C/2025/2027

4.4.2025

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/2025/2027)

COMMUNICATION OF APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT

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

'Alcachofa de Benicarló / Carxofa de Benicarló'

EU No: PDO-ES-0202-AM01 - 10.3.2025

1. **Name of product**

'Alcachofa de Benicarló / Carxofa de Benicarló'

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**

Spain

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

Consejería de Agricultura, Agua, Ganadería y Pesca [Regional Ministry of Agriculture, Water, Livestock and Fisheries]

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6. **Qualification as standard amendment**

Explanation of why the amendment(s) fall under the definition of a standard amendment as provided for in Article 24(4) of Regulation (EU) No 2024/1143:

In accordance with Article 24(4) of Regulation (EU) No 2024/1143, it is a standard amendment as it does not:

a) include a change in the name of the protected designation of origin, or in the use of this name;

b) risk voiding the link to the geographical area referred to in the single document;

c) entail any further restrictions on the marketing of the product.

This amendment results in a change to the single document.

([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).

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

Only early varieties that are white are eligible to be the protected product (flower heads). Until now, the 'Blanca de Tudela' variety has been the most commonly planted, and this was the reason for the specific reference to it in the product specification, since it was the only variety that was registered in the PDO 'Alcachofa de Benicarló'.

Propagation is by planting root crowns and shoots. The proposed change involves allowing an alternative breeding system by planting seedlings from certified nurseries of early varieties that are white, provided that they comply with the current requirements of the product specification.

1. Simplification of the wording

In the first paragraph of Section B 'Description of product', 'other' has been added to 'requirements' for better understanding.

In the second paragraph of Section B 'Description of product', the following has been deleted: 'where "Blanca de Tudela" and its variations of "Benicarlò", "del Prat", and "de Reus" are found.'

This amendment affects the single document.

2. Change in the planting conditions

In the first paragraph of Section E 'Method of production', point b 'Planting', the following has been added: 'or by plants from authorised nurseries in the case of those varieties which are propagated by seeds.'

In the last paragraph of Section E 'Method of production, point b 'Planting', the following has been added: 'The sowing of the seed varieties in the nursery takes place between April and June. The plants are transplanted to the field between May and August. As well as this, the planting of varieties of cuttings that are propagated by cuttings...'. Limits on planting density have been removed.

In the final paragraph of section E 'Method of production', point b 'Planting', the reference to the average density per hectare has been deleted as it is currently not applicable.

This amendment affects the single document.

3. Change in the reproduction conditions

In Section F 'Link', point c 'Growing conditions and/or production', the wording 'from the selection of cuttings by the farmers themselves' has been replaced by 'in each and every step described' in order to adapt to the amendment to include a new cultivation method.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

4. Update of the Inspection Structure

Up to date data from the Inspection Structure.

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This amendment affects the single document.

5. Updating legislation

Law 10/2006, of 26 December 2006 of the Generalitat Valenciana, on Fiscal Measures, and Administrative and Financial Management, and on the Organisation of the Generalitat, in its chapter XVII, entitled 'The protection of

agri-food quality systems', regulates the management, control and certification of protected designations of origin, geographical indications, traditional specialities guaranteed and organic agriculture.

Consell Decree 222/2007 of 9 November 2007, laying down rules concerning the Regulatory Councils or Management Bodies of the quality designations of the Autonomous Community of Valencia.

Consell Decree 46/2010 of 12 March 2010, amending Article 4(4); Article 6(3); Article 7(1), (3) and (5), Article 8(1) and Article 11(2), (3), (4) and (5) of Consell Decree 222/2007 of 9 November 2007.

This amendment affects the single document.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

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

'Alcachofa de Benicarló / Carxofa de Benicarló'

2. **Member State or Third Country**

Spain

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

3.1. *Combined Nomenclature code*

— 07 - EDIBLE VEGETABLES AND CERTAIN ROOTS AND TUBERS

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

— 10 - CEREALS

— 11 - PRODUCTS OF THE MILLING INDUSTRY; MALT; STARCHES; INULIN; WHEAT GLUTEN

— 20 - PREPARATIONS OF VEGETABLES, FRUIT, NUTS OR OTHER PARTS OF PLANTS

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

Flower heads of the artichoke (*Cynarus Scolymus* L), intended to be eaten fresh and of classes 'Extra' and 'I'.

