechanized for modern factory production. In factory production mixer chrome boilers are used but there are some crucial points to maintain a certain quality of the product. This mixture is made under the supervision of a master to avoid watering, sticking to the pan and burn. For reaching its consistency a master oversight is crucial. Because it is not possible to give a standard time for mixing cooking. Depending on the type of yoghurt and cracked wheat used, it is possible for each mixture to reach a consistency in different times. It is not possible to produce only with automatic mixing process.

Once dried, '*Maraş Tarhanası*' is gathered in large and small strips in the shape of chips.

The product acquires a fermented identity, with fermentative yeasts from the cracked wheat and lactobacilli from yogurt carrying out a simultaneous fermentation. It is the most important feature of '*Maraş Tarhanası*' that distinguishes it from other Tarhana species. The making process of '*Maraş Tarhanası*' is exclusive and special to the product.

This whole process gives a sour taste to it. Moreover, the fermentation process helps the product to be preserved longer and it can be eaten all year long. '*Maraş Tarhanası*' can be stored for a year in a dry and cool place. The period for making tarhana is between the beginning of June and the end of October.

#### Reputation

The link between '*Maraş Tarhanası*' and its geographical area is also based on reputation like its specifications, natural factors and human factors of the geographical area.



According to the rumor, during the Dulkadiroğlu Principality, Yavuz Sultan Selim had prepared 'Maraş Tarhanası' by the people of the region for his army, while he was crossing the Sinai desert during the Ridaniye Campaign on his way to Egypt. It is rumored that Yavuz Sultan Selim learned 'Maraş Tarhanası' from his mother, Ayşe Hatun (Gülbahar Sultan) was from Kahramanmaraş and he preferred tarhana hence it is light, it has high nutritional value and keeps you full and it is durable enough not to spoil in heat and cold. This rumor is mentioned in all local and national sources and is known by every Maras citizen. (Simsekli, N., Dogan, I. (2015). Traditional and Maraş Tarhana as a Functional Product. Iğdır University Graduate School of Natural and Applied Sciences Magazine. 5(4): 33-40.).

An American officer Stanley Kerr took a photograph showing the spread of tarhana in 1919 in Kahramanmaraş. 'Maraş Tarhanası' is being spread under the supervision of the trainer in American Orphanage for winter.

By its structure; In Divan-ı Lügat-it Türk, 'tar' means yoghurt stored from summer to winter, and in Persian, the words 'terhuvane' and 'terhime' are used (Dayısoylu, İnanç, Duman, Gezginç & Özsisli, 2003)

You can learn how people make 'Maraş Tarhanası' in Kahramanmaraş by the documentary, 'Maraş Tarhanası Nasıl Üretiliyor?- Ev Yapımı -TRT Avaz', was prepared by the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT) İzmir Television in the summer of 2012 under the coordination of the Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism.

In the book which offers numerous recipes of traditional foods from across the world written by Kristberg Kristbergsson, and Jorge Oliveira, 'Traditional Foods, General and Consumer Aspects', Springer; 1st ed, March 10, 2016, you can find 'Maraş Tarhanası' from Kahramanmaraş in the page 94.

'Maraş Tarhanası' has been the subject of many scientific articles, journals, thesis and symposiums with its value, production process and ethnic and cultural aspects.

In a research article published in Journal of Social and Humanities Sciences, 'Maraş Tarhanası ve Gelişim Süreci', Kaya, M. & Seçim, Y. (2020), mentioned that tarhana is a food product known all over Turkey but 'Maraş Tarhanası' is a food product that is diversified with many methods and contents and becomes unique to the region and consumed by the wide public. With this aspect, 'Maraş Tarhanası' stands out as a local product. Thanks to this feature, the product reached its geographical mark which is very important for the gastronomy world in July 2010.

In Food Bioscience which is a journal that aims to provide a forum for recent developments in the field of bio-related food research, focuses on both fundamental and applied research worldwide, with special attention to ethnic and cultural aspects of food bioresearch, a study is published of monitoring of acid development in fermentation of 'Maraş Tarhanası'. The study is about using different yoghurt cultures and its effects on 'Maraş Tarhanası' (Dağ, Ü. & İnanç, A. L. (2019). Farklı Endüstriyel Yoğurt Kültürleri Kullanarak Maraş Tarhana Hamurunun Fermantasyonunda Asit Gelişiminin İzlenmesi ve Tarhanaya Etkileri . Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam Üniversitesi Mühendislik Bilimleri Dergisi , 22 (1) , 1-9 . DOI: 10.17780/ksujes.436311).

#### Causal link

Thanks to the natural factors of the geographical area that presents a long dry summer with constant winds, and the human factors that have developed a particular tradition and specific skills with specific ingredients (yogurt) and method (the yogurt is added after the cooking of the mixture). 'Maraş Tarhanası' has its specific characteristics due to its origin in the province of Kahramanmaraş.

