C/2026/4740

8.9.2026

Publication of the communication of an approved standard amendment to a product specification of a geographical indication in accordance with Article 5(4) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/27 [1]

(C/2026/4740)

COMMUNICATION OF APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT

(Article 24 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143)

'Neretvanska mandarina'

EU reference number: PDO-HR-1225-AM01 – 19.6.2026

1. **Name of product**

'Neretvanska mandarina'

2. **Geographical indication type**

☑ PDO

☐ PGI

3. **Sector**

☑ Agricultural products

☐ Wines

☐ Spirit drinks

4. **Country to which the geographical area belongs**

Croatia

5. **Member State authority communicating the standard amendment**

Name(s)

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

6. **Qualification as standard amendment**

The amendment to the product specification does not include a change to the name of the protected geographical indication or to the use of that name. There is no risk of voiding the link to the defined geographical area of production, nor does the amendment entail any additional restrictions on the marketing of the product.

7. **Description of the approved standard amendment(s)**

Title

Standard amendment of point 2. Product specifications

Description

Amendment of point 2: The description of the product refers to the total acid content of the fruit and the size of the fruit.

[1] Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/27 of 30 October 2024 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council with rules concerning the registration and the protection of geographical indications, traditional specialities guaranteed and optional quality terms and repealing Delegated Regulation (EU) No 664/2014 (OJ L, 2025/27, 15.1.2025, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2025/27/oj).

Part of the text defining the quality parameters:

— the total acid content of the fruit must fall within the range 0,7–1,3 %;

— the size of the fruit of the Neretvanska mandarina is within the range calibre 1-XX to calibre 4.

has been replaced by:

— the total acid content of the fruit must fall within the range 0,8–1,5 %;

— the size of the fruit of the Neretvanska mandarina is within the range calibre 1-X to calibre 3.

Justification: The reason for the increase in the total acid content value is primarily climate change, which producers have witnessed over the last decade. The main changes are longer and more frequent periods with high temperatures (above 32 °C) which result in mandarins at technological maturity having a higher percentage of total acid content. The size of the fruit is also directly linked to climate change. Ever-increasing periods of drought result in an increasing percentage of finer fruits that generally do not meet the required sugar-acid ratio for the fruit. On the other hand, fruit that is too big, with a calibre of 1-xx and more, have a lower proportion of fruit juice than the values defined in the specification.

☑ The amendment affects the single document.

Title

Standard amendment of point 4. of the product specification (sub-point 4.2. Traceability control in the production process)

Description

The amendment in point 4.2 concerns the method of maintaining the register of agricultural producers whereby an Excel table is introduced as a register instead of the computer application. The term 'computerised register' has been changed accordingly to 'register'.

The previous wording:

Traceability checks in the production process are carried out by means of a single computerised register of production parcels (orchards). Within the register, each production parcel of each individual producer is recorded under a specific identification number ('ID number') and is visibly marked on the orthophoto map of the Neretva Valley. The ID number of the producer is the starting point for the traceability check (Annex 4.3. Self-control system and Annex 4.4 Traceability form – example).

The obligation of each agricultural producer under the protection system is to register production parcels in the computerised register and to carry out all the activities necessary to establish the traceability and compliance of the product with the requirements of this specification. In addition to the records of the production orchards, this register also keeps records of all the agricultural techniques implemented in the production process. A computerised register of producers and production parcels is kept by the Neretva Fruit Growers' Association 'Mandarina Opuzen' (Annex 4.5. Extract from the computerised register).

has been replaced by:

Traceability checks in the production process are carried out by means of a single register of production parcels (orchards). Within the register, each production parcel of each individual producer is recorded under a specific identification number ('ID number'). The ID number of the producer is the starting point for the traceability check (Annex 4.3. Self-control system and Annex 4.4 Traceability form – example).

The obligation of each agricultural producer under the protection system is to register production parcels in the register of producers and to carry out all the activities necessary to establish the traceability and compliance of the product with the requirements of this specification. A register of producers and production parcels is kept by the Neretva Fruit Growers' Association 'Mandarina Opuzen' (Annex 4.5. Register of producers).

Justification:

In this article, the obligation to keep records of agricultural producers and all the agricultural techniques implemented in the production process via the GIS programme computerised register has been removed from the specification. For reasons of simplicity and operability, all records will be kept in Excel tables in the future.

☐ The amendment affects the single document.

Title

Standard amendment of point 5. of the product specification (sub-point 5.4.2. Agronomic measures and orchard management measures)

Description

The text of point 5.4.2.: (in the part Harvesting of the fruit) is related to the total acid content of the fruit, which determines when the harvest begins and ends.

