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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/2025/4076)

COMMUNICATION OF APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT

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

'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores'

PGI-PT-1124-AM01 – 23.4.2025

1. **Name of product**

'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores'

2. **Geographical indication type**

☐ Protected designation of origin (PDO)

☒ Protected geographical indication (PGI)

☐ Geographical indication (GI)

3. **Sector**

☒ Agricultural products

☐ Wines

☐ Spirit drinks

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

Portugal

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

Directorate-General of Agriculture and Rural Development

6. **Qualification as standard amendment**

The proposed amendment is a standard amendment since it does not include a change to the registered designation, does not amend the melon's links to the geographical area, and places no restrictions on marketing.

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

1. *Introduction*

Current version:

This document, in line with Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 of 20 March 2006 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs and Commission Regulation (EC) No 1898/2006 of 14 December 2006 laying down detailed rules of implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006, is intended to support the process of certification of 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' as a protected geographical indication (PGI) product, helping to confirm its quality and thus enhance its value on the various sales markets.

(…)

[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).

It is therefore a product which meets all the conditions necessary to obtain protection for its geographical name, 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' PGI.

Proposed amendment:

This document sets out the characteristics and method of certifying 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' as a product with a protected geographical indication (PGI), helping to confirm its quality and thus enhance its value on the various sales markets.

Justification:

The legislation referenced in paragraph 1 of the Introduction is not up to date. The last paragraph has been omitted. The remaining paragraphs remain unchanged.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

2. *Product description*

Current version:

The designation 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' is given to the fruits of *Cucumis melo L.* belonging to the *Cantalupenses* group and reticulated varieties produced on the island of Santa Maria, part of the archipelago of the Azores, in accordance with the rules laid down in this specification. The fruit is round to oval in shape, has a markedly reticulated rind that is greenish when unripe and turns greenish yellow as it ripens, with an average weight of 0,8 kg, an average diameter of 13 cm and a generally soft, very aromatic orange-coloured flesh that tastes sweet and juicy when ripe.

According to the classification of foodstuffs, for the purposes of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 of 20 March 2006, in accordance with Annex II to Commission Regulation (EC) No 1898/2006 of 14 December 2006, the product comes under Class 1.6. Fruit, vegetables and cereals fresh or processed.

Proposed amendment

The designation 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' is given to the fruits of *Cucumis melo L.* belonging to the *Cantalupenses* group and various reticulated varieties produced in accordance with the rules laid down in this specification and in the defined geographical area. The fruit are round to oval in shape, with a markedly reticulated rind that is greenish when unripe and turns greenish yellow as it ripens, with an average weight of 0,8 kg.

Justification:

According to the legislation in force, the product type is classified under the Combined Nomenclature and the previous classification has therefore been omitted. The remaining information has been grouped under the following points (2.1 Organoleptic characteristics; 2.2 Chemical characteristics and 2.3 Commercial presentation). The diameter was omitted, as explained under the point 'Commercial presentation'.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

3. *Organoleptic characteristics*

Current version:

2.6 ORGANOLEPTIC CHARACTERISTICS

The 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' has unique organoleptic characteristics in terms of its aroma and taste, very pleasant and easily distinguishable by the local people and connoisseurs of the product.

In order to study the organoleptic characteristics of 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores', various organoleptic parameters of the fruit have been analysed (Table 5): the colour, the texture of the flesh, the type of rind, the flesh colour, taste and smell. These analyses were carried out at the Instrumental Analysis Laboratory of the Department of Agricultural Sciences of the University of the Azores.

Table 5 – Organoleptic parameters assessed for 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores'.

The flesh is orange coloured and has a soft texture, sweet and juicy taste and is very aromatic, which is a characteristic feature of the varieties grown in Santa Maria. Its typical aroma, resulting from the release of volatile acids, is the characteristic which immediately indicates the presence of the fruit.

These characteristics of the melon – appearance, taste, texture and aroma – result from the natural conditions of the island of Santa Maria, in particular the soil and climate, as well as the growing methods adopted by the island's producers.

Thus, the 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores', hallowed by tradition, has a high degree of market acceptance and is popular with consumers who rate it above melons from other areas in terms of its appearance and taste.

Proposed amendment

The 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' has unique organoleptic characteristics in terms of its aroma and taste, very pleasant and easily distinguishable by the local people and connoisseurs of the product.

The flesh is orange in colour with a soft texture. It has a sweet and juicy taste and is very aromatic. Its typical aroma, resulting from the release of volatile acids, is the characteristic which immediately indicates the presence of the fruit.

Justification:

The first and third paragraphs of this point have been moved to 2.1 Organoleptic characteristics and the remaining paragraphs have been deleted as they are repeated.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

4. *Chemical characteristics*

Current version:

2.5 PHYSICAL, CHEMICAL AND NUTRITIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

In 2004, the Santa Maria Agricultural Development Board (SDASMA) carried out an experiment with the 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores', in which it studied the quality of the fruit according to the altitude at which it was grown (Table 1).

The physical and chemical parameters analysed were pH, moisture content at 70 °C (vacuum), proteins, total sugars, reducing sugars and vitamin C. These analyses were carried out at the Instrumental Analysis Laboratory of the Department of Agricultural Sciences of the University of the Azores.

