

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

(2010/C 192/07)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 ⁽¹⁾. Statements of objection must reach the Commission within six months of the date of this publication.

SUMMARY

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

‘MOSTVIERTLER BIRNMOST’

EC No: AT-PGI-0005-0325-14.11.2003

PDO () PGI (X)

This summary sets out the main elements of the product specification for information purposes.

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Composition: Producers/processors (X) Other (X)

3. Type of product:

Class 1.8. Other products of Annex I to the Treaty (spices etc.)

4. Specification:

(summary of requirements under Article 4(2) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

4.1. Name:

‘Mostviertler Birnmost’

4.2. Description:

‘Mostviertler Birnmost’ is produced by cask fermentation of the juice obtained from pressing perry pears. It is fully fermented, clear, without any turbidity and — depending on the variety of perry pear used — reddish-yellow, gold-yellow, light-yellow or greenish-yellow in colour. Under the Austrian Wine Law, as a quality fruit wine its alcohol content must be at least 5 % vol., its titratable acidity (expressed as tartaric acid) at least 5 g/l, and its sulphur content no more than 40 mg/l free SO₂ and 150 mg/l total sulphur. Residual sugar must not be more than 5 g/l unless the perry has been bottled

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12.

cold-sterile in a closed process, i.e. not pasteurised, in which case even higher residual sugar values are possible. The volatile acid (acetic acid) content must not exceed 0,8 g/l. Compliance with these criteria must be checked by laboratory analysis.

In addition, in the test for award of the Lower Austrian 'Mostgütesiegel' (perry/cider quality seal) the perry must gain at least 17 out of a possible 20 points in order to qualify to be designated and marketable as 'Mostviertler Birnmost' ('ordinary' perry and mixed apple and pear musts, on the other hand, require only 14 points). In this blind, sensory test carried out by trained tasters selected and appointed by the Lower Austria Chamber of Agriculture, appearance (1-3 points), aroma (1-5 points), taste (1-7 points) and harmony (1-5 points) of the product are judged. If it satisfies these criteria, a perry or cider is entitled to bear the Lower Austrian 'Mostgütesiegel' (perry/cider quality seal).

Characteristic of 'Mostviertler Birnmost' is the fruity, pure taste of perry pears. The addition of concentrated fruit juice or cider apples is not allowed. The basis for production comprises perry pears, i.e. pear varieties whose astringent phenol content makes them unsuitable to eat, unlike dessert pears.

4.3. *Geographical area:*

The name 'Mostviertel' (lit. 'fruit-must quarter') is not an official or cartographic designation, but a traditional geographical term for the south-eastern part of the province of Lower Austria, namely, the area above the Wienerwald in which economically and traditionally great importance is attached to perry. The area, which is excellently suited to perry pear trees, is generally regarded as extending from the Danube to the Alps and from the Enns up to and including the Wienerwald. This roughly corresponds to the districts Amstetten, Scheibbs and Lilienfeld, the area covered by Waidhofen an der Ybbs, and the parts of the districts Melk and St Pölten-Land located to the south of the Danube.

All raw materials originate, and all stages of production are performed, within the above geographical area; only bottling may be done outside the area.

4.4. *Proof of origin:*

The labels show the producers' names and addresses and the batch numbers, so a bottle of perry can be traced right back to the cask. The batches have to be entered in the cellar books, which are regularly checked by cellar inspectors. The batch numbers may be individually designed or systematised by each producer. In the event of an inspection or a complaint, however, the producer must be able to show clearly and unequivocally which quantity was bottled from which batch. This is done by means of entries in the cellar book. In the case of bottling outside the production region, the same procedure has to be followed. The bottlers are identified on the labels.

Approximately 2 kg of fruit are required for one litre of perry. As producers generally only use the fruit from their own trees, it is easy to relate the volume of perry to the yield of a farm's trees by means of a plausibility test. If perry pears are bought in, traceability must be ensured by means of delivery notes.