The previous wording:

The start of the harvest is defined as the time when the maximum acid content is 1,3 % and the maturity index ratio is 7:1. The end of the harvest for fruit eligible to be marketed as the protected product is defined as the time when the minimum acid content is 0,7 % with the same maturity index ratio.

has been replaced by the following text:

The start of the harvest is defined as the time when the maximum acid content is 1,5 % and the maturity index ratio is 7:1. The end of the harvest for fruit eligible to be marketed as the protected product is defined as the time when the minimum acid content is 0,8 % with the same maturity index ratio.

Justification:

The reason for the increase in the value of total acid content is primarily climate change, which producers have witnessed over the last decade. The main changes are longer and more frequent periods with high temperatures (above 32 °C) which results in mandarins at technological maturity having a higher percentage of total acid content.

☑ This amendment affects the single document.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

Designations of origin and geographical indications of agricultural products

'Neretvanska mandarina'

EU reference number: PDO-HR-1225-AM01 – 19.6.2026

1. **Name(s)**

'Neretvanska mandarina'

2. **Geographical indication type**

☑ PDO

☐ PGI

3. **Country to which the defined geographical area belongs**

Croatia

4. **Description of the agricultural product**

4.1. *Classification of the agricultural product in accordance with the Combined Nomenclature heading and code, as referred to in Article 6(1) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143*

08 – EDIBLE FRUIT AND NUTS; PEEL OF CITRUS FRUIT OR MELONS

4.2. *Description of the agricultural product to which the registered name applies*

'Neretvanska mandarina' is a fruit of the mandarin orange tree belonging to the Unshiu-Satsuma Group (Citrus unshiu 'Marcovitch'). In terms of botanical systematics, it belongs to the family Rutaceae, subfamily Aurantioideae, genus Citrus and species Citrus reticulata 'Blanco'.

The 'Neretvanska mandarina' fruit is a segmented fleshy berry (hesperidium) with rind that separates easily from the pith. The edible part of the fruit is juicy, without pips, orange in colour, and divided up into segments which can be separated from each other easily. The edible part of 'Neretvanska mandarina' has a carotenoid content between 15,50 and 26 mg/kg. The taste is acidulous, refreshing and with a sweet note depending on the ratio of sugar to acid in the fruit. The fruit varies from flattened to flattened round in shape. The rind colour changes and varies depending on the ripeness of the fruit. The fruit is light green when it starts to ripen, gradually changing from light yellow to gold and finally to orange when fully ripe. The fruit has a mild, well-balanced and refreshing aroma which becomes intense only after it is damaged or peeled and its aromatic compounds are released.

The quality of 'Neretvanska mandarina' is determined on the basis of the following parameters:

— fruit juice content must be at least 40 %;

— the total acid content of the fruit must fall within the range of 0,8–1,5 %;

— the lowest permissible ratio of sugar to acid in the fruit of 'Neretvanska mandarina' is 7:1 (total soluble solid/titratable acid).

— the size of the fruit of the Neretvanska mandarina is within the range of calibre 1-X to calibre 3.

4.3. *Derogations on sourcing of feed (for products of animal origin designated by a protected designation of origin only) and restrictions on sourcing of raw materials (for processed products designated by a protected geographical indication only)*

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

Each phase of production of 'Neretvanska mandarina', from the production of reproductive material to the harvesting of the mandarin, must take place within the geographical area defined under point 5.

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

The fruit is collected in boxes (crates) of a capacity of 30 kg, stacked on pallets and delivered to sales and distribution centres. Further processing of the fruit takes place within those centres according to the following procedure: quality and traceability control at entry, ripening of the fruit (if necessary), calibration, waxing by spraying, drying, cooling at a temperature of 5–8 °C and exit quality and traceability control at the end of the process. The maximum amount of time permitted for getting the 'Neretvanska mandarina' ready for market (from the time of arrival of the fruit at the sales centre to the time of dispatch) is 5 days or 120 hours.

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

When placing the product on the market, each product package must be clearly and conspicuously marked with the designation 'Neretvanska mandarina'. In terms of size, type and colour (typography), the letters of the name should stand out more clearly than any other inscription on the packaging. The words 'Lot broj' ('Lot No') also need to be clearly distinguishable on the finished product declaration. This guarantees traceability and permits a link to be established with the producer at any given time.