Table 1 – Characteristics of the 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores', by altitude.

It was found that the physical, chemical and organoleptic characteristics of the fruit do not change significantly depending on the altitudes where the melon is grown on the island of Santa Maria. The researchers concluded that altitude does not have a direct influence on the characteristics in question.

Another evaluation carried out by the SDADMA concerned the quality of the fruit when it was harvested at three different moments during the harvesting season (Table 2). These analyses were carried out at the Institute of Technological Innovation of the Azores (INOVA).

Table 2 – Characteristics of the fruit depending on the harvesting season.

It was found that the characteristics analysed did not show significant changes over the harvesting period.

Analyses were carried out on various parameters in order to characterise the 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' in physical and chemical terms.

In 2006, the Santa Maria Agricultural Development Service, in partnership with AGROMARIENSECOOP – *Cooperativa de Produtores Agro-Pecuários da Ilha de Santa Maria* (Cooperative of Agricultural and Cattle Producers of Santa Maria), C.R.L. and with the technical support of Codimaco – *Certificação e Qualidade* (Certification and Quality) Lda., carried out a series of physical and chemical analyses of samples of 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' which showed a range of differences compared to common melons (Table 3).

Table 3 – Nutritional composition of the 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores', compared to common melons.

In terms of energy, the 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' has an average energy content higher than that of a common melon. It also has higher values for proteins, lipids and carbohydrates. It has less fibre than the average common melon.

In 2007, the SDASMA carried out a further set of analyses on the organoleptic parameters (Table 5) and physical and chemical parameters of samples of 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' at the Instrumental Analysis Laboratory of the Department of Agricultural Sciences of the University of the Azores, demonstrating once again the difference between this fruit and common melons (Table 4).

Table 4 – Physical and chemical composition of the 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores', compared to common melons.

The nutritional properties of the 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' include its high vitamin C content, compared with the average value for common melons, as well as its mineral content, including potassium, magnesium and calcium.

Due to the high potassium and water content, 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' is recommended for people under diuretic medication.

The results presented show the difference between 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' and common melons.

Proposed amendment

'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' stands out because of its high energy values and significant amounts of protein, lipids and carbohydrates, being rich in Vitamin C and in essential minerals such as potassium, magnesium and calcium.

Justification:

The physical, chemical and nutritional characteristics have been summarised and included in point 2.2 Chemical characteristics, with only the differentiating parameters kept.

This amendment affects the single document.

5. *Commercial presentation*

Current version:

5. COMMERCIAL PRESENTATION

The 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores', when sold fresh, must be whole, healthy (products which are going off or deteriorating, rendering them unfit for consumption, are excluded), clean, free from visible foreign matter, free from parasites and any changes caused by them, free from abnormal external moisture, free from extraneous smells and taste, and must be sufficiently developed to enable it to:

— continue the ripening process in order to reach the degree of maturity appropriate to the varietal characteristics;

— withstand transport and ripening;

— reach its destination in a satisfactory condition.

The fruits intended for storage/marketing fresh should be selected. Sizing by diameter is carried out (above 10cm) and the following size groups are distinguished:

— Size I: weight between 800 and 1 400 g

— Size II: weight between 600 and 799 g.

Fruit of sizes below and above those accepted in classes I and II and/or which are malformed can be used for industrial consumption, in particular for preserves and smoothies, among other uses.

'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' must always be packaged individually and/or in multi-packs, suitable, depending on the use, for keeping the product in perfect condition.

The fruit must be presented under the following conditions:

— Uniformity: the contents of each package must be uniform and consist only of fruit of the same origin (i.e. the same holding), variety, size and quality and the same state of ripeness. The visible part of the contents of each package must be representative of the entire contents.

— Presentation: 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' must be packaged in a single layer.

— Packaging: ‘Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores’ must be packaged in such a way as to ensure that the product is properly protected. The internal packaging materials must be new, clean and of a quality such as to avoid causing any external or internal damage to the produce. Packaging must be free of any foreign bodies.

— Labelling: the packaging must be labelled in accordance with the law. The material to be used is paper or printed marks bearing commercial indications, provided that the printing or affixing of the label is always done with a non-toxic (food-grade) ink or glue.

Proposed amendment

‘Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores’ must be marketed fresh, whole or prepared (peeled, cut up or pulped, fresh or frozen). The fresh whole fruit, depending on its weight, may be marketed in the following size categories:

size III (weight between 500 and 799 g);

size II (weight between 800 and 1 399 g);

size I (weight between 1 400 and 1 600 g).

Fruit weighing less than 500 g or more than 1 600 g may be sold for further processing.

Justification:

— Due to the distance between the island of Santa Maria and the main markets, transporting fresh ‘Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores’ PGI fruit is difficult, especially because of its perishable nature. Further processing the product (peeling, cutting or pulping, fresh or frozen) makes it possible to overcome these limitations. This change broadens the possibilities for use, despite the fact that further processing is already a possibility in the current specification, thus adding value to this local product and promoting its presence in bigger and more distant markets. In addition, the production window is very small, and in peak production periods, freezing is an alternative to the difficulty of immediate disposal of the product outside the island due to limited sea and air transport links.

