C/2024/1990

7.3.2024

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

(C/2024/1990)

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 [1] within three months from the date of this publication.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'Espárrago verde de Guadalajara'

EU No: PGI-ES-02963— 5.6.2023

PDO ( ) PGI (X)

1. **Name of PGI**

'Espárrago verde de Guadalajara'

2. **Member State or Third Country**

Spain

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

3.1. *Type of product*

Class 1.6. Fruit, vegetables and cereals fresh or processed

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

Asparagus in the form of tender green shoots that are healthy and clean, of the asparagus species Asparagus officinalis L., genetically diploid subspecies F1, type 'University of California', varieties: Apollo, Grande, Early California, Sunlim, Vegalim, Magnus, Placosesp, UC 157, UC 115 and Darzilla.

The Protected Geographical Indication must only be used for green asparagus with a dry matter content between 6,5 % and 8,5 %; pH values between 5,7 and 5,9; electrical conductivity between 4,4 and 6,2 (±0,3 mS cm–1); length between 13 cm and 26 cm, of which a maximum of 3 cm is white, with a maximum difference of 20 % between units within the same bundle; a minimum diameter of 10 mm; and a soluble solids content expressed in degrees Brix between 3,8 and 6,1 (±0,6 %).

As a result of these chemical characteristics, the flavour of this asparagus is intense and juicy, very slightly fibrous, with sweet and bitter notes. The flavour lingers thanks to specific concentrations of soluble solids, salts, organic acids and other bioactive compounds.

The asparagus is produced to be eaten fresh or in processed form. It is free from pests and diseases, undamaged by implements or by the weather, free from soil and washed. The curvature in the upper third of the asparagus spear is no more than 30 %. The head of the green asparagus is closed up, and there are no off-shoots or flowers of any kind.

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

—

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

The geographical area described in Section 4 is where Espárrago verde de Guadalajara is produced.

[1] OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2012/1151/oj.

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

Packagers must have systems in place to ensure that asparagus covered by the PGI is packaged separately from any other asparagus that they might be packaging.

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

The labelling of the packaged asparagus must include the following: the name under which it is sold; the logo appearing in Section 3.6 of the single document, which is available to any operator who requests it and who complies with the specification; and reference to the Protected Geographical Indication 'Espárrago Verde de Guadalajara'. Optionally, the label may also include the conformity mark issued by the product certification section within the control body.

The aforementioned logo appears below.



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

The production area for the Protected Geographical Indication comprises the following municipalities in the province of Guadalajara:

Alarilla, Aldeanueva de Guadalajara, Aranzueque, Arbancón, Armuña del Tajuña, Cabanillas del Campo, Cañizar, Casas de San Galindo, Centenera, Ciruelas, Cogolludo, Copernal, Chiloeches, Espinosa de Henares, Fontanar, Fuencemillán, Guadalajara, Heras de Ayuso, Hita, Horche, Humanes de Mohernando, Jadraque, Loranca del Tajuña, Lupiana, Málaga del Fresno, Malaguilla, Marchamalo, Membrillera, Miralrío, Mohernando de Henares, Montarrón, Robledillo de Mohernando, Romanones, Taragudo, Tendilla, Torija, Torre del Burgo, Tórtola de Henares, Valdarachas, Valdearenas, Valdegrudas, Villanueva de Argecilla, Yebes and Yunqueras de Henares.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

The application to register the PGI 'Espárrago Verde de Guadalajara' is based on the specific characteristics of the product arising from the link with the geographical area. The green colour and dry matter content of between 6,5 % and 8,5 % are due to the average solar radiation of 1 642,5 megajoules per square metre during the production period. The pH values between 5,7 and 5,9 and soluble solids content expressed in degrees Brix between 3,8 and 6,1 (±0,6 %) are due to the low temperatures, which mean that the asparagus grows slowly. The length between 13 cm and 26 cm and minimum diameter of 10 mm are due to the soils with pH values mainly between 8,1 and 8,3, along with the depth of the soils, availability of nutrients and balanced sand, clay and silt content. These qualities mean that considerable reserves of moisture and macro and microelements are available.

Specificity of the geographical area

a) Landscape

Geographically, the production area for green asparagus is located in the western part of the province of Guadalajara, in the districts of La Sierra, La Campiña and Alcarria Alta, in the municipalities of Membrillera and Loranca de Tajuña, at elevations between 640 and 1 020 metres above sea level.

The area is characterised by gentle slopes and terrace formations on the river plains, as well as the higher areas of the plateaux that form the heathlands of Alcarria.

b) Hydrography

The production area is set in the valleys of the rivers Henares and Badiel, and the Tajuña with its tributaries the Matayeguas and the Hungría.

The river basins were formed in these valleys as a result of erosion processes deep in the calcareous crust, affecting lower lithological levels mainly consisting of clays and silt. These alluvial basins add more fertile lands to the river plains, producing better soils for cultivation, more suitable for producing green asparagus.

The waters used for irrigation have very low salinity and are therefore the most suitable for producing the best crop.

c) Climate

We use the Papadakis climate classification system (1966) to define the climate characteristics of the production area for green asparagus. According to that system, we can describe the characteristics as belonging mainly to the climate type temperate Mediterranean (ME). Similarly, the summer type is 'Maize' (M) and the winter types are cold 'Oat' (AV) and temperate 'Oat' (AV). With regard to humidity, the production areas are largely humid Mediterranean (ME), with some areas of the lower Henares plain classed as dry Mediterranean (ME). According to the same system, the temperature system of the area is largely 'Pampas' (PA), with some of the heathland areas defined as hot temperate (TE).