The varieties to be protected are early varieties that are white. They are termed 'early' because they can start blooming in autumn, continuing into winter and spring.

In regard to the characteristics of the product, flower heads, other than their beautiful exterior, they are dense and compact, and also have a higher resistance to browning after the stems have been cut.

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

The product discussed in this application must have been grown within the demarcated geographical area.

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

Site preparation: Parcels are selected and prepared so that artichokes can be grown on them for two or three years. Deep ploughing is carried out once or twice to ensure good ventilation and thorough permeability of the soil. Afterwards, a tillage tool is used to break up the surface of the soil and prepare the furrows for later planting. At least 20 days before planting, organic soil improver is added.

Planting: The propagation system used is by means of cuttings derived from mother plants selected by the farmers themselves or by plants from authorised nurseries in the case of those varieties which are propagated by seed. For the preparation of cuttings once the harvest has been completed and irrigation has stopped, i.e. once the plants have 'lignified', the selected mother plants are uprooted. Farmers obtain between four and six cuttings from the rhizome of a mother plant. Sowing of the seed varieties takes place in the nursery between April and June. The

plants are transplanted to the field between May and August. Planting of the cuttings of the varieties that are propagated by cuttings is carried out manually during the months of July and August.

Fertilisation: Basal application during the preparation of the site. A top dressing is applied throughout the season, depending on the plants' needs.

Harvesting: The harvest takes place successively from approximately October to April. It is done manually with a knife. Artichokes are selected and cut, retaining a section of their stalks of less than 10 cm, and then placed in baskets. Once full, the baskets are carefully emptied into plastic boxes and sent to the processing centres as soon as possible.

Packaging: In the packhouses, the product is selected, then classified, and then packed according to the categories.

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

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

Owners of processing centres will be provided with packaging strips, which must clearly display the name of the protected designation of origin 'Alcachofa de Benicarló' and their own logo, together with a numbered label which, irrespective of the type of packaging in which the artichokes are dispatched for consumption, must be affixed before dispatch in accordance with the rules laid down by the Regulatory Council.

The PDO logo that must appear on the label is the following:



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

The production area consists of the municipalities of Benicarló, Cálig, Peñíscola and Vinaròs, all of which are close to the coast and situated in the region of 'Baix Maestrat' belonging to the province of Castellón (Autonomous Community of Valencia). The entire production area currently covers 25 129 hectares, of which about 16 000 are cultivated, with 3 800 hectares of vegetable crops, of which more than 18 % are used for the cultivation of the artichoke. The production area is the same as the processing area.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

Historical

The artichoke is a product with a long tradition, mainly in the city of Benicarló. It is perfectly adapted to the area, with its local importance reflected in the municipal coat of arms of Benicarló, on which an artichoke plant appears. This image of the artichoke and its plant is very ancient, and is believed to date from the 13th century. The botanist Cabanilles called them 'Scolymus hispanicus' and said that they flourished in his time (late 18th century) in the irrigated lands throughout Valencia.

The current production and marketing of the artichoke began half a century ago, at the end of the 1940s, when experienced farmers felt able to cultivate it on a large scale, as trade expanded and markets became accessible thanks to transport.

Natural environment

The artichoke cultivated within the municipalities of the designation of origin grows in optimal conditions. It benefits from the particular climate conditions of the area and the soil characteristics of the coastal plains in the north of the Autonomous Community of Valencia.

Relief

It is a coastal area with gentle slopes of an average gradient of 2 %, protected by a mountain range.

Soil

The bedrock is made of limestone, characterised by a slightly alkaline pH and loamy texture.

Climate

Dry subhumid, Mediterranean-maritime, with mild but not warm winters and little risk of frost. The average annual rainfall is 400 mm and irregularly distributed, which makes it necessary to bring in water for irrigation.

In these conditions, and with meticulous cultivation, the white varieties manage to develop flower heads with unique qualities. In addition to having a dense and compact exterior appearance, the artichoke of the area has a greater resistance to browning after being cut, a quality highly appreciated in the trade.

The cultivation is manual and meticulous, from the selection of the cuttings by farmers to the harvest, when the artichokes to be harvested at their optimal point are selected every day. These stages, and all others involved, are carried out by the farmers with great care, the result of a professionalism and tradition of several generations.

Reference to publication of the product specification

https://breu.gva.es/b/v2CsPP2KhJ