— Amending the permitted size of ‘Meloa de Santa Maria- Açores’ PGI is a response to a growing preference on the market, aligning it with consumer demand, and making the product more competitive.

— It should be noted that, over the years of production and sale, the diameter of ‘Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores’ PGI has remained within the limits laid down for marketing. This stability indicates that diameter is no longer a factor of significant variability which would justify its inclusion as a calibration criterion. Selection exclusively by weight is sufficient to ensure uniformity of batches and simplifies the calibration processes, optimising resources and increasing efficiency.

Fruit weighing less than 500 g or more than 1 600 g with the same physical, chemical and organoleptic characteristics may be further prepared and processed.

This amendment affects the single document.

6. *Botanical and morphological characteristics*

Deletion of point 2.3 Botanical characteristics and point 2.4 Morphological characteristics of the specification, as these characteristics relate to all melons, not specifically ‘Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores’ PGI.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

7. *Definition of the defined geographical area*

Current version:

3. CHARACTERISATION OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA OF PRODUCTION AND PACKAGING

3.1. LOCATION

(…)

3.2. CLIMATE

(…)

3.3. GEOLOGY, MORPHOLOGY AND RELIEF

(…)

3.4. SOILS

(…)

Proposed amendment

3. GEOGRAPHICAL AREA OF PRODUCTION

Island of Santa Maria, Azores, Portugal.

Figure 1 – Geographical area of 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' PGI.

Justification:

To indicate clearly the production area of the product, i.e. the island of Santa Maria in the Azores.

The information in points 3.1 Location, 3.2 Climate, 3.3 Geology, Morphology and Relief and 3.4 Soils has been summarised and reorganised in section 6.3 Natural factors, where it is better framed.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

8. *Evidence that the product originates in the defined geographical area*

Current version:

7. Guarantee of the product's geographical origin

7.1. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PRODUCT

The characteristics of 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores', particularly its aroma and taste, are closely linked to the geographical area and method of production. These characteristics, as defined in this specification, which result from the interaction of climatic, soil and cultural factors with the plant and the know-how associated with the production of this crop, from the farm to the final consumer, are easily discernible and recognised by the local population and habitual consumers and must be highlighted by labelling and the quality mark so that other consumers can recognise them.

7.2. Control system

The existence of a control system is crucial to ensure that:

a) only fruit obtained in the above-mentioned geographical area and produced on holdings authorised by the PGI Management Group may benefit from the use of the Protected Geographical Indication 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores'.

b) authorisation is granted only to producers who, cumulatively:

— operate holdings in the geographical area of production referred to in point 3.1;

— produce the melons as described in point 4;

— submit to the inspection and certification system provided for in this document – Inspection and Certification Body – Technical Commission for Certification and Control;

— undertake in writing to comply with the provisions laid down in this document.

The authorisation provided for in the previous subparagraph shall be subject to prior verification of the production conditions and characteristics of the final product, to be carried out by the entity recognised as the Inspection and Certification Body, at the request of the group managing the PGI.

7.3. Traceability

Procedures will be put in place to make it possible at any time during production, conservation or at the point of sale to know the precise origin of 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' and the conditions under which it was produced.

The traceability system shall be as follows:

a) the agricultural holdings in question are registered by the managing group, indicating the area and the current varieties of melon;

b) melons harvested from each holding are delivered to storage/processing units also registered with the managing group and duly authorised;

c) records are kept by the storage/processing units demonstrating the destination of the products received;

d) the packaging of the final product is registered and labelled in accordance with point 5.1;

e) it is possible to trace the product through the serial number of the guarantee mark and the bar code on each package.

All these procedures must be in accordance with the legislation in force.

Proposed amendment

4. GUARANTEE OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN OF THE PRODUCT

7.1. – OMISSION

4.1. CONTROL SYSTEM

The control system shall ensure that:

a) only fruit obtained in the above-mentioned geographical area and produced on approved and inspected holdings may benefit from the use of the Protected Geographical Indication 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores'.

b) authorisation is granted only to producers who, cumulatively:

— operate holdings in the geographical area of production referred to in point 3;

— produce the melons as described in point 5;

— submit to the inspection system;

— undertake in writing to comply with the provisions laid down in this document.

The verification of compliance with the product specification of the 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' is carried out by the competent authority responsible for official inspections of geographical indications in the Autonomous Region of the Azores or by the inspection body to which that authority delegates such tasks.

4.2. TRACEABILITY

The traceability system ensures that, at any moment, from production to placing on the market, the precise origin of 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' and how it was produced can be known. Accordingly:

a) agricultural holdings must keep records of the variety of melon used, cultivated areas, methods of production, etc.;

b) the melons harvested on each holding are delivered to approved sorting and packaging plants subject to the inspection system;

c) these plants keep records showing the origin and destination of the products received;

d) the packaging of the final product is registered and labelled in accordance with point 7;

e) a product logo is applied to each fruit and to pre-packaged products.

Justification:

Clarification, simplification and summary of information with deletion of some text and repeated information.

