OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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

(2021/C 32/14)

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

COMMUNICATION OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT TO THE SINGLE DOCUMENT

'CORBIÈRES-BOUTENAC'

PDO-FR-A0670-AM01

Date of communication: 3.11.2020

DESCRIPTION OF AND REASONS FOR THE APPROVED AMENDMENT

1. **Geographical area and area in immediate proximity**

A reference to the Official Geographical Code, which recognises and lists the municipalities by department at national level, has been inserted in Section IV 'Geographical area and area in immediate proximity' of Chapter I of the specification. This editorial amendment allows the geographical area to be identified with reference to the 2019 version of the Official Geographical Code, which is updated by the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE), and gives the definition of the geographical area legal certainty.

The same reference has been inserted in the single document under the headings 'Geographical area' and 'Area in immediate proximity'.

2. **Demarcated parcel area**

Section IV of Chapter I of the specification has been amended to replace the wording 'the wines are produced exclusively from vines' with the more precise wording 'the wines are produced from grapes grown on parcels' (located within the parcel area of production).

This rewording does not affect the single document.

3. **Vine varieties**

Section V of Chapter I of the specification, on vine varieties, has been amended to eliminate the concepts of primary and secondary varieties. The four vine varieties for the PDO, Carignan N, Grenache N, Mourvèdre N and Syrah N, are unchanged but now all have equal importance as primary varieties.

The list of vine varieties has been supplemented by rules on the proportion of those varieties grown in the vineyards of each holding. Those rules have been amended to increase the proportion of Carignan grown to over 30 %, in order to reflect its predominance over the other varieties.

In the single document, the section headed 'Main wine-grape varieties' has been amended to include the four varieties. The list headed 'Secondary varieties' has been deleted.

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

4. **Yield**

In Section VIII of Chapter I of the specification, on the yield of the PDO wines, the basic yield has been reduced from 45 hl/ha to 42 hl/ha and the maximum yield has been reduced from 54 hl/ha to 50 hl/ha, to bring them into line with the yields for wines with a designation of origin produced in the Corbières region.

The maximum yield has also been amended in the single document, under the heading 'Maximum yields'.

5. **Growing methods**

In Section VI of Chapter I of the specification, on vine training:

— the average maximum crop load per parcel has been reduced from 7 500 kg to 7 000 kg per hectare in line with the decrease in wine yield,

— irrigation of the vines is permitted, in which case the average maximum crop load per parcel is reduced to 5 500 kg/ha.

In Section VII of Chapter I of the specification, on grape harvest, transport and ripeness, the requirement for grapes of the Carignan variety to be transported whole to the winemaking location has been deleted. That requirement has been deleted from the specification because it is a question of best practice rather than a production condition. It has also been deleted because of the progress that has been made with regard to transporting the harvest.

These amendments to the specification bring the production conditions more into line with the reality on the ground.

These amendments have also been made to the single document, under the heading 'Winemaking practices'.

6. **First production of young vines**

In Section VIII of Chapter I of the specification, on yield and first production of vines, the date of first production of vines of the Carignan variety that qualify for the PDO has been brought forward from the 9th to the 7th year after the year of planting, in order to reflect the importance of Carignan in the wines covered by this PDO.

This amendment to the specification does not affect the single document.

7. **Analytical characteristics of the product**

In Section VII of Chapter I of the specification, on harvesting, the minimum natural alcoholic strength by volume has been increased from 12 % to 13 %, and the sugar content for determining the ripeness of the grapes has been changed from less than 207 g/l of must to less than 224 g/l. These amendments to the specification bring the production conditions more into line with the reality on the ground.

These amendments have also been made in the single document, under the heading 'Analytical characteristics' in the section 'Description of the wine(s)'.

8. **Blending of varieties**

In Section IX of Chapter I of the specification, the blending rules for the grape variety Carignan now state that the proportion of Carignan in the blend must be at least 30 %. This minimum proportion reflects the place and importance of Carignan in the wines covered by this PDO.

This amendment has also been made in the single document, under the heading 'Winemaking practices'.

