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Publication of a communication of approval of a standard amendment to a product specification for a name in the wine sector referred to in Article 17(2) and (3) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/33

(C/2026/1655)

This communication is published in accordance with Article 17(5) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/33 [1].

COMMUNICATING THE APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT

'Côtes de Thongue'

PGI-FR-A1110-AM01

DESCRIPTION OF AND REASONS FOR THE APPROVED AMENDMENT

1. Organoleptic description of the products

Chapter I, section 3.3 of the product specification for the PGI 'Côtes de Thongue' has been supplemented to accommodate additions to the organoleptic description of the PGI wines.

The single document has been supplemented in the section entitled 'Description of the wine(s)'.

2. Area in immediate proximity

Chapter I, section 4.2 – Area in immediate proximity – of the product specification for the PGI 'Côtes de Thongue' has been amended. The list of municipalities making up the area in immediate proximity has been updated, without any changes, in accordance with the 2021 Official Geographic Code.

This editorial amendment allows the geographical area to be identified with reference to the 2021 version of the Official Geographic Code, which is updated by the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE), and gives the delimitation of the geographical area legal certainty. The same reference has been added to the single document under the heading 'Area in immediate proximity'.

The section of the single document entitled 'Further conditions – Area in immediate proximity' has been updated.

3. Vine varieties

Chapter I, section 5 – Vine varieties – of the product specification for the PGI 'Côtes de Thongue' has been amended.

The list of varieties selected for the production of the PGI 'Côtes de Thongue' has been amended as follows:

— Introduction of 17 varieties considered to be 'resistant' to vine diseases:

  Artaban N, Bronner B, Cabernet blanc B, Cabernet Cortis N, Floreal B, Johanniter B, Monarch N, Muscaris B, Pinotin N, Prior N, Saphira B, Sauvignac B, Solaris B, Soreli B, Souvigner gris B, Vidoc N and Voltis B.

— Introduction of 14 varieties with the potential to adapt to climate change:

  Agiorgitiko N, Assyrtiko B, Calabrese N, Carricant B, Fiano B, Montepulciano N, Moschofilero Rs, Parellada N, Primitivo N, Roditis Rs, Saperavi N, Touriga Nacional N, Verdejo B, Xinomavro Rs.

[1] OJ L 9, 11.1.2019, p. 2.

— Withdrawal of 20 varieties not recorded as being used in production:

Auxerrois B, Baco blanc B, Clairette rose Rs, Clarin B, Couderc noir N, Gamay de Chaudenay N, Jurançon blanc B, Landal N, Lival N, Maréchal Foch N, Müller-Thurgau B, Muscadelle B, Muscat à petits grains rouges Rg, Muscat à petits grains roses Rs, Ravat Blanc B, Rayon d'or B, Savagnin Rose Rs, Valérien B, Villard noir N.

The varieties which have been added are known to be resistant to drought and fungal diseases. With similar physiological and oenological properties to the varieties used in the PGI production, they reduce the need for plant protection products. They do not entail any change to the characteristics of the PGI wines.

The amendment of the list of varieties selected for the PGI vine varieties affects the single document in the section entitled 'Wine grape varieties'.

4. **Maximum production yield**

Chapter I, section 6 – Maximum production yield – of the product specification for the PGI 'Côtes de Thongue' has been amended.

This amendment raises the yield for rosé wines from 90 to 100 hl/ha. The yield for the red and white wines remains unchanged at 90 hl/ha. The goal is to help operators meet the dynamic market demand for rosé wines, which is rapidly increasing.

The 'Maximum yields' section of the single document has been amended.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

Chapter I, section 8 of the product specification for the PGI 'Côtes de Thongue' has been amended to change the wording on the link with the geographical area.

The 'Link with the geographical area' section of the single document has been updated.

6. **Inspection body**

Chapter III of the product specification for the PGI 'Côtes de Thongue' has been amended to simplify the section entitled 'Inspection body', specifying that compliance with the product specification must be checked on the basis of an approved control plan and by a third-party body delegated by the National Institute of Origin and Quality (INAO) and offering guarantees of competence, impartiality and independence.