The text in point 7.4 – Inspection and certification body has been included and updated.

The product logo obligation also applies to prepacked products, in order to provide a guarantee to consumers.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

9. *Description of the method of production*

Current version:

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD OF OBTAINING 'MELOA DE SANTA MARIA – AÇORES'

Cucurbitaceae are typical plants of warm and dry climates. Like all *cucurbitaceae*, melons are frost-sensitive and heat resistant, provided that the fruit is well protected from direct sunlight by its leaves.

The monthly average minimum temperatures must not be less than 15 °C, as this would slow the growth of the plant and delay the ripening of the fruit. During the growing season, the temperature may range from 12 °C to 34 °C, with the optimum temperature for flowering and initial growth of the fruit in the range of 18 to 23 °C, while for the ripening of the fruit it will be higher, between 20 and 30 °C. Thus, and as explained in the previous chapter, the island of Santa Maria has excellent conditions for the cultivation of melons.

Proposed amendment

5. DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD OF OBTAINING 'MELOA DE SANTA MARIA – AÇORES'

Omission

Justification:

Elimination of non-product-specific generic information.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

10. *Description of the method of production*

Current version:

4.1. PREPARING THE GROUND

4.2. FERTILISATION

4.3. STRUCTURE OF THE LAND

4.4. SOWING AND TRANSPLANTATION

(...) The second case of direct sowing is also an alternative, with the application of insulation and the use of 'tunnels', speeding up the growth of the crops and protecting them from wind and sea spray. Using 'tunnels' is good alternative to bring forward growth.

(…)

4.5. AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES

4.6. IRRIGATION

4.7. PESTS AND DISEASES

4.8. ROTATIONS

4.9. HARVEST

4.12. PESTICIDE RESIDUES

Proposed amendment

5.1. PREPARING THE GROUND

5.2. FERTILISATION

5.3. STRUCTURE OF THE LAND

5.4. SOWING AND TRANSPLANTATION

(...) The second case of direct sowing is also a more economical alternative. In both cases, the application of insulation and the use of 'tunnels' makes it possible to speed up growth and protect the crops against wind and sea spray.

(…)

5.5. AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES

5.6. IRRIGATION

5.7. PESTS AND DISEASES

5.8. ROTATIONS

5.9. HARVEST

4.12. Omitted

Justification:

Clarification of the possibility of using insulating film and 'tunnels' for sowing and transplantation in order to protect the plants when temperature conditions, wind and sea spray could be harmful.

Other points renumbered according to the new structure of the specification, and 4.12 omitted as being of a general nature. Points 4.10 – Conservation and 4.11 – Packaging were justified above.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

11. *Description of the method of production*

Current version:

4.10. PRESERVATION

(…)

Proposed amendment

5.10. PRESERVATION

(…)

The use of fruit preservation products, such as disinfection of the stalk and protection of the rind, is permitted in order to extend the shelf life of 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' PGI (post-harvest).

Justification:

A paragraph has been added to the 'Conservation' point in the chapter – Description of the method of production, in order to allow the use of products to protect the fruit after harvesting, given that 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' is an extremely sensitive and perishable fruit. Use of such products extends the lifespan of the product without altering its organoleptic, physical and chemical characteristics, benefiting both producers and consumers.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

Current version:

4.11. Packaging

'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' must be packaged in the defined geographical area in packaging suitable for keeping the product in perfect condition, guaranteeing its authenticity by ensuring that it does not mix with other similar products.

Selection and packaging are carried out in the region of origin, in plants authorised by the Producers' Group and subject to inspection and certification carried out by the Technical Commission for Certification and Control, making it possible to ensure full traceability of the product, protecting consumers and offering them a product which is authentically produced and prepared in the place of origin.

These measures are justified not only in terms of cost efficiency, but also in terms of the efficiency and effectiveness of quality control ('Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' is a product that is extremely sensitive to handling/transport and is easily damaged, which jeopardises both the preservation and the quality and image of the product) and traceability. The aim is to protect the quality and authenticity of the product, to the benefit of both producers and consumers.

Consumers buying a product labelled with the PGI indication can be assured that the product is authentic and has all the physical, chemical and sensory characteristics specific to it, which is their right when they decide to purchase the product.

5. Commercial presentation

(…)

'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' must always be packaged individually and/or in multi-packs, suitable, depending on the use, for keeping the product in perfect condition.

The fruit must be presented under the following conditions:

Uniformity: the contents of each package must be uniform and consist only of fruit of the same origin (i.e. the same holding), variety, size and quality and the same state of ripeness. The fruit that can be seen must be representative of all the fruit in the package. (…)

Proposed amendment

5.11. PACKAGING

'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' must be packaged in the defined geographical area in packaging suitable for keeping the product in perfect condition, guaranteeing its authenticity by ensuring that it does not mix with other similar products.

Selection and packaging are carried out in plants subject to the inspection system located in the geographical area of production.

The whole fruit may be packaged individually or in multi-packs, arranged in a single layer. The contents of each package must be uniform and consist only of fruit of the same variety, size and quality and the same state of ripeness. The fruit that can be seen must be representative of all the fruit in the package.