In this same section, the provisions on packaging are unchanged but have been clarified to specify that all the wines are packaged in bottles.

This amendment has also been made in the single document, under the heading 'Winemaking practices'.

9. **Packaging**

In Section IX of Chapter I of the specification, it is specified under point 3 'Provisions on packaging' that all the wines are packaged in bottles. The words 'For every batch packaged' have been replaced by the words 'All batches are packaged in bottles'.

This clarification has also been made in the single document, under 'Winemaking practices'.

10. **Date from which wines can circulate**

In Section IX of the specification, on the processing and packaging of the wines, the date from which the wines may circulate among traders and brokers has been deleted under point 5 to allow wines to circulate among all operators and eliminate any risk of unfair competition.

It has also been deleted from the 'Specific oenological practices' section of the single document.

11. **Link with the geographical area**

In Section X of Chapter I of the specification, on the link with the geographical area, the human factors relevant to the link have been expanded to include the winegrowers' role in developing the land and building particular expertise.

This addition has also been made in the single document, under the heading 'Description of the wine(s)'.

In Section X of Chapter I of the specification, on the link with the geographical area, the production figures for the wines covered by this PDO have been updated.

These figures have been updated in the single document, under 'Link with the geographical area'.

In Section X of Chapter I of the specification, on the link with the geographical area, the causal link has been expanded to include the contribution and importance of the Carignan N grape variety in these wines.

These figures have been updated in the single document, under 'Link with the geographical area'.

12. **Presentation and labelling rules**

In Section XII of Chapter I of the specification, on the presentation and labelling rules, the broadest geographical name that can appear on the label of these wines is now 'Corbières' rather than 'Languedoc', which corresponds to a broader geographical area. The winegrowing area covered by this PDO forms an integral part of the 'Corbières' PDO winegrowing area, which identifies the geographical origin of these wines more precisely.

This clarification has also been made in the single document, in the labelling section.

13. **Declaration requirements for inspection purposes**

In Chapter II of the specification, on the declaration requirements for producers of the PDO, the following clarifications have been made:

— A document identifying the parcels suitable for irrigation must be attached to the advance declaration of parcels assigned to production of the PDO.

— The deadline for each operator to submit a claim statement to the protection and management body has changed. It should be sent to the protection and management body no later than 1 February of the year following the year of harvest and at least 10 working days before the first transaction or packaging declaration.

— The requirements regarding the declaration of transactions between authorised warehousekeepers have been supplemented. It must be sent not only to the protection and management body but also to the inspection body on the day on which the transaction between the operators is contracted, or at least within 5 working days thereof, and at least 10 working days before the collection of the wine. The quality and volume of wine covered by the declaration, its vintage and the identity and full address of the buyer must be given in addition to the identity and full address of the seller.

— Operators that carry out more than 12 packaging operations per year must send the protection and management body and the inspection body a summary packaging declaration each month.

— Any operator wishing to market a wine under a broader designation of origin must declare this to the protection and management body and inspection body responsible for the broader designation of origin at least 8 working days prior to the wine's withdrawal in order to ensure follow-up. That declaration must specify the designation of origin, colour, vintage, volume and storage location of the wine.

It must be accompanied by:

— on the part of operators that are winemakers, a copy of the claim statement for the original designation of origin,

— on the part of operators that are not winemakers, an extract of the stock records or a copy of the bulk transaction under the designation of origin.

— Any operator declassifying wines covered by the registered designation of origin must declare this to the protection and management body and the authorised inspection body 'no later than 7 working days' rather than 'at least 15 working days' after that declassification.

— .Every operator must declare the pruning method used on each parcel to the protection and management body on the advance declaration of the assignment of parcels.

— .Operators must keep an up-to-date record of the ripeness of the grapes, stating their sugar content per crop unit or the alcoholic strength by volume per container.

These amendments do not affect the single document.

14. **Main points to be checked**

The table in Chapter III of the specification has been updated under 'Inspection of products'. All batches of packaged wine are checked.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

1. **Name of the product**

Corbières-Boutenac

2. **Geographical indication type**

PDO – Protected Designation of Origin

3. **Categories of grapevine product**

1. Wine

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

Organoleptic characteristics

These wines are still, dry red wines.