#### Reference to publication of the specification

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**Publication of an application for approval of a non-minor amendment to a product specification 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**

(2023/C 287/06)

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 <sup>(1)</sup> within three months of the date of this publication.

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF A NON-MINOR AMENDMENT TO A PRODUCT SPECIFICATION FOR A PROTECTED DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN OR PROTECTED GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION

**Application for approval of an amendment in accordance with the first subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012**

**‘Huîtres Marennes Oléron’**

**EU No: PGI-FR-0591-AM02 — 26.4.2022**

**PDO ( ) PGI (X)**

**1. Applicant group and legitimate interest**

Groupement Qualité ‘Huîtres Marennes Oléron’ [Association promoting the quality of ‘Huîtres Marennes Oléron’]  
13, rue Sergent Lecest  
ZAC Les Grossines CS 60 002 – 17320 Marennes  
FRANCE

Tel. +33 0546850669

Fax +33 0546853652

Email: info@huitresmarennesoleron.com

Composition and legitimate interest: the group is an association whose members are operators involved in the actual production or packaging activities provided for in the specification.

It therefore has a legitimate right to request amendments to the product specification.

**2. Member State or Third Country**

France

**3. Heading in the product specification affected by the amendment(s)**

- ☐ Product name
- ☒ Product description
- ☒ Geographical area
- ☒ Proof of origin
- ☒ Production method
- ☒ Link
- ☒ Labelling
- ☒ Other: deletion of the presentation and objectives of the association, addition of the contact details of the competent department in the Member State and of their inspection bodies and national requirements.

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

#### 4. Type of amendment(s)

- ☒ Amendment to the product specification of a registered PDO or PGI not to be regarded as minor in accordance with the third subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.
- ☐ Amendment to the product specification of a registered PDO or PGI for which a single document (or equivalent) has not been published, not to be regarded as minor in accordance with the third subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

#### 5. Amendment(s)

##### 5.1. Amendments that impact critical elements

###### — Section entitled 'Product description'

A marketing period from 1 September to 31 May has been added.

The registered specification does not contain any provision on the placing on the market of oysters covered by the PGI. Further marketing dates have therefore been added.

This amendment is consistent with professional practice: in summer, it is extremely difficult to mature oysters on oyster beds given that the high temperatures of the water in the oyster beds lead to an increased mortality risk. There is also no marketing of 'pousse en claires', which are the special oysters bred on oyster beds, during the summer.

The single document (point 3.2) has been amended accordingly.

###### — Section entitled 'Production method'

Sub-section entitled 'Maturing and breeding oysters on oyster beds'

The maturing conditions have been amended.

A duration-density of 21 days/2 kg/m<sup>2</sup> has been added and the distinction between summer and winter periods in respect of the duration-densities for maturing has been deleted. In the new product specification, the same maturing rules apply regardless of the season. The purpose of this amendment is to enable operators to choose their maturing rules independently of the summer and winter seasons and thus to adapt to changing climatic conditions. It allows them to mature the oysters over shorter periods of time during warm autumns and at lower densities in order to avoid mortality.

A further addition has been made to the effect that when several batches are matured in the same oyster bed on different dates, the compulsory maturing period for each batch depends on the overall density of the oyster bed. The duration is thus calculated from the date on which each batch is placed in the water.

Sensory analyses have been carried out to gauge whether or not reducing the minimum maturing period throughout the seasons has any impact on product quality. The results have shown that there is no impact on the product at the densities set out in the product specification.

A maximum concentration of 45 kg/m<sup>2</sup> in the oyster bed enclosures has also been added.

This provision complements the system because in the time/density ratio, duration refers to the minimum duration and density to average maximum density. In practice, when maturing in oyster beds, the oysters are contained (in bags, racks, etc.). Although the bags or racks are not stacked on top of one another, it has proved important to define the maximum concentration of oysters in bags or on racks to avoid any excessive variations in the size of the containers.

The conditions for greening have been added to, with a distinction drawn between whether this takes place during or after maturing.

None of these amendments call into question the specificity of the product or the causal link established between the maturing method and the 'Huîtres Marennes Oléron'.

As regards breeding in oyster beds, it has been added that harvesting is carried out manually. The purpose of this amendment is to lay down the relevant professional practices.

These amendments do not affect the single document.

— Section entitled 'sizing, storage and finishing'

In view of the deletion of the summer and winter maturing periods, the storage and finishing conditions (duration and density), which were also defined on the basis of these periods, have been supplemented and redefined with separate target values for oysters matured or bred in oyster beds.

These amendments do not affect the single document.