This simplification does not affect the single document.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

1. **Name(s)**

Côtes de Thongue

2. **Geographical indication type**

PGI – protected geographical indication

3. **Categories of grapevine products**

1. Wine

5. Quality sparkling wine

16. Wine of overripe grapes

3.1. *Combined Nomenclature code*

— 22 – BEVERAGES, SPIRITS AND VINEGAR

2204 – wine of fresh grapes, including fortified wines; grape must other than that of heading 2009

4. **Description of the wine(s)**

1. *Still red, rosé and white wines – Organoleptic description*

BRIEF WRITTEN DESCRIPTION

'Côtes de Thongue' PGI winemakers lay claim to a tradition of blending different vine varieties within a specific area, i.e. the Thongue Valley. Their philosophy is similar to that which underpins the PDO system, in which the importance of terroir is highlighted.

The rosés are made from blends of hallmark varieties from the Occitanie region (Grenache noir, Cinsault, Syrah, Mourvèdre, etc.) with varieties brought in from other regions (Cabernet franc, Cabernet sauvignon, Merlot, Pinot, etc.), sometimes associated with white or grey grape varieties (Vermentino, Grenache blanc or gris, etc.). The resulting wines are typically pale pink in colour and pleasingly fresh on the palate, with a powerful and complex bouquet based on peach, apricot, blackcurrant and banana aromas.

The reds are made from a wide range of grape varieties, harvested at an advanced stage of ripeness to allow for the production of structured wines that are often aged in the barrel. They tend to be delicately structured, with fine, well-developed and harmonious tannins, and complex aromas of red fruit, black fruit and spices.

The white wines are made from the Muscats, Sauvignon, Vermentino or Viognier varieties, blending hallmark varieties from the region and others from elsewhere. These elegant wines are full-bodied and known for their freshness, with aromas varying from citrus to exotic fruits or floral notes (linden, orange-blossom, etc.) depending on the varieties used.

2. *Still red, rosé and white wines – Analytical description*

BRIEF WRITTEN DESCRIPTION

Wines with a fermentable sugar content (glucose and fructose) of at least 45 g/l have a volatile acidity content of not more than 24,48 meq/l.

In the case of de-alcoholisation, the minimum actual alcoholic strength by volume may be reduced to 9,5 %.

The levels for total alcoholic strength by volume, total acidity, volatile acidity and total sulphur dioxide are those set by EU legislation.

General analytical characteristics

— Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume): —

— Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume): 11,5

— Minimum total acidity: —

— Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre): —

— Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre): —

3. *Red, rosé and white wines of overripe grapes – Organoleptic description*

BRIEF WRITTEN DESCRIPTION

Wines made from overripe grapes have high sugar content levels and develop complex aromas of cooked fruits, with colours ranging from amber to terracotta shades.

4. *Red, rosé and white wines of overripe grapes – Analytical description*

BRIEF WRITTEN DESCRIPTION

Wines with a fermentable sugar content (glucose and fructose) of at least 45 g/l have a volatile acidity content of not more than 24,48 meq/l.

For the wines of overripe grapes, the (minimum or maximum) levels for total acidity, volatile acidity, actual alcoholic strength by volume, total alcoholic strength by volume, natural alcoholic strength by volume and total sulphur dioxide content are as laid down by EU legislation.

General analytical characteristics

— Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume): —

— Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume) —

— Minimum total acidity: —

— Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre): —

— Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre): —

5. *Quality sparkling wines (red, rosé and white)*

BRIEF WRITTEN DESCRIPTION

The quality sparkling wines are to be made exclusively using the secondary bottle fermentation method. They have fine, elegant bubbles with floral or fruity aromas depending on the varieties used for the cuvée.

The (minimum or maximum) levels for total acidity, volatile acidity, actual alcoholic strength by volume, total alcoholic strength by volume, natural alcoholic strength by volume and total sulphur dioxide content are as laid down by EU legislation.