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

The geographical area of the Neretva Valley in which 'Neretvanska mandarina' is produced is bordered to the north by Bosnia and Herzegovina and bounded to the south by the coast of the Adriatic Sea. To the south, south-east and north-west, the Neretva Valley is delineated by the Dinaric mountain chain. The area of production of 'Neretvanska mandarina' includes the towns of Metković, Opuzen and Ploče and the municipalities of Slivno, Kula Norinska and Zažablje.

6. **Link with the geographical area**

Summary of the link

The micro-climate of the area is determined by its proximity to the sea, which has the effect of mitigating low winter and high summer temperatures. The average annual temperature during the 10-year average (2002-2012) in the Neretva Valley is 15,8 °C. The mean winter temperature is 7,25 °C. Relative humidity of the air is a bio-climatic factor of major significance. This, along with air temperature and wind, is very important for ensuring a regular transition between vegetative and generative phases in the growth of the mandarin trees. The average relative humidity (ten-year average) is 69 %. The abundance of water, lakes and rivers with rugged watercourses and hand-dug open-water drainage channels are the Neretva Valley area's main characteristics and make it unique also hydrologically. The maximum distance of 'Neretvanska mandarina' plantations from natural sources of open water is 500 metres. The hydrological attributes of the area have resulted in a high groundwater level and elevated relative air humidity, which is particularly marked when the fruit is ripening (in September, October and November). At that time, an optimal supply of water to the plants is of crucial importance for fruit quality. In terms of soil, the Neretva Valley area is characterised by sediments of alluvial origin of markedly heterogeneous composition. In terms of texture, loamy sand and sandy clay loam predominate. Their pronounced capillarity is conducive to the growth of the mandarins.

As a result of the abovementioned natural characteristics of the area of cultivation, the 'Neretvanska mandarina' fruit is distinguishable by its thin, smooth rind which is easy to peel, is seedless and the segments separate easily.

The edible part of the fruit is golden yellow in colour, which changes to orange as it ripens. This is linked to the high carotenoid content. The high carotenoid content of the edible part of the fruit is one of the key characteristics of mandarins from the Neretva region. The results of analyses carried out on samples of 'Neretvanska mandarina' established that the concentration of carotenoids in the flesh of the fruit was above average. (V. Dragović-Uzelac et al. 2012.: Određivanje specifičnih svojstava neretvanske mandarine (Citrus reticulata L.) zbog zaštite geografskog podrijetla (GI), Faculty of Food Technology and Biotechnology, Zagreb). In addition, the 'Neretvanska mandarina' fruit is distinguished by the high juice content in the edible part of the fruit, its high dry matter content and the harmonious balance of sugar and acid which gives it its particular organoleptic characteristics: a refreshing taste and pronounced aroma. Plantation-style cultivation of mandarins in the Neretva Valley began following the completion of reclamation works there in 1961 and 1962. According to church records (of the Sv. Ilija parish office in Metković), 'despite the great drought in the Neretva Valley in 1971, the mandarin yield is estimated to be as high as 900 tonnes.' Therefore 'Neretvanska mandarina' is a specific product, the particularities of which are influenced not only by interaction with the environment (climate, location and terrain), but also by a long-standing tradition of production. Geographically the Neretva Valley is one of the three most northerly citrus-growing regions in Europe. This in large part determines the structure of production, choice of cultivars and rootstock, which ultimately affect key fruit quality components. All plantings of 'Neretvanska mandarina' for commercial purposes are grafted onto Poncirus trifoliata rootstock. The advantages this affords, reflected directly in the quality and earliness of growth of the fruit, lead to the choice of this rootstock being considered indispensable. Apart from that, the proximity to the sea has a strong influence on daily variations in air temperature (from day to night). The fluctuations are particularly pronounced in the autumn, when the temperature of the sea can often exceed that of the surrounding air. These temperature fluctuations have a direct effect on the colour of the fruit, the amount of carotenoids in its pulp and the uniformity and earliness of maturation. A long-standing tradition of cultivation dating back more than 80 years, and the application of new know-how and technology have contributed significantly not only to the expansion of mandarin cultivation in the Neretva Valley over the last decade, but also to improvements in the quality. Despite numerous changes in agricultural technology, all of the key elements of the geographical area and traditional cultivation have been preserved. These relate above all to auxiliary technical processes (cutting, pruning of the crown, removal of wild shoots, removal of fruit from young plantings) which are still performed exclusively by hand.

Reference to the electronic address (url) of the published specification

https://poljoprivreda.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/dokumenti/hrana/zoi-zozp-zts/dokumenti-zoi-zozp-zts/Specifikacija%20proizvoda%20Neretvanska%20mandarina%20-%20%C4%8Distopis.pdf