5.2. *Amendments that do not impact critical elements*

— Section entitled 'Product description'

This section has been reorganised to present the characteristics of 'Huîtres Marennes Oléron' and then those of the various trade names of the oysters covered by the PGI. The organoleptic descriptors have been reworded in some instances in line with the vocabulary needed to implement the organoleptic testing. For example, for *fine de claires* - fine fattened oysters: 'sweet' and 'less salty' instead of 'balanced in water, salt and iodine'; for *spéciale de claire* - special fattened oysters: their texture is 'firm' instead of 'intense'.

However, the product characteristics have not been amended.

Some paragraphs have been deleted as they do not provide any further or necessary information to describe the product. The photographic reference system has been deleted in order to simplify the digital version of the specification.

The single document (point 3.2) has been amended accordingly.

— Section entitled 'Evidence that the product originates from the defined geographical area'

Two parts have been added, one relating to declaration requirements and the other to record-keeping. These additions are likely to facilitate inspections and quality control.

Producers are required to submit the following declarations to the association:

- a declaration confirming their identity to authorise producers prior to the start of the relevant activity;
- a prior declaration of assignment of the oyster beds;

This declaration is designed to ensure better monitoring of oyster bed use and to carry out checks on oyster bed production. It covers the implementation of maturing, breeding and storage operations carried out on oyster beds.

— Sales declaration

This declaration is designed to ascertain over time the volumes of PGI sold and the average price per sales category in order to estimate the turnover in PGI. These elements are compiled and presented annually by the group in its annual report and provide a comprehensive overview of the economic position of the PGI sector.

In terms of record-keeping, the contents of the shipping register have been supplemented in order to permit monitoring of the conditions of storage and finishing before dispatch.

A point has been added to the effect that registers and all registration and monitoring documents must be kept on site so that they are accessible to inspection officers.

The general objectives of traceability have been deleted, as have the provisions on health marking which are part of the regulatory requirements.

The bottom-up and top-down traceability tables and the corresponding diagrams have been kept. However, the provisions on points of sale have been deleted as they do not concern traceability, but are rather recommendations or regulatory requirements concerning the placing on the market that have no impact on the intrinsic characteristics of the product.

These amendments do not affect the single document.

- Section entitled 'Production method'
- Sub-section entitled 'Selection prior to placing oysters in oyster beds'

The registered specification provides that only oysters reared on the French coast (Spanish to Belgian borders) are allowed to be placed in oyster beds. There is no change on this point.

The registered specification justifies the origin of oysters based on history and tradition, the draft specification supplements these elements by stating that 'the rearing ponds on the French coast (Spanish to Belgian borders) developed in the 1970s, specifically on the initiative of the oyster producers in the Marennes Oléron basin who organise their production around placing oysters on oyster beds. Some producers then choose to breed or to obtain oysters bred in other ponds with greater and faster growth potential. This supply of market-ready oysters bred on the French coast (Spanish to Belgian borders) has made it possible to develop the sector and to recognise the characteristics of the oysters after they have matured or been bred in oyster beds as 'pousse en claires'.

The definition of the breeding phase (oysters bred on the French Atlantic coast) is based on Article 38(1)(c) of Regulation (EU) No 1379/2013.

The criteria for selecting oysters before they are placed in oyster beds are specified: the phrase 'the oyster is selected at the adult stage in general in its third year' has been replaced by 'the oyster is selected at the market-ready stage with a weight per unit of at least 30 g' This is more of a rewording than an amendment, the weight criterion already being included in the registered specification.

The single document (point 3.4) has been amended accordingly.

The points relating to the quality of the shell and the organoleptic appearance of the oysters before being placed in oyster beds have been deleted, since these points are a matter of good professional practice rather than an obligation.

- Section entitled 'Link'

The current specification elaborates on the link between the product and its geographical origin in multiple sub-sections. These have been grouped together and summarised in the 'Elements justifying the link with the geographical environment' section of the product specification.

These elements have been restructured in three parts to better define the specific characteristics of the geographical area and of the product, and the link between them. An introductory paragraph has also been added to outline the basis for the link with the geographical origin.

The link with the geographical setting rests on the reputation and particular characteristics of 'Huîtres Marennes Oléron' resulting from natural and human factors that coincide in the geographical area. Due to its climatic and soil conditions, the local environment has proved to be conducive to the development of oysters in this region. Human activity, through spatial planning, has made it possible to develop specific oyster farming whose production is based on the use of oyster beds and thus stands out from an organoleptic point of view.

By comparison with the open sea, oyster beds are a very specific environment due to their geochemical characteristics: a highly mineral environment rich in nutrients with low water levels, low turbidity and cyclical water renewal. Oysters are filter-feeding animals with a high retention capacity that benefit effectively from this nutrient resource specific to oyster beds.