General analytical characteristics

— Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume): —

— Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume) —

— Minimum total acidity: —

— Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre): —

— Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre): —

5. **Winemaking practices**

5.1. *Specific oenological practices*

1. Specific oenological practice

In the case of de-alcoholisation, the minimum actual alcoholic strength by volume may be reduced to 9,5 %.

Quality sparkling wines bearing the protected geographical indication ‘Côtes de Thongue’ are to be made exclusively using the secondary bottle fermentation method.

Besides the provision set out above, the oenological practices adopted for the wines must comply with the obligations laid down by EU legislation and by the Rural and Maritime Fisheries Code.

5.2. *Maximum yields*

1. Red and white wines

90 hectolitres per hectare

2. Rosé wines

100 hectolitres per hectare

6. **Demarcated geographical area**

The harvesting of the grapes and the production and development of wines bearing the 'Côtes de Thongue' PGI must take place in the territory of the following municipalities in the department of Hérault:

Alignan-du-Vent, Abeilhan, Autignac, Coulobres, Espondeilhan, Fouzilhon, Gabian, Magalas, Margon, Montblanc, Montesquieu, Néffiès, Nézignan-l'Evêque, Pouzolles, Puimisson, Puissalicon, Roujan, Saint-Geniès de Fontedit, Saint-Thibéry, Servian, Tourbes, Vailhan, Valros.