There are official climate stations of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in the production area, in Marchamalo, Jadraque and Armuña de Tajuña. According to data supplied by the stations, the average maximum temperature is 20,6 °C; the average minimum temperature is 6 °C; the average absolute minimum temperature is – 9,1 °C; and the average average temperature 13,1 °C.

For the production period, the average temperatures for March, April, May and June are 7,3 °C, 11,7 °C, 15,7 °C and 20,6 °C respectively. This demonstrates that winters are long, meaning that springs are shorter. Average annual precipitation is around 434,8 litres.

The average net solar radiation during the months of production, between March and June, is 1 642 megajoules per square metre. This is less than in other, warmer production areas in Spain.

Calculations based on the climate data show a total of 1 290,5 hours of cold during the winter months, with a 25 % greater probability of late springs frosts after 11 April.

These figures show a climate with very long and cold winters, late frosts and short springs and autumns. It is generally cold at the beginning of spring, with dry hot summers and precipitation levels that are average or low in more westerly areas.

Generally, during the production period, the optimum climate conditions are of relatively short duration, much shorter than for crops grown in warmer areas. While a few asparagus shoots may be visible at the end of March, it is not until mid-April that harvesting begins under normal conditions.

Late frosts lead to breaks in production. This factor, along with high temperatures in June, means that the actual period of asparagus picking lasts some 70 days at most. Consequently, the plants retain their reserves. The resulting lack of stress notably increases the quality of the products.

d) Soils

The production area is located on the plains of the Henares, Badiel and Tajuña rivers, formed during the Plio-Quaternary period. The soils are mainly calcic cambisols and cambic rendzinas, although fluvisols are also present.

The most common texture of these soils is loamy or clay-loam, highly permeable and with a high carbonate content. The average pH values are between 8,1 and 8,3, with the soil conductivity values ranging between 150 and 184 mS cm^{-1}, The organic matter content tends to be low, less than 1,5 %,

Specificity of the product

Espárrago de Guadalajara has the following characteristics:

Dry matter content between 6,5 % and 8,5 %;

pH values between 5,7 and 5,9;

Electrical conductivity between 4,4 and 6,2 (±0,3 mS cm^{-1});

Length between 13 cm and 26 cm, of which a maximum of 3 cm is white, with a maximum difference of 20 % between units within the same bundle;

Diameter of at least 10 mm;

Soluble solids content (°Brix) between 3,8 and 6,1 (±0,6 %).

Causal link between the geographical area and the quality or characteristics of the product (for PDO) or a specific quality, the reputation or other characteristic of the product (for PGI)

During the months of production, temperatures are relatively low with averages of 7,3 °C in March, 11,7 °C in April, 15,7 °C in May and 20,5 °C in June.

This means that the asparagus grows slowly, facilitating a greater concentration of soluble solids, between 3.8 and 6.1 degrees Brix, and pH values between 5,7 and 5,9.

Similarly, the winter cold and the fact that there is over a 25 % probability of late frost (i.e. frost after 11 April) mean that the plants do not consume the reserves of carbohydrates, proteins and minerals held in their rhizome and root systems. These reserves remain available to be transferred to the new asparagus shoots in greater proportions than in asparagus grown in warmer climates.

There are 1 290,5 hours of cold temperatures: a high number. This affects the asparagus in two ways. Firstly, during the winter recess, it allows full regeneration of the metabolic hormonal systems active in the plant. Secondly, the asparagus shoots generally emerge around the same time, which is not the case with asparagus grown in less cool agri-climate conditions. Therefore, while a very small amount of asparagus can appear at the end of March, the season does not generally get properly under way until mid-April.

Cropping finishes when the June heat arrives, allowing the plants a longer vegetative growth period. This is largely thanks to the summer heat and the traditional ways in which farmers manage irrigation and fertilisation. This long summer allows a significant amount of biomass to develop, which will subsequently restore the reserve substances in the rhizome and root system, making them available for the next season.

The average difference between the maximum daytime and minimum night-time temperatures is around 14,2 °C. This, together with the low daytime temperatures in early spring, helps to preserve the asparagus from the conditions of heat stress which lead to high levels of transpiration. There is less need for metabolism of carbohydrates to mitigate excessive midday temperatures. The carbohydrates, therefore, are retained in the asparagus.

There is also less water loss due to gas exchange through the stomata compared to asparagus grown in warmer areas. The soluble solids therefore remain stored and available in the asparagus, producing values of between 3,8 and 6,1 degrees Brix, and a pH of between 5,7 and 5,9: high values that are representative of the production area.

The special characteristics of the production area include the altitude levels of the producers' farms. This factor, together with the latitude of the province of Guadalajara, results in an average solar radiation of 1 642,5 megajoules per square metre during the production period. The asparagus is green in colour and has a dry matter content of between 6,5 % and 8,5 %.

The special characteristics of the soils include pH values mainly between 8,1 and 8,3, depth, availability of nutrients, and balanced sand, clay and silt content. These qualities mean that considerable reserves of moisture and macro and microelements are available for producing the asparagus, which is between 13 cm and 26 cm long and at least 10 mm in diameter. It grows very slowly because of the temperature variation between night and day.

The nutrients in the soil, together with the traditional practices regarding crop fertilisation and the area's agri-climate characteristics, mean that the flavour of this asparagus is intense and juicy, very slightly fibrous, with sweet and bitter notes. It has a lingering flavour thanks to specific concentrations of soluble solids, salts, organic acids and other bioactive compounds.

Reference to publication of the product specification

http://pagina.jccm.es/agricul/paginas/comercial-industrial/consejos_new/pliegos/PLIEGO_CONDICIONES_esparrago_Guadalajara_20221020.pdf