'Corbières-Boutenac' is an aged, dry red wine in which the combined proportion of the Carignan N, Grenache N, Mourvèdre N and Syrah N varieties in the blend must be greater than or equal to 70 %. Carignan N must account for at least 30 % of each blend. It is a *vin de garde* (wine for ageing) and must be aged until 31 December of the year following the year of harvest, with at least 2 months in the bottle to refine its tannin structure.

The wines generally have a deep robe, shot through with violet glints when young. They develop notes of spices and mature fruit. They are powerful and generous on the palate and are structured around smooth and harmonious tannins which are overlaid with flattering notes of mocha, spices and caramel. They are full-bodied and warm with a long finish.

Analytical characteristics

These red wines have a minimum natural alcoholic strength by volume of 13 %.

Batches of wine that are ready for marketing have a fermentable sugar content (glucose and fructose):

— less than or equal to 3 g/l for wines with a natural alcoholic strength by volume less than or equal to 14 %,

— less than or equal to 4 g/l for wines with a natural alcoholic strength by volume greater than 14 %.

Wines ready to be marketed in bulk or packaged have a malic acid content less than or equal to 0,4 g/l. The total acidity, volatile acidity and total sulphur dioxide content are as laid down in 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**

a. *Specific oenological practices*

Specific oenological practice

— The use of wood chips is prohibited.

— Any heat treatment of the wine harvest at a temperature above 40 °C is prohibited.

— In addition to the above provisions, all winemaking practices followed must also comply with the requirements laid down at EU level and in the Rural Code.

— The use of continuous fermentation tanks, continuous presses, centrifugal destemmers (vertical destemmers) and screw-type juice separators is prohibited.

In the wine blends:

— The proportion accounted for by the Carignan N, Grenache N and Mourvèdre N varieties combined must be greater than or equal to 70 %.

— The Carignan N variety must account for at least 30 % of the blend.

— No single variety may account for more than 80 % of the blend.

— The wines are aged at least until 31 December of the year following the year of harvest, with at least 2 months in the bottle.

— After ageing, the wines are placed on the market for sale to the consumer from 1 January of the second year following the year of harvest.

— All batches are packaged in bottles.

Cultivation method

The minimum planting density of the vines is 4 400 plants per hectare. The distance between the rows must not exceed 2,50 m.

The area available for each plant must not exceed 2,25 m^2. This area is calculated by multiplying the distance between rows by the distance between vines in the same row. For vines planted in squares or triangles and trained using the goblet system, the area available for each plant must not exceed 3 m^2.

When trained using the goblet system, the vines are pruned short, with a maximum of six spurs per vine. Each spur has a maximum of two count buds.

When trained using the Royat cordon system, the vines are pruned short:

— with a maximum of six spurs per vine and a maximum of two count buds per spur, or

— with a maximum of 10 spurs per vine and a maximum of one count bud per spur.

Irrigation may be authorised.

The average maximum crop load per parcel is set at 7 000 kg per hectare. Where irrigation is authorised, the average maximum crop load per irrigated parcel is set at 5 500 kg per hectare.

Grapes containing less than 224 g of sugar per litre of must cannot be considered fully ripe.

Grapes of the Carignan N variety are harvested by hand and transported whole to the winemaking location.

b. *Maximum yields*

50 hectolitres per hectare

6. **Demarcated geographical area**

The grapes are harvested and the wines are made, processed, aged and bottled in the following municipalities in the department of Aude, listed on the basis of the 2019 Official Geographical Code: Boutenac, Fabrezan, Ferrals-les-Corbières, Lézignan-Corbières, Luc-sur-Orbieu, Montséret, Ornaisons, Saint-André-de-Roquelongue, Saint-Laurent-de-la-Cabrerisse, Thézan-des-Corbières.