7. **Wine grape variety(ies)**

Agiorgitiko N

Alicante Henri Bouschet N

Alphonse Lavallée N

Altesse B

Alvarinho – Albariño

Aramon N

Aramon blanc B

Aramon gris G

Aranel B

Arinarnoa N

Artaban N

Arvine B – Petite Arvine

Assyrtiko B

Aubun N – Murescola

Bourboulenc B – Doucillon blanc

Bronner B

Cabernet Blanc B

Cabernet Cortis N

Cabernet Franc N

Cabernet Sauvignon N

Calabrese N

Caladoc N

Cardinal Rg

Carignan N

Carignan blanc B

Carménère N

Carricante

Chambourcin N

Chardonnay B

Chasan B

Chasselas B

Clairette Rose Rs

Chenanson N

Chenin B

Cinsaut N – Cinsault

Clairette B

Colombard B

Côt N – Malbec

Counoise N

Danlas B

Egiodola N

Fer N – Fer Servadou, Braucol, Mansois, Pinenc

Fiano

Floréal B

Gamay N

Gewürztraminer Rs

Grenache N

Grenache blanc B

Grenache gris G

Gros Manseng B

Johanniter B

Listan B – Palomino

Lledoner pelut N

Macabeu B – Macabeo

Marsanne B

Marselan N

Mauzac B

Merlot N

Meunier N

Monarch N

Montepulciano

Morrastel N – Minustellu, Graciano

Moschofilero Rs

Mourvèdre N – Monastrell

Muscardin N

Muscaris B

Muscat d'Alexandrie B – Muscat, Moscato

Muscat de Hambourg N – Muscat, Moscato

Muscat à petits grains blancs B – Muscat, Moscato

Nielluccio N – Nielluciu

Négrette N

Parrellada B

Petit Manseng B

Petit Verdot N

Picardan B – Araignan

Pinot Gris G

Pinot Noir N

Pinotin N

Piquepoul blanc B

Piquepoul gris G

Piquepoul noir N

Plant droit N – Espanenc

Portan N

Primitivo N – Zinfandel

Prior N

Riesling B

Rivairenc N – Aspiran noir

Rivairenc blanc B – Aspiran blanc

Roditis Rs

Roussanne B

Rubilande Rs

Saperavi N

Saphira B

Sauvignac

Sauvignac B

Sauvignon B – Sauvignon blanc

Sauvignon Gris G

Sciaccarello N

Sémillon B

Servant B

Seyval B

Solaris B

Soreli B

Souvignier Gris Rs

Sylvaner B

Syrah N – Shiraz

Tannat N

Tempranillo N

Terret blanc B

Terret gris G

Terret noir N

Touriga Nacional N

Ugni Blanc B

Verdejo B

Verdelho B

Vermentino B – Rolle

Vidoc N

Villard blanc B

Viognier B

Voltis B

Xinomavro N

8. **Description of the link(s)**

8.1. *Specificity of the geographical area*

The Côtes de Thongue wine-growing region encompasses 23 villages situated in the Faugères-Pézenas-Béziers triangle that spans the catchment area of the Thongue, a tributary of the Hérault river in the Languedoc region in the south of France. The Thongue emerges from the first foothills of the Cévennes before joining the Hérault river in Saint-Thibéry, a village on the outer boundary of the Côtes de Thongue area located 10 km from the Mediterranean Sea. Over time, the watercourse has sculpted the distinctive and very open landscape of the Côtes de Thongue. This string of undulating hills, locally known as 'puechs', lends cadence to the terrain and breaks up its linearity. Through erosion, the Thongue has carved a relatively wide and shallow valley with soils that are well-suited to the vines that occupy the majority of the farmland. Of the many different soil types in the Côtes de Thongue, some of the most characteristic are the stony terraces dating from the Villafranchian age, the sandy and gravelly marls, the lacustrine limestones and the clay-limestone soils. Most of the vines are planted on ancient terraces and alluvial cones, glacis, limestone plateaus and slopes, or hills of sandy loam molasse. The majority of the vineyards are located at an altitude of between 50 m and 100 m, where they get the full benefit of the Mediterranean climate: mild weather in winter, spring and autumn with varying amounts of rainfall, and hot, dry summers. Rainfall does not exceed 600 mm on average over the year.

8.2. *Specificity of the product*

Nestled between the coastal lagoon area and the foothills of the Haut-Languedoc, this territory has always been a much-traversed land. From Roman times onwards, it was intersected by the Via Domitia, which encouraged the establishment of vineyards. Having endured successive invasions, the people developed a strong collective organisation that was reflected in their habitat of fortified villages built with a uniquely concentric layout. The area under vines expanded significantly in the 19th and 20th centuries, initially focusing on spirits and later, from 1850 onwards, on wines for consumption. The collective spirit led the winegrowers to form a union at a very early stage to promote their best wines under the 'Côtes de Thongue' designation. It went on to be awarded 'Vin de Pays' status by the Decree of 5 April 1982. In order to build on this momentum and better reflect the geographical reality of the territory, the PGI area was expanded to include another 9 municipalities, going from 14 to 23. The heterogeneous soil and climate conditions have allowed for strategic planting of varieties with different ecological needs, such as Mediterranean varieties in the driest sites and the more recently introduced varieties in soils with greater depth. This diversity allows for the production of a rich array of wines, ranging from still wines to wines of overripe grapes. Recent technological advances mean that depending on the winemaking and ageing conditions, the red wines are either smooth and fruity or spicy and robust. The winemakers generally aim for a balance between fruitiness and elegance in the white and rosé wines. Most of the output is bottled in the production area, with almost 70 % being exported, mainly within Europe but also to the United States and Japan.

8.3. *Causal link between the specificity of the geographical area and the specificity of the product*

The Côtes de Thongue winegrowing area enjoys a homogeneous Mediterranean climate in which all of the grape varieties ripen well. In converting vineyards over the last 40 years, the winegrowers have been able to showcase their expertise in adapting the grape varieties to the diversity of soil conditions in the area, enabling them to achieve their optimal expression. Despite this diversity, and whether presented as a blend or a specific grape variety, these wines all share the same strong Mediterranean character, roundness and distinctive aromas based on ripe fruit with subtle vegetal notes. The close-knit network of tasting cellars encouraged the development of direct sales and meant that Côtes de Thongue wines soon became well-known. Numerous events are organised every year, including walks through the vines and open evenings in summer, so that people can discover the vineyards and their wines as part of the heritage of the area. Aside from the area's natural suitability for winegrowing, the determination, engagement and skill of the producers will continue to play a decisive role in the production and reputation of Côtes de Thongue wines and in the protection of the vineyards. A collective initiative has been set up to preserve and promote biodiversity, thereby fully integrating the Côtes de Thongue PGI into a comprehensive plan for land use and sustainable development. The renown of Côtes de Thongue wines now extends far beyond France, as evidenced by the repeated accolades received from Parker's Wine Buyer's Guide and the Wine Spectator magazine. It is the collective commitment on the part of the winegrowers and their common goal of promoting their designation far and wide that has made this possible. Recognised by distributors and professionals in the wine sector, this reputation has been forged gradually over time thanks to the quality of the wines and the uniqueness of the blends.