Justification:

Clarification, simplification and summary of information, given that some information on packaging was already mentioned in point 5, Commercial presentation.

The product follows a strict traceability system that guarantees authenticity, quality and food safety, from the farm to the final consumer, in accordance with the rules laid down. Given that all producers of 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' follow the same production standards as those laid down in the specification, it is no longer necessary for the content of each multi-pack to have the same origin (holding).

This amendment affects the single document.

12. *Elements establishing the link between the product and the geographical environment*

Current version:

3. – Description of the geographical area of production and packaging

3.1. – Location

3.2. – Climate

3.3. – Geology, morphology and relief

3.4. – Soils

Proposed amendment

6.1. NATURAL FACTORS

The Azores Archipelago is located in the Atlantic Ocean and consists of nine islands, including, in the very south, the island of Santa Maria, where 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' is grown.

Santa Maria, when compared with the other islands of the Azores Archipelago, is the only island on which there are areas of sedimentary origin (limestone), in addition to the volcanic formations found on the other islands.

The specific nature of the island is therefore entirely linked to the type of soil: clay loam, very rich in potassium, calcium and magnesium and in all other micronutrients;

the organic matter content is high, and the pH is neutral.

Most of the island's soils are andosols, originating from volcanic materials and with good water retention capacity. These soil types include litholics, barros, mollisols and pardacento (greyish brown) soils. The deeper and well-aerated barros and pardacento soils, which predominate in the southern and south-western areas of the island, are particularly suitable for the cultivation of the fruit.

As regards the terrain, the island consists of a virtually flat part in the west, and an area in the east which is quite hilly. 85 % of the island (82,5 km^2) is below 300 m.

Due to its position in the south-east of the archipelago and its low altitude, the island of Santa Maria has lower humidity levels than the other islands of the Autonomous Region of the Azores.

The climate is considered dry and temperate, with little fluctuation between the average winter temperature (14 °C) and the average summer temperature (22 °C) and an annual average temperature that varies between 10 °C and 20 °C. In terms of relative air humidity, the climate can be considered humid (annual average relative humidity at 09,00 between 75 % and 90 %), although the average relative humidity is lower than on the other islands of the Azores. As regards precipitation, it is classified as moderately rainy to rainy, with more rain in the winter (average annual precipitation between 500 and 2 000 mm), depending on the area.

The prevailing winds change direction throughout the year and are stronger in winter.

In short, the island of Santa Maria has its own very specific climatic conditions, explained by its location, size, morphology and orography, which distinguish it from the other islands of the Azores. This makes it favourable for the production of the fruit.

The organoleptic characteristics of 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' are closely linked to the geographical area and method of production. The combination of climate and the diverse types of soil and relief gives the island's agricultural produce very specific characteristics, in particular the Meloa de Santa Maria.

Justification:

In point 6 – Elements establishing the link with the geographical environment, the text in point 3 – Description of the geographical area of production and packaging (location, climate, geology, morphology, relief and soils) has been summarised in the section 'Natural factors', in order to highlight the specificity of the geographical area and its link with the product.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

13. *Elements establishing the link between the product and the geographical environment*

Current version:

7.1. Characteristics of the product

The characteristics of 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores', particularly its aroma and taste, are closely linked to the geographical area and method of production. These characteristics, as defined in this specification, which result from the interaction of climatic, soil and cultural factors with the plant and the know-how associated with the production of this crop, from the farm to the final consumer, are easily discernible and recognised by the local population and habitual consumers and must be highlighted by labelling and the quality mark so that other consumers can recognise them.

Proposed amendment

6.2. HUMAN FACTORS

The know-how of the island's producers in terms of production and cultivation techniques complement the factors associated with the natural environment: incorporating forage legume residue into the soil, shape pruning (traditionally not carried out for common melons), good irrigation, knowing how to tell when the fruit is perfectly ripe, and rigorous selection of the fruit. The result is a product which, by its flavour, texture and aroma, can be distinguished from other melons, and is widely recognised by consumers elsewhere in the Azores and in mainland Portugal.

Justification:

Reorganisation of the text on 'know-how' under Human Factors, justifying the link between the product and the geographical environment.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

14. *Elements establishing the link between the product and the geographical environment*

Current version:

6.2. – Economic and social aspects

Until 2000, 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' was sold exclusively on the local market and did not have a significant impact on the economy of the island. As its reputation grew, demand for the product started to emerge from large-scale traders on the neighbouring island, São Miguel.

In order to encourage agricultural producers on Santa Maria to produce more and better 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores', in 2005 the Santa Maria Agricultural Development Board took the initiative to promote specific training for producers – Integrated melon production and protection (Annex III; Article 3).

With the increase in production over the years, the need for producers to organise themselves into a cooperative to improve the marketing of the product emerged. Therefore, in 2006, 13 producers got together to form the AGROMARIENSECOOP – COOPERATIVA DE PRODUTORES AGRO-PECUÁRIOS DA ILHA DE SANTA MARIA, C.R.L., with a project for the enhancement and marketing of Santa Maria agri-food products, with 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' as its star product.