4.5. *Method of production:*

Only pears of the 59 varieties typically used for 'Mostviertel' may be used to produce 'Mostviertler Birnmost'. They are produced in the designated region in an environmentally friendly and traditionally extensive manner. Plantation growing is permitted.

The perry pears are harvested fresh, i.e. gathered as fallen fruit or plucked straight from the tree by hand or by means of fruit-gathering machines, washed and then crushed. The resulting mash is pressed to obtain juice. The juice has any slime removed from it, if necessary, and is put into wooden, plastic or stainless steel casks for targeted, pure fermentation by adding pure-bred yeast. The fermentation period comprises a maximum of 3-6 weeks in order to prevent the occurrence of defects detrimental to taste. After fermentation the perry is drawn off as quickly as possible from the sediment (dead yeast and small fruit particles). The 'Mostviertler Birnmost' is then treated by means of sulphurisation, clarification with gelatins or bentonites, the addition of malic, lactic or citric acid, and sweetening and filtration, so that the resulting product is stable and complies with the Austrian Wine Law.

4.6. *Link:*

The link between the perry and the geographical region is based on its special quality and the product's reputation.

Regarding quality

In the 'Mostviertel' region, both climatic and soil conditions are ideal for growing perry pears. The climate is damp enough and not too warm, and the soils have the ideal depth and fertility. The region ranks as the largest, self-contained area of fruit trees in Europe and has several hundred thousand fruit trees in it.

The area corresponds to the Lower Austrian part of the molasse and flysch zone (red and black shales). The soils are predominantly brown earth and brown loam. They are accordingly characterised by their depth, and the climate by high precipitation (approximately 800-1 500 mm/year) and high humidity.

As a result of these special conditions, the perry pears can build up sufficient acid and tannin, two substances crucial to the perry's taste and stability.

In addition, 'Mostviertler Birnmost' is produced from perry pear varieties traditionally grown in the 'Mostviertel'. These pears and the perry producers' expertise based on many years of experience give 'Mostviertler Birnmost' its characteristic, fruity taste and full aroma, coupled with the typical sourness and astringency. Because it is forbidden to add fruit juice concentrates or to use perry apples, 'Mostviertler Birnmost' also differs in taste compared to perry/cider from other regions.

Regarding appearance

The first reference to perry in the region was made by the Minnesinger Neidhart von Reuenthal as long ago as around 1240. As numerous other documents show, perry production in the 'Mostviertel' continued to gain importance in later centuries too. Most of the perry pear trees now have very high yields and are about 100-150 years old. The use of old pear trees will preserve them and their descendants for the future as an expression of a very environment-friendly, extensive and traditionally-rooted form of agriculture on small family farms. Only through this economic use can the pear tree continue to be preserved in future as the landscape feature typifying the 'symbol of the Mostviertel', benefiting it indirectly as a tourist attraction (e.g. intensive advertising of the late-April blossom period — 'The "Viertel" in bloom').

The strong link between the perry and the region is illustrated by numerous activities and attractions which centre on perry production (e.g. perry baptisms, perry taverns, perry route) and references to this can be found on numerous websites (<http://www.mostheurige.com>, <http://www.moststraße.at>, <http://www.mostbirnhaus.at>). In 2005 the 'Mostviertel' was included as one of the 'Genussregionen Österreichs' (Austrian regions of culinary delights) thanks to perry, the defining product typical of the region, and the fact that it is firmly embedded in the regional gastronomy (see <http://www.genuss-region.at>). Thanks to the pleasure 'Mostviertel' producers take in innovating and their awareness of quality, perry has also established itself as the perfect accompaniment to fine dining and is even offered in such renowned Viennese temples of enjoyment as 'Meinl am Graben'.

4.7. *Inspection body:*

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4.8. *Labelling:*

The designation 'protected geographical indication' or PGI is added after the words 'Mostviertler Birnmost' and is therefore always shown on the label.

Once proof of the requisite quality of the perry has been provided (see paragraph 4.2), the labels are handed out to the individual producers in the Obstbauverband Mostviertel (Mostviertel Fruit Growers' Cooperative) and their use is administered.