9. **Essential further conditions (packaging, labelling, other requirements)**

Labelling

Legal framework

National legislation

Type of further condition

Additional provisions relating to labelling

Description of the condition

The PGI 'Côtes de Thongue' may be supplemented by the name of one or more grape varieties.

The PGI 'Côtes de Thongue' may be supplemented by the term 'primeur'. This term is reserved for still wines.

The European Union PGI logo must appear on the label if the words 'Indication géographique protégée' (Protected geographical indication) are replaced by the traditional term 'Vin de Pays'.

Area in immediate proximity

Legal framework

National legislation

Type of further condition

Derogation concerning production in the demarcated geographical area

Description of the condition

The area in immediate proximity defined by derogation for the production and development of still wines, wines of overripe grapes and quality sparkling wines bearing the PGI 'Côtes de Thongue' comprises the following municipalities in the department of Hérault, in accordance with the 2021 Official Geographic Code:

Adissan, Agde, Agel, Agonès, Aigne, Aigues-Vives, Les Aires, Aniane, Arboras, Argelliers, Aspiran, Assas, Assignan, Aumelas, Aumes, Avène, Azillanet, Babeau-Bouldoux, Baillargues, Balaruc-les-Bains, Balaruc-le-Vieux, Bassan, Beaufort, Beaulieu, Bédarieux, Bélarga, Berlou, Bessan, Béziers, Boisseron, Boisset, La Boissière, Le Bosc, Boujan-sur-Libron, Le Bousquet-d'Orb, Bouzigues, Brenas, Brignac, Brissac, Buzignargues, Cabrerolles, Cabrières, Cambon-et-Salvergues, Campagnan, Campagne, Camplong, Candillargues, Canet, Capestang, Carlencas-et-Levas, Cassagnoles, Castanet-le-Haut, Castelnau-de-Guers, Castelnau-le-Lez, Castries, La Caunette, Causse-de-la-Selle, Causses-et-Veyran, Caussiniojouls, Caux, Le Caylar, Cazedarnes, Cazevieille, Cazilhac, Cazouls-d'Hérault, Cazouls-lès-Béziers, Cébazan, Ceilhes-et-Rocozels, Celles, Cers, Cessenon-sur-Orb, Cesseras, Ceyras, Clapiers, Claret, Clermont-l'Hérault, Colombières-sur-Orb, Colombiers, Combaillaux, Combes, Corneilhan, Courniou, Cournonsec, Cournonterral, Creissan, Le Crès, Le Cros, Cruzy, Dio-et-Valquières, Entre-Vignes, Fabrègues, Faugères, Félines-Minervois, Ferrals-les-Montagnes, Ferrières-les-Verreries, Ferrières-Poussarou, Florensac, Fontanès, Fontès, Fos, Fozières, Fraisse-sur-Agout, Frontignan, Galargues, Ganges, Garrigues, Gigean, Gignac, Gorniès, Grabels, Graissessac, La Grande-Motte, Guzargues, Hérépian, Jacou, Joncels, Jonquières, Juvignac, Lacoste, Lagamas, Lamalou-les-Bains, Lansargues, Laroque, Lattes, Laurens, Lauret, Lauroux, Lavalette, Lavérune, Lespignan, Lézignan-la-Cèbe, Liausson, Lieuran-Cabrières, Lieuran-lès-Béziers, Lignan-sur-Orb, La Livinière, Lodève, Loupian, Lunas, Lunel, Lunel-Viel, Maraussan, Marseillan, Marsillargues, Mas-de-Londres, Les Matelles, Mauguio, Maureilhan, Mérifons, Mèze, Minerve, Mireval, Mons, Montady, Montagnac, Montarnaud, Montaud, Montbazin, Montels, Montferrier-sur-Lez, Montouliers, Montoulieu, Montpellier, Montpeyroux, Moulès-et-Baucels, Mourèze, Mudaison, Murles, Murviel-lès-Béziers, Murviel-lès-Montpellier, Nébian, Nissan-lez-Enserune, Nizas, Notre-Dame-de-Londres, Octon, Olargues, Olmet-et-Villecun, Olonzac, Oupia, Pailhès, Palavas-les-Flots, Pardailhan, Paulhan, Pégairolles-de-Buèges, Pégairolles-de-l'Escalette, Péret, Pérols, Pézenas, Pézènes-les-Mines, Pierrerue, Pignan, Pinet, Plaissan, Les Plans, Poilhes, Pomérols, Popian, Portiragnes, Le Pouget, Le Poujol-sur-Orb, Poujols, Poussan, Pouzols, Le Pradal, Prades-le-Lez, Prades-sur-Vernazobre, Prémian, Le Puech, Puéchabon, Puilacher, Puisserguier, Quarante, Restinclières, Rieussec, Riols, Les Rives, Romiguières, Roquebrun, Roqueredonde, Roquessels, Rosis, Rouet, Saint-André-de-Buèges, Saint-André-de-Sangonis, Saint-Aunès, Saint-Bauzille-de-la-Sylve, Saint-Bauzille-de-Montmel, Saint-Bauzille-de-Putois, Saint-Brès, Saint-Chinian, Saint-Clément-de-Rivière, Sainte-Croix-de-Quintillargues, Saint-Drézéry, Saint-Étienne-d'Albagnan,