7. **Main wine grape variety(-ies)**

Carignan N

Grenache N

Mourvèdre N - Monastrell

Syrah N - Shiraz

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

The geographical area is located at the centre of the department of Aude, between Carcassonne and Narbonne, around the Pinada de Boutenac massif, which ascends to an altitude of 273 m. It is bounded:

— by three rivers, the Orbieu to the north, the Aussou to the east and the Nielle to the west,

— and by the limestone plateaux of Thézan-des-Corbières and Saint-Laurent-de-la-Cabrerisse to the south.

This geographical area, which is south / south-west facing, is characterised by a gently rolling landscape made up of a succession of small hills, elongated ridges and hilltops crowned with pine forests.

Vines occupy most of the slopes up to an altitude of around 180 m. Grown in a Mediterranean climate, the vineyards covered by the 'Corbières-Boutenac' registered designation of origin are well protected from maritime influences by a network of interlacing hills and exposed to the influence of the north-west wind. The soils are thin and very stony but deep enough to allow good root development.

The natural conditions are ideal for achieving excellent ripeness, as they prevent summer water stress. However, the plant achieves balance gradually, which is why the more robust vine varieties, such as Mourvèdre N and Carignan N, have a late entry into production.

These natural conditions are particularly favourable for the historical Mediterranean grape varieties Grenache N, Mourvèdre N and Carignan N, and have proved to be well suited to Syrah N, which was introduced throughout Languedoc-Roussillon in the early 1980s. Syrah N contributes coveted and original aromatic notes in the coolest situations.

Carignan N is a hardy variety that tolerates windy and dry situations well. It is the winegrowers' preferred variety in the poorest soils of the Boutenac area, which is its natural habitat of choice. The young wines have hard, powerful tannins which become more refined over the appropriate ageing period.

Grenache N is happy in stony soils. It is adapted to wind and to the hottest situations, contributing fruitiness, alcoholic richness and fullness to the blend.

Mourvèdre N performs well in soils that are very warm with good water status. It is slow to adapt and its yield is used in blends only from the 6th year after planting, after which it contributes subtle notes and a sought-after hint of tannin.

The soils, climate, human expertise in planting the grape varieties, vine training method (short pruning for Mediterranean grape varieties), cultivation practices (manual harvesting) and ageing (mandatory ageing for 1 year, with 2 months in the bottle to refine the wines) are all factors that contribute to the production of an original product, which was recognised as a registered designation of origin within the 'Corbières' PDO in 2005.

By including a period of bottle ageing within the demarcated geographical area and area in immediate proximity in the production conditions, the producers are aiming to better safeguard the product's quality and specificity and thus the reputation of the registered designation of origin.

It is a young registered designation of origin which, nevertheless, has a long history of winegrowing. Vineyards already existed in Roman times, as shown by the earliest reference to wine being grown in the Corbières region at 'Villa major', now 'Villemajou', which lies in the municipality of Boutenac, right at the heart of the geographical area.

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

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, processing, ageing and bottling of the wines, comprises the territory of the following municipalities in the department of Aude, listed on the basis of the 2019 Official Geographical Code: Bizanet and Narbonne.

Legal framework:

National legislation

Type of further condition:

Additional provisions relating to labelling

Description of the condition:

(a) Wines with the registered designation of origin may display the name of a smaller geographical unit on their labels, provided that:

— it is a registered location,

— it appears on the harvest declaration.

The name of the registered location must be printed in letters no larger, in terms of both height and width, than half the size of the letters forming the name of the registered designation of origin.

(b) Wines with the registered designation of origin may display the broader geographical unit 'Corbières' on their labels.

The size of the letters for this broader geographical unit must be no larger, in terms of both height and width, than half the size of the letters forming the name of the registered designation of origin.

Legal framework:

National legislation

Type of further condition:

Packaging within the demarcated geographical area

Description of the condition:

The wines are aged at least until 31 December of the year following the year of harvest, with at least 2 months in the bottle.

By including a period of bottle ageing within the demarcated geographical area and area in immediate proximity in the production conditions, the producers are aiming to better safeguard the product's quality and specificity and thus the reputation of the registered designation of origin.

Link to the product specification

https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/gedei/site/bo-agri/document_administratif-eb40cd8d-b50b-496a-9338-b05361e352b3