The single document (point 5) has also been amended to align it with the wording of this section of the product specification. It has been rewritten to specifically highlight the aspect of 'reputation', also included in the specification registered in 2009 (Commission Regulation (EC) No 98/2009 of 2 February 2009).

- Section entitled 'Labelling'

The obligation to market oysters with the specific logo of 'Huîtres Marennes Oléron' has been deleted as have the corresponding typographical elements.

The single document (point 3.6) has been amended accordingly.

### 5.3. Amendments to wording

In the 'Competent authority in the Member State' section, the contact details for the national quality and origin institute (*l'Institut national de la qualité et de l'origine - INAO*) have been added as the competent Member State authority in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

In the 'Applicant group' section, the description relating to the applicant group has been deleted as well as the text relating to the contracts concerned and the scope of the PGI.

The map of the geographical area has been deleted from the 'Geographical area' section. A line has been added indicating that the maps showing the geographical area can be viewed on the website of the national quality and origin institute.

The explanatory section and the description of the area (general information about the geography and definition of the oyster bed) have been deleted. The information on the link with the product has, however, been retained and are included in the section on the link with the place of origin.

The presentation has been revised to list the relevant municipalities of the Charente-Maritime department in accordance with the 2021 Official Geographic Code. Your attention is drawn to the merger of the municipalities of Hiers-Brouage and Marennes, which brings the number of municipalities to 26 instead of 27.

The single document (point 4) has been updated accordingly.

— Section entitled 'Production method'

— Sub-section entitled 'Maturing and breeding of oysters in oyster beds'

The points relating to the identification of the oyster beds have been moved to the section concerning the declaration obligation (prior declaration of assignment of the oyster beds) and record-keeping (shellfish product tracking register).

The conditions for the maintenance of the oyster beds have been reworded to emphasise their mandatory nature and to allow them to be checked.

The descriptive elements of the uses have been moved to the Link section and the general points deleted.

— Sub-section entitled 'Selection of oysters after maturing and breeding'

The changes made are editorial and thus make it possible to delete phrases which are unnecessary because they concern health regulations or allude to professional practices which are not subject to checks.

— Sub-section entitled 'sizing, storage and finishing'

Repetitions relating to staff training have been deleted.

— Sub-section entitled 'Packaging'

The purely descriptive parts have been deleted, as have the points relating specifically to health regulations.

The justification for packaging on site has been reworded to enlarge on the know-how aspect.

— Sub-section entitled 'Presentation for sales to consumers'

This part has been deleted, firstly because it was purely descriptive and secondly because it included regulatory requirements.

The name and contact details of the certifying body have been deleted from the section entitled 'Control body' in accordance with the applicable instructions at national level in order to harmonise the wording of the product specifications. This section now provides the contact details of the authorities responsible for inspections at national level, i.e.: the National Institute of Origin and Quality (INAO) and the Directorate-General for Competition, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Prevention (DGCCRF). The name and contact details of the certification body can be found on the INAO website and in the European Commission's database.

In the light of changes to national legislation and rules, the section entitled 'National requirements' is presented in the form of a table indicating the main items to be checked and the evaluation methods to be used.

With the exception of the updating to the section entitled 'Geographical area', the single document: (point 4) is not affected by the above-mentioned editorial amendments.

#### SINGLE DOCUMENT

#### 'Huîtres Marennes Oléron'

EU No: PGI-FR-0591-AM02 — 26.4.2022

#### PDO ( ) PGI (X)

#### 1. Name(s) [of PDO or PGI]

'Huîtres Marennes Oléron'

#### 2. Member State or Third Country

France

#### 3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff

##### 3.1. Type of product

Class 1.7 Fresh fish, molluscs and crustaceans and products derived therefrom

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

'Huîtres Marennes Oléron' are oysters which are matured or bred in oyster beds, which distinguishes them from open sea oysters.

'Huîtres Marennes Oléron' are characterised by the quality of their shell (mother-of-pearl and hardness) and their presentation (low incidence of epibionts).

'Huîtres Marennes Oléron' are marketed from 1 September to 31 May.

'Huîtres Marennes Oléron' are marketed live and unprocessed.

'Huîtres Marennes Oléron' are marketed with the following additional indications concerning the production methods:

— 'Fines de Claires' [Fine fattened oysters] and 'Fines de Claires Vertes' [Green fine fattened oysters]

As they mature, their flavour becomes more 'refined' and sweeter and less salty. Their filling power index (FPI) is between 7 and 10.5.

Green fine fattened oysters possess the same characteristics as the fine fattened oysters and a green hue around the gills, as result of their maturing and becoming green naturally in a 'green' oyster bed.