The AZUL brand, inspired by the green of the land and the blue of the sea surrounding it, was launched in order to promote the agri-food products of Santa Maria, of which 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' is the best known on the Azores market. The commercial development of a product, or a set of products, by means of branding works on the basis that consumers can recognise it and rely on its quality. Having 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' as the lead product of a brand representing a locality gives it prominence at local, regional and national levels. The launch took place at the 'Open Day/Farmers' Day' event promoted by the Regional Secretariat for Agriculture and Forestry in 2006, where visits to the 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' testing ground run by the SDASMA were also promoted. Over the following years (2007 and 2008), 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' remained the star product at the 'Open Day/Farmers' Day' event, with visits to 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' testing grounds, organised tasting of 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' originating from these testing grounds, and desserts based on the product served at special lunches (Annexes II to IV).

With a view to raising the profile of the 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores', through the AZUL brand, the AGROMARIENSECOOP took part in various campaigns aimed at promoting the intrinsic quality of this local product from Santa Maria to the rest of Portugal and internationally.

One of these took place at the 28th International Horticulture Congress (2010) in Lisbon, a dedicated venue for establishing contacts between professionals in the field, where AGROMARIENSECOOP had a stand dedicated to the AZUL brand with a special focus on 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' and the opportunity to sample the product (Annexes II to IV).

To ramp up the impact of the brand, various promotional and awareness-raising campaigns were organised in 2010 in a number of Pingo Doce outlets in Lisbon, bringing to the mainland one of the products benefiting from the favourable environment of the islands, especially the soil and climate of the island of Santa Maria. As part of these promotional campaigns, advertising/information leaflets for the AZUL brand were distributed, highlighting 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' (Annexes II to IV and Annex VI).

Another promotional/awareness-raising event was included in the Santa Maria Rally of 2010, where 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' was promoted at the Rally briefing – one of the cars was decorated with the AZUL brand, with a special mention of the 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' product, highlighting it in order to reach a wide target audience (Annexes II to IV).

There are currently 13 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' producers, two of which are not members of the Producers' Group. The Group produces an average of 200 tonnes of melons, some of which are sent to other islands in the Azores, in particular the islands of S. Miguel, Pico, Faial and Terceira, and some of which go to mainland Portugal. Production of 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' is expected to increase in the coming years, to reach 400 tonnes over the next four years.

6.3. CULTURAL AND GASTRONOMIC ASPECTS

Ever since AGROMARIENSECOOP was established and started running, events to promote and raise awareness of the 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' have been organised, such as participation in and/or organisation of agricultural fairs and melon festivals, as part of the major festivities taking place on the island.

Starting in 2004, the *Feira de Horticultura da Ilha de Santa Maria – Festa da Meloa* has been one of the main social events on the island, welcoming a large number of visitors. The exhibition of fruit and vegetables at that edition of the fair in the cloisters of the town hall of Vila do Porto, highlighted 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores'. At the 2004 event, a competition of desserts based on 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' was held for local hospitality businesses and a workshop dedicated to 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' juices and gratins, highlighting the culinary tradition associated with the fruit (Annexes II to IV).

Since the first edition and then annually every August, the Melon Festival has been one of the island's main festivities, becoming a point of reference at local and regional level, inspiring various activities such as informative talks (e.g. on the marketing and selling of agricultural products), practical workshops (e.g. on fast food, with celebrity chef Vitor Sobral – in 2005), and dessert competitions with 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' as the main ingredient (Annexes II to IV).

Chakall, another celebrity chef, hosted a workshop at the Melon Festival in 2009 on the preparation of dishes based on 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Azores', as well as a demonstration and tasting session for drinks and aperitifs made from it and a 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' dessert competition. This year, in addition to the traditional activities, a 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' recipe book was launched (Annex V).

These awareness-raising and promotional activities gave rise to various articles in the local, regional and national press (Annexes II to IV).

'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' is recognised as a distinct product linked to production actually carried out on Santa Maria, which gives it its recognised characteristics and qualities.

Proposed amendment

6.2.2. Socio-economic and cultural aspects

Sales of Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores used to be restricted to the local market. However, the product's reputation for excellence led to an increase in demand from major commercial operators on the neighbouring island, São Miguel, which was an incentive to increase both the quantity and quality of the fruit produced.

With the increase in production over the years, the need for producers to organise themselves into a cooperative to improve the marketing of the product emerged; so, in 2006, 13 co-operatives got together to form the AGROMARIENSECOOP – COOPERATIVA DE PRODUTORES AGRO-PECUÁRIOS DA ILHA DE SANTA MARIA, C.R.L., with a project for the enhancement and marketing of Santa Maria agri-food products, with 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' as its star product.

Some of the production is marketed at regional level, sent to São Miguel, Pico, Faial and Terceira; another share is sent to mainland Portugal.

Among agri-food products from Santa Maria, 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' has the highest profile on the Azores market, which has led to the development of various promotion and awareness-raising initiatives to increase the product's visibility and reputation, for example the highlighting of the product in the context of the festivities held on the island, including the *Festa da Meloa* (Melon Festival), an annual celebration that takes place during the season of the island's major social events.

Given the importance of this crop and the context of agricultural production on the island, and in order to encourage agricultural producers on Santa Maria to produce more and better 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores', in 2005 the Santa Maria Agricultural Development Board took the initiative to promote specific training for producers – Integrated melon production and protection.