Saint-Étienne-de-Gourgas, Saint-Étienne-Estréchoux, Saint-Félix-de-l'Héras, Saint-Félix-de-Lodez, Saint-Gély-du-Fesc, Saint-Geniès-des-Mourgues, Saint-Geniès-de-Varensal, Saint-Georges-d'Orques, Saint-Gervais-sur-Mare, Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert, Saint-Guiraud, Saint-Hilaire-de-Beauvoir, Saint-Jean-de-Buèges, Saint-Jean-de-Cornies, Saint-Jean-de-Cuculles, Saint-Jean-de-Fos, Saint-Jean-de-la-Blaquière, Saint-Jean-de-Minervois, Saint-Jean-de-Védas, Saint-Julien, Saint-Just, Saint-Martin-de-l'Arçon, Saint-Martin-de-Londres, Saint-Mathieu-de-Tréviers, Saint-Maurice-Navacelles, Saint-Michel, Saint-Nazaire-de-Ladarez, Saint-Nazaire-de-Pézan, Saint-Pargoire, Saint-Paul-et-Valmalle, Saint-Pierre-de-la-Fage, Saint-Pons-de-Thomières, Saint-Pons-de-Mauchiens, Saint-Privat, Saint-Saturnin-de-Lucian, Saint-Sériès, Saint-Vincent-de-Barbeyrargues, Saint-Vincent-d'Olargues, Salasc, La Salvetat-sur-Agout, Saturargues, Saussan, Saussines, Sauteyrargues, Sauvian, Sérignan, Sète, Siran, Sorbs, Soubès, Le Soulié, Soumont, Sussargues, Taussac-la-Billière, Teyran, Thézan-lès-Béziers, La Tour-sur-Orb, Tressan, Le Triadou, Usclas-d'Hérault, Usclas-du-Bosc, La Vacquerie-et-Saint-Martin-de-Castries, Vacquières, Vailhauquès, Valergues, Valflaunès, Valmascle, Valras-Plage, Vélieux, Vendargues, Vendémian, Vendres, Verreries-de-Moussans, Vias, Vic-la-Gardiole, Vieussan, Villemagne-l'Argentière, Villeneuve-lès-Béziers, Villeneuve-lès-Maguelone, Villeneuvette, Villespassans, Villetelle, Villeveyrac, Viols-en-Laval, Viols-le-Fort.

Link to the product specification

https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/gedei/site/bo-agri/document_administratif-e83db010-64e6-4e3c-ab1b-74ec7d4d0d93