— 'Spéciales de Claires' [Special fattened oysters] and 'Spéciales de Claires Vertes' [Green special fattened oysters]

Oysters are selected for their roundness, thickness and flesh. They possess a sizeable amount of flesh (filling power index (FPI)  $\geq 10.5$ ). As they mature on the oyster beds, they acquire a more firm texture than the fine fattened oysters. Their taste is distinguished by their volume in the mouth and they are markedly sweeter.

Green fine fattened oysters possess the same characteristics as the special fattened oysters and are distinguished by a green hue around the gills, as result of their maturing and becoming green naturally in a 'green' oyster bed.

— 'Pousse en Claire' [Special oysters grown in an oyster bed]

These oysters are bred in oyster beds for at least four months at very low density; during this period, they grow by forming characteristic lace patterns on their shells known as 'growth lines' [lignes de pousse]. They have a high flesh index (filling power index (FPI)  $\geq 12$ ), are firm and crunchy, and brilliant ivory in colour. They acquire a pronounced, long-lasting taste in the mouth.

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

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

Maturing of 'Huîtres Marennes Oléron' or the breeding of oysters grown in an oyster bed ['Pousse en Claire'] must take place in oyster beds located in the geographical area.

In line with customary practice, only open sea oysters bred on the French coast (from the Belgian to the Spanish border) are authorised for placing in oyster beds.

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

The packaging of 'Huîtres Marennes Oléron' in the geographical area makes it possible to preserve their quality and to ensure health control thanks to the speed of execution and to guarantee the product's origin.

Packing is carried out quickly after the water is discharged (after finishing) in order to better preserve the oysters' freshness: The packing date must correspond to the date on which the water is discharged.

This is carried out by workers who have been specifically trained in sorting and packing oysters in order to protect themselves against the risk of placing a final product on the market that is non-compliant.

The oysters must be packed flat, with the cupped valve facing downwards, to ensure the most favourable storage conditions possible. The packages are secured tightly and the baskets are adapted to the quantity of oysters packed, in order to prevent the oysters from moving.

Carrying out these operations in the geographical area, with a control system in place to check that the operations have been carried out as they should, limits the risk of a break in traceability and thus the risk of fraud.

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

In addition to the mandatory information required by the rules on the labelling and presentation of foodstuffs, labels must include:

- the product's registered name: 'Huîtres Marennes Oléron'
- the European Union's PGI symbol in the same visual field
- the specification: - 'matured in oyster beds' (for fine/special fattened oysters)
- The additional specification of the product:
  - 'Huîtres Fines de Claires' [fine fattened oysters];
  - 'Huîtres Fines de Claires Vertes' [green fine fattened oysters];
  - 'Huîtres Spéciales de Claires' [special fattened oysters];
  - 'Huîtres Spéciales de Claires Vertes' [green special fattened oysters];
  - 'Huîtres Pousse en Claire' [special oysters grown in an oyster bed]
- The address of the consumer service.



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

The geographical area for maturing in oyster beds, the breeding of special oysters grown in oyster beds and the packaging of the PGI 'Huîtres Marennes Oléron' covers the following municipalities in the department of Charente-Maritime based on the 2021 Official Geographic Code (COG):

Charente-Maritime (17): Arvert, Beaugeay, Bourcefranc-le-Chapus, (La) Brée-les-Bains, Breuillet, Chaillevette, (Le) Château-d'Oléron, Dolus-d'Oléron, (L') Éguille, Étaule, (Le) Grand-Village-Plage, (Le) Gua, Marennes-Hiers-Brouage, Moëze, Mornac-sur-Seudre, Nieulle-sur-Seudre, Port-des-Barques, Saint-Denis-d'Oléron, Saint-Froult, Saint-Georges-d'Oléron, Saint-Just-Luzac, Saint-Nazaire-sur-Charente, Saint-Pierre-d'Oléron, Saint-Trojan-les-Bains, Soubise and (La) Tremblade.

#### 5. Link with the geographical area

The link with the geographical area rests on the reputation and particular characteristics of 'Huîtres Marennes Oléron' resulting from natural and human factors that coincide in the geographical area. Due to its climatic and soil conditions, the local environment has proved to be conducive to the development of oysters in this region. Human activity, through spatial planning, has made it possible to develop specific oyster farming whose production is based on the use of oyster beds and thus stands out from an organoleptic point of view.

##### 5.1. Specificity of the geographical area

On the Atlantic coast of the department of Charente-Maritime, the île d'Oléron, a spit measuring around 30 kilometres from north to south by 10 kilometres east to west, harbours the Marennes Oléron basin of oceanic depressions, wave motion and winds.

The Marennes Oléron basin is supplied with fresh water from the Seudre to the south and the Charente to the north. This zone, covering 400 square kilometres corresponds to part of the former Gulf of Santonia. The area, subject to the silt deposits from the Charente and Seudre, was covered by the ocean before the embankment works began. The salt marshes here cover a total area of approximately 3 000 hectares.