Over the years, the 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' has also inspired various promotional and tasting activities, visits to testing grounds, competitions, workshops and informative talks. It is a fruit widely known in the local traditional cuisine, and a book of recipes based on it has been published.

Justification:

Change of title in line with the new structure of the specification and reorganisation and summary of the text.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

15. *Compliance checking Inspection body*

Current version:

7.4. CONTROL AND CERTIFICATION BODY

The control and certification of 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' will be carried out by the Control and Certification Body (CB) designated by the PGI Management Group and recognised as complying with the requirements of Standard 45011:2001 (concerning product certification), which carries out its activities in accordance with the specification for 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' PGI. This ensures that only melons produced on farms and packaging plants authorised for that purpose can benefit from the PGI.

The control system put in place is implemented along the production chain, and the 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' is duly labelled by the CB's affixing of its certification mark to it.

The certification mark must include the following wording:

— Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores – IGP;

— Name of the inspection and certification body;

— Serial number (numbered code enabling the product to be traced).

Proposed amendment

Omission

Justification:

This information has been updated under point 4 – Guarantee of the geographical origin of the product – 4.1 Control system.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

16. *Labelling*

Current version:

5.1. Specific labelling elements with the PGI indication

Each package of 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' must bear a standardised label containing the following information:

— Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores – Indicação Geográfica Protegida (IGP);

— Trade name or company name and address of the producer (this may appear in the bar code, in which case there is no need to show it on the labelling);

— Origin of the product: Ilha de Santa Maria – Açores – Portugal;

— Commercial characteristics – class and size;

— Bar code (with information ensuring traceability throughout the process);

— Logo of the producer group:

— Approved EU logo for PGIs following the EU decision.

The name or business name and address of the producer may be replaced by the name of another entity, with the authorisation of the Producers' Group, provided that the entity in question is responsible for and markets the product.

In addition to this information, irrespective of the form of commercial presentation, the specific logo of the Management Group and the certification mark must always be affixed indelibly and in a tamper-proof way to each fruit.

The following illustration shows the logo of the Producers' Group.

Proposed amendment

7. SPECIFIC LABELLING DETAILS

Labelling allows the product to be clearly and immediately identified by the consumer, inside and outside the geographical area of production, as a product with unique characteristics based on its origin.

In addition to the statutory information, 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' must bear the following words: 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores Indicação Geográfica Protegida' or 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores IGP'.

The 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores', regardless of how it is presented for sale, must be individually identified with this product logo, which may include sequential numbering and (mention of) the body responsible for control.

Figure 6 – Logo

Justification:

Correction of the mandatory information on 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' which must be displayed on each fruit/package and the logo to be used, in order to guarantee the origin of the product and make it more recognisable.

Clarification and simplification of the information with deletion of repeated text.

This amendment affects the single document.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores'

EU No: PGI-PT-1124-AM01 – 23.4.2025

PDO ( ) PGI (X)

1. **Name(s) (of PDO or PGI)**

'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores'

2. **Member State or third country**

Portugal

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

3.1. *Combined nomenclature code*

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

0807 – melons, watermelons and papaws (papayas), fresh

0807 19 – other

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

0811 – Fruit and nuts, uncooked or cooked by steaming or boiling in water, frozen, whether or not containing added sugar or other sweetening matter:

0811 90 – other

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

'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' is a reticulated cantaloupe melon of the species *Cucumis melo L.*

The fruit is round to oval in shape, has a markedly reticulated rind that is greenish when unripe and turns greenish yellow as it ripens, and a soft, aromatic orange-coloured flesh that tastes sweet and juicy when ripe.

'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' stands out because of its high energy values and significant amounts of protein, lipids and carbohydrates, being rich in Vitamin C and in essential minerals such as potassium, magnesium and calcium.

'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' must be marketed fresh, whole or prepared (peeled, cut up or pulped, fresh or frozen). The fresh whole fruit, depending on its weight, may be marketed in the following size categories:

— size III (weight between 500 and 799 g);

— size II (weight between 800 and 1 399 g);

— size I (weight between 1 400 and 1 600 g).

Fruit weighing less than 500 g or more than 1 600 g may be sold for further processing.

3.3. *Feed (for products of animal origin only)*

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

Production, harvesting, selection and preparation take place in the defined geographical area.

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

The whole fruit may be packaged individually or in multi-packs, arranged in a single layer. The contents of each package must be uniform and consist only of fruit of the same variety, size and quality and the same state of ripeness. The visible part of the contents of each package must be representative of the entire contents.

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

In addition to the statutory information, 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' must bear the following words: 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores Indicação Geográfica Protegida' or 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores IGP'.

The 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores', regardless of how it is presented for sale, must be individually identified with the product logo, which may include sequential numbering and (mention of) the body responsible for the control.

Logo:



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

The demarcated geographical area consists of all the parishes on the island of Santa Maria in the Archipelago of the Azores.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

Specificity of the geographical area

Santa Maria, when compared with the other islands of the Azores Archipelago, is the only island on which there are areas of sedimentary origin (limestone), in addition to the volcanic formations found on the other islands. The specificity of this island is therefore entirely derived from the type of soil: clay loam, very rich in potassium, calcium and magnesium and in all other micronutrients; the organic matter content is high, and the pH is neutral.

Due to its position in the south-east of the archipelago and its low altitude, the island of Santa Maria has lower humidity levels than the other islands of the Autonomous Region of the Azores. The climate is considered dry and temperate, with little fluctuation between the average winter temperature (14 °C) and the average summer temperature (22 °C) and an annual average temperature that varies between 10 °C and 20 °C. In terms of the relative humidity of the air, the climate is considered humid (annual average relative humidity at 09,00 between 75 % and 90 %). As regards precipitation, it is classified as moderately rainy to rainy (average annual precipitation between 500 and 2 000 mm), depending on the area. In short, the island of Santa Maria has its own very specific climatic conditions, explained by its location, size, morphology and orography, which distinguish it from the other islands of the Archipelago of the Azores.

The combination of climate and the diverse types of soil and relief gives the island's agricultural produce very specific characteristics, and it precisely this that makes 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' stand out from other melons. Another important factor is the producers' expertise in growing the crop and the techniques they use – such as incorporating forage legume residue into the soil, shape pruning, knowing how to tell when the fruit is perfectly ripe, good irrigation and rigorous selection of the fruit. The result is a product which, by its flavour, texture and aroma, can be distinguished from other melons, and is widely recognised by consumers elsewhere in the Azores and in mainland Portugal.

The islands have been known for the flavour of the local melons since they were first introduced on the island. In 1570, Gaspar Frutuoso declared: '(…) melons are also plentiful, the best on these islands, and there is not a single one, even the least good, that does not taste delicious (…)'. In modern times, the island continues to be known for fruit production and, of all the agricultural products produced there, is 'famous for its melons' (Guido de Monterey, 1981, p. 47).

Specificity of the product

'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' can be distinguished from fruit of the same category produced elsewhere by its physical, chemical and organoleptic characteristics. In organoleptic terms, it is distinguished by its soft, orange-coloured flesh, and sweet, juicy taste when ripe, which is very specific to the varieties grown on the island of Santa Maria. It can be detected immediately by its aroma, created by the release of volatile acids.

Of the nutritional properties listed in point 3.2, the high vitamin C content, compared to the average value for common melons, and the fact that it is rich in minerals, including potassium, magnesium and calcium should be emphasised. Regarding energy values, 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' has higher average values than the common melon. It also contains more protein, fat and carbohydrate. It has lower fibre values than the common melon.

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)

Melons were introduced by colonists on the island of Santa Maria around the 16th century and continued to be grown as a garden crop. Writing about regional production at that time, when the island's main agricultural products were wine and sweet potatoes, Adriano Ferreira (1996, p. 88) provides a historical record of the lands and its people, stating that 'Santa Maria was known for its excellent melons, which were exported to other islands. And let it be said, while we are about it, that our fruit was always good, although we never produced large quantities of it'.

More recently, in the seventies, emigrants returning from the Americas began to introduce hybrid melon varieties. Local growers soon realised that these new varieties grew very well and produced high quality fruit, in addition to having excellent commercial potential, and gradually increased their production area. For almost 20 years efforts focused on finding the melon variety that best adapted to Santa Maria's soil and climatic conditions and met the islanders' demands. Reticulated cantaloupe varieties were the ones selected.

The specific characteristics of 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' – rough rind, juicy, orange-coloured flesh, sweet taste and agreeable aroma – derive from the soil and climatic conditions of the island and the local production methods. The development of volatile acids, which occurs when the fruit ripens and gives it its aroma, and the specific characteristics of the local soil, rich in potassium, magnesium, calcium and other micronutrients, give the fruit the physical, chemical and nutritional characteristics described in points 3.2 and 5.2.

Also important is the producers' knowledge of the fruit and method of production, including the fact that on Santa Maria forage legume residue – *Outonos* (field beans/yellow lupin) – is incorporated into the soil, which improves its fertility in a natural and very specific way. For better plant development it is important to carry out shape pruning on 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores'; this is not traditionally done on common melons. 'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores' is very susceptible to root rot, so reducing the amount of water given at harvesting time is beneficial for the quality of the fruit. The production techniques, degree of ripeness, sorting by size and manual selection of the fruit when harvested all result in a melon with specific physical and chemical characteristics that distinguish it from similar melons grown elsewhere in Europe.

'Meloa de Santa Maria – Açores', enshrined by tradition, is very popular and is preferred by consumers who can tell it apart from melons grown elsewhere by its appearance and flavour. Originally, it was sold only on the local market. However, the product's reputation for excellent quality led to an increase in demand from major commercial operators on the neighbouring island, São Miguel, which was an incentive to increase both the quantity and quality of the fruit produced. Today it is a distinct product with specific characteristics that are closely linked to the geographical production area, the island of Santa Maria in the Archipelago of the Azores.

Reference to publication of the product specification

https://tradicional.dgadr.gov.pt/images/prod_imagens/frescos/docs/CE_Meloa_Santa_Maria_vf.pdf