The silt deposits consist of impermeable soil that has been in place since the Quaternary era. This sediment layer measures several tens of metres in thickness in some places in the geographical area.

In the Marennes Oléron basin, the setting of the first oyster beds on the left bank of the Seudre is attributed to Charles of Oléron in the 16th century.

The 'Huîtres Marennes Oléron' are already distinguished by their maturing in oyster beds. It is estimated that in 1738 there were 7 000 oyster beds on the left bank of the Seudre, and the term 'claire' [oyster bed] appears for the first time in the 'Dictionnaire Raisonné des Sciences, des Arts et des Métiers' in 1753.

There is a distinct similarity between the oyster beds of the 18th century and the traditional beds currently in use. The concerns are the same: maintenance of slopes, monitoring of the supply of water for the beds, fear of heat and frost. In the 19th century, the production methods and the maturing of the oysters in beds in the Marennes region were described in great detail, in particular, by Coste in his work 'Voyage d'exploration sur le littoral de la France et de l'Italie' [Voyage of exploration along the coastlines of France and Italy] in 1861.

In the 20th century, a number of epizootic crises severely affected oyster production in the Marennes Oléron basin. Flat oysters (*Ostrea edulis*) and the Portuguese cupped oyster (*Crassostrea angulata*) were decimated. This was followed by a period of decline in maturing and breeding in oyster beds. From the 1990s onwards, the oyster farmers redesigned and restructured the oyster beds and adopted the Japanese cupped oyster (*Crassostrea gigas*), which is now the most widespread type of oyster farmed in the area.

Oyster beds are positioned below the highest water spring tides and are supplied and drained by gravity. Each bed possesses its own hydraulic structure allowing different ways of managing the water supply and drainage.

Since the establishment of the first oyster beds right down to the present day, producers have gained experience that is passed on from generation to generation on how to maintain and look after the oyster beds. In order to remain in good condition and to maintain their efficiency, the oyster beds require regular maintenance.

Constant monitoring of the oyster beds enables the development of macroalgae to be kept to a minimum, as if they were to proliferate, this would reduce the productivity of the oyster beds and 'thin down' the oysters.

The flooring, draining and re-flooding of the oyster beds are part of the maintenance work needed to develop the micro algae upon which the oysters feed, allowing them to mature or breed on the oyster beds.

## 5.2. *Specificity of the product*

Huîtres Marennes Oléron are oysters which are matured or bred on oyster beds, and this distinguishes them from open sea oysters and confers on them a sweeter and less salty flavour, a quality shell (low presence of epibionts on the outside and a thicker layer of mother-of-pearl on the inside), a green hue around the gills (for the fine fattened green oysters or the special fattened green oysters), and a firmer texture (for the special fattened oysters). In addition to the characteristics of maturing on oyster beds, breeding on oyster beds enables the oysters to grow significantly (flesh and shell), to acquire a firm and crunchy texture, a brilliant ivory colour and a pronounced 'oyster bed taste'.

## 5.3. *Causal link between the geographical area and the reputation or other characteristics of the product*

The climatic conditions of the geographical area are very favourable to the oyster farming practised on the foreshore and salt marshes (oyster beds for maturing and breeding). It is the main activity of this basin covering the banks of the Sèvre to the south, from the île d'Oléron to the west and the Brouage marshes in the centre to Port-des-Barques and île-Madam to the north.

The present oyster beds possess the same geomorphological and water-based characteristics that have prevailed over the centuries. They are situated between the land and the sea and feature aspects of both these environments. They are supplied with water and drained by gravity, depending on the variations in river flows and tidal levels.

By comparison with the open sea, oyster beds are a very specific environment due to their geochemical characteristics: a highly mineral environment rich in nutrients with low water levels, low turbidity and cyclical water renewal. Oysters are filter-feeding animals with a high retention capacity that benefit effectively from this nutrient resource specific to oyster beds.

Only oyster beds in good working order, regularly maintained, cleaned and dried out each year, retain their characteristics and ensure that placing oysters in the beds transforms and improves the quality of the product.

The clay and mineral nature of the oyster beds contributes to obtaining an important nutrient substrate for the development of the food the oysters feed upon, phytoplankton. This specific nourishment gives the oysters their 'oyster bed taste'. In addition, the salty flavour is generally less intense as the salinity of oyster bed oysters is usually lower than that of open sea oysters.

The internal floors and sides of the oyster beds may naturally be covered with a benthic phytoplanktonic species: the diatom *Haslea ostrearia*, commonly known as blue navicula. Discovered in oyster beds of the Marennes Oléron basin, this diatom produces the natural blue pigment 'marennine'. By filtering the water in the beds, the oysters' gills become pigmented. The blue pigment of the marennine combined with the pale yellow colour of the gills turns the gills green.

During breeding in the oyster beds, the oyster shells undergo a growth spurt, which provides a visual clue that they have been cultivated in oyster beds. Moreover, the extremely rich environment of oyster beds in respect of breeding densities increases the oysters' flesh content. The 'pousse en claire' [special oysters grown in an oyster bed] is a very fleshy oyster with a particularly firm and crunchy flesh.

The reputation of oysters from the Marennes Oléron Basin is long-standing. In 1698, the intendant of the Navy in Rochefort drafted a notice on the Generality of La Rochelle and presented Marennes: 'It is a large town between the river of Sèvre and the port of Brouage; its land is not fertile and does not produce good wines. A lot of salt is made there and it is of very good quality. The green oysters of Marennes are highly regarded.'

Two extracts from the 'Journal de Marennes' (10 June and 16 September 1866) highlight the ever-increasing share of oysters matured in oyster beds in the regional economy. At the beginning of the 20th century, the Marennes Oléron basin accounted for one third of national oyster production.

'Huîtres Marennes Oléron' have a renowned national reputation (IFREMER 1997 survey): 74 % of consumers are familiar with the origin of these oysters, and 51 % prefer them to oysters from other regions. 'Huîtres Marennes Oléron' are very often referred to in major cities, where they seem to enjoy a good reputation. In these major cities, oysters have more of a connotation as a product for a special occasion. Under these circumstances, consumers are willing to pay a high price. By contrast, those questioned close to the Marennes Oléron basin consider oysters as an everyday product that they consume often.

Each year, oyster farmers present their 'Huîtres Marennes Oléron' at the competition for regional products in Nouvelle Aquitaine and at the Concours Générale Agricole [Paris General Agricultural Competition] in Paris and are awarded medals.

In 2022, the following were awarded:

- at the Concours Générale Agricole de Paris, two gold medals for fine and special fattened oysters, one bronze medal for fine green fattened oysters);
- at the Saveurs Nouvelle Aquitaine competition, three gold medals for fine and fine green fattened oysters and oysters grown on an oyster bed, three silver medals for (fine green fattened oysters, fine and special fattened oysters), and one bronze medal for fine fattened oysters.

**Reference to publication of the specification**

<https://extranet.inao.gouv.fr/fichier/CDC-IGPHMO-2203.pdf>

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**Publication of an application for registration of a name 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**

(2023/C 287/07)

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

SINGLE DOCUMENT

**‘Ezine Peyniri’**

**EU No: PDO-TR-02889 – 5.1.2023**

**PDO (X) PGI ( )**

**1. Name(s)**

‘Ezine Peyniri’

**2. Member State or Third Country**

Türkiye

**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**

‘Ezine Peyniri’ is a creamy white cheese manufactured with a mixture of sheep, goat and cow’s milk and matured in brine for at least 8 months. Depending on the season, 35-45 % sheep’s milk is mixed with minimum 40 % goat’s milk and maximum 25 % cow’s milk. ‘Ezine Peyniri’ exhibits the following characteristics:

**Sensory Properties**

— Colour: White - light yellow

— Texture: Semi-hard or firm with small holes and without skin

— Taste and Aroma: ‘Buttery’ and ‘cooked milk’ aroma and ‘mild-sweet’ ‘salty’ and ‘sour’ taste

**Chemical Properties**

	Minimum
Fat in dry matter (%)	49
Dry matter (%)	43
Salt content in dry matter (%)	6
Acidity (% Lactic acid)	0,70
pH	4,72

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

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

The milk used in production of 'Ezine Peyniri' is supplied from sheep of 'Tahirova', 'Sakız', 'Dağlıç' and 'Sakız+Dağlıç' breeds, cows of 'Holstein' breed and goats of 'Karakeçi' raised in the area. Particularly the milks collected during the season starting from March and until July are used in production of 'Ezine Peyniri'. Dairy cows, sheep and goats producing the raw material for 'Ezine Peyniri' are fed only with the fodder supplied from the geographical area. During spring and summer months, the animals are fed on pastures, and exceptionally indoors. During winter months, they are fed with hay harvested from the pastures found in the geographical area. The fodder fed to these animals does not contain concentrated animal feed. The minimum average grazing season per year is eight months. Quality of the milk is a result of the free-range grazing method for dairy farming and also, the abundance and quality of fodder found in the area. The flora is composed of hundreds of aromatic plants, most particularly sweet marjoram (*Origanum majorana* L.), wild marjoram (*Origanum vulgare*), common sage (*Salvia officinalis* L.), horse mint (*Mentha longifolia* L.), lemon balm (*Melisa officinalis* L.) and common thyme (*Thymus vulgaris* L.).

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

All the steps, from pasturage and milk production to maturing of cheese must be carried out in the identified geographical area referred to in Section 4.

### 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*

'Ezine Peyniri' logo must be used on the product's packaging. Labelling can be applied directly on the packaging or on tags attached to the packaging. All producers can use labels given that they give notice the producer group of their production.



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

In Çanakkale Province, Ezine, Bayramiç and Ayvacık districts; Şerbetli, Etili, Alatliburun, Küçükklü, Alibeyköy and Söğütalan villages of Çan district and Karacaören, Kurşunlu, Şerbetli and Kirazlı villages of Merkez district.

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

### *Specificity of the geographical area*

The area reflects the transitional features between Mediterranean and Black Sea climates. Besides, it has lower average temperatures in winter. Minimum temperature is in February, at -4,2 °C and maximum temperature is in August, at +35,8. Annual average temperature is 14,7 and the average humidity is 72,6 %. Another feature distinguishing the area from other environments is the strong winds during most of the year.

Annual dominant wind direction in the area is north. The most common winds are northeaster, north, southwester and south. Annual average precipitation is between 662,8 m<sup>3</sup> and 854,9 m<sup>3</sup>. Rainfall during summer is low. The months with the highest precipitation are December, January and February. The number of days with snow cover is around 8 days at most.

These climatic conditions allow the floral diversity for natural grazing and the limited days of snow cover enable yearly long-term grazing of the dairy animals on pastures. Three districts placed in the geographical area are located between the Kaz Mountains and the Aegean Sea. Sheep and goat breeding is prevalent in the area. Plants of a high diversity grow, particularly in spring, on the non-arable lands on the Kaz Mountains' piedmont. Kaz Mountains provide the area with high precipitation and rich flora and with an abundance of oxygen. Since the hundreds of area-specific aromatic plants consumed by the animals have a direct effect on the milk's taste and aroma, its features give a unique taste and aroma profile to the cheese. Particularly the milks collected during the season starting from March and until July are used in production of 'Ezine Peyniri'. Kaz Mountains' climate, geographically transitional between Mediterranean and Black Sea climates is semi-humid with high precipitation. These humid conditions and faulty topography have caused a robust forest cover and rich flora on the Kaz Mountains. The flora is composed of hundreds of aromatic plants, most particularly sweet marjoram, wild marjoram, common sage, horse mint, lemon balm and common thyme. The flora is composed of hundreds of aromatic plants, most particularly sweet marjoram (*Origanum majorana* L.), wild marjoram (*Origanum vulgare*), common sage (*Salvia officinalis* L.), horse mint (*Mentha longifolia* L.), lemon balm (*Melisa officinalis* L.) and common thyme (*Thymus vulgaris* L.). The cheese produced from milk collected from animals feeding on these plants has "buttery" and "sweet" aroma.

Sea salt is exclusively used in production of "Ezine Peyniri". Use of easily dissolvable sea salt prevents melting and breaking of the cheese and allows the cheese to easily exude its water content during the maturation process.

#### *Specificity of the product*

"Ezine Peyniri" is of white - light yellow colour and has a medium-rigid and non-fragile texture. It contains small holes throughout the cheese. "Ezine Peyniri" has a "creamy" aroma (caused by the milk fat in the milk's composition) of "cooked milk" (contributed by the heat treatment). Taste and aroma properties of the sheep, goat and cow milks used in production are imparted to the product and affect the taste and aroma of the cheese. "Ezine Peyniri" is matured for at least 8 months in brine. This process gives the cheese its typical colour, texture and taste. The enzymatic, chemical and microbial reactions during maturation of protein, fat and lactose in the milk's composition causes characteristic sour' and 'sweet' tastes in the cheese; small holes are found and the cheese stays rindless.

#### *Causal link between the geographical area and the product's quality, its reputation or other characteristics*

- Traditional livestock breeding practices are applied in an area with a transitional climate between Mediterranean and Black Sea climates, with semi-humid, high-precipitation and and windy climatic features; the area's Kaz Mountains that are free of adverse environmental conditions imposed by industrialisation provide the area with high rainfall and rich flora, as well as abundant oxygen.
- The designated area has natural pastures rich in local aromatic plant populations that are used in every season by the livestock breeders for sheep and goat grazing, optimally based on their experience of the area's geological features; the area's climatic properties and specific flora that contributes to production of milks with a particular quality and hence gives 'Ezine Peyniri' unique qualities and a pleasant organoleptic character.
- Specific methods used during production:
  - Use of three types of milk (goat, sheep and cow milk) at production;
  - Use of animal-sourced abomasum rennet;
  - Maturation in brine;
  - Use of only sea salt;
  - Not using starter culture;
  - A maturation period of at least 8 months.

#### **Reference to publication of the specification**

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