C/2025/5427

8.10.2025

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/2025/5427)

COMMUNICATION OF APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT

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

'Terra d'Otranto'

EU No: PDO-IT-1519-AM01 – 17.7.2025

1. **Name of product**

'Terra d'Otranto'

2. **Geographical indication type**

☒ Protected Designation of Origin (PDO)

☐ Protected Geographical Indication (PGI)

☐ Geographical Indication (GI)

3. **Sector**

☒ Agricultural products

☐ Wines

☐ Spirit drinks

4. **Member State to which the geographical area belongs**

Italy

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

MASAF [Ministry of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forestry]

6. **Qualification as standard amendment**

The amendments fall within the definition of a standard amendment because they do not include a change in the name or use of the name, do not risk voiding the link, and do not entail further restrictions on the marketing of the product.

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

1. *This amendment concerns Article 7 of the product specification and point 3.2 of the single document on the description of the product*

— The description of 'Terra d'Otranto' has been adapted to align with new EU legislation on oil and the introduction of 4 new varieties.

— The values for linoleic, linolenic, oleic and campesterol acids have been removed as prescriptive parameters.

— The maximum acidity expressed as oleic acid has been reduced from 0,8 g per 100 g of oil to 0,35 g per 100 g of oil.

[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).

New version:

‘Article 7

Characteristics on consumption

Extra virgin olive oil with the “Terra d’Otranto” protected designation of origin must have the following characteristics when released for consumption:

— Organoleptic evaluation:

Colour: green or yellow with slight green tints;

Fruitiness: median ≥ 1

Pungency: median ≥ 1

Bitterness: median ≥ 1

Moreover, depending on the time of harvest and the prevalence of varieties, the fruitiness is supplemented by hints of olive leaf, freshly mown grass, cardoon, artichoke, chicory, tomato and fruits of the forest.

— Chemical assessment

Total maximum acidity by weight not exceeding 0,35 g of oleic acid per 100 g of oil;

peroxide value: <= 12 meq O_2.’

The amendment affects the single document.

2. *This amendment concerns Article 2 of the product specification and point 3.3 of the single document regarding the introduction of new varieties*

Four new varieties have been introduced (Leccino, FS17, Lecciana, and Leccio del Corno), which, on the basis of the decisions of the Plant Health Observatory pursuant to Article 5(2) of European Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2015/789 of 18 May 2015, have been authorised as having resistance/tolerance to *Xylella fastidiosa*.

New version:

‘Article 2

Olive varieties

The Protected Designation of Origin “Terra d’Otranto” may be used only for extra virgin oil obtained from the following olive varieties that are planted in the olive groves, either on their own or in combination: Cellina di Nardò, Ogliarola (known locally as Ogliarola leccese or salentina), Leccino, FS17 (known as Favolosa), Lecciana and Leccio del Corno, to at least 60 %.

Other varieties present in the grove may also be used, providing they do not account for more than 40 %.’

The amendment affects the single document.

3. *This amendment concerns the article in the product specification on proof of origin*

A specific article on proof of origin not included in the product specification has been added to bring it into line with the provisions of the Community Regulation.

The following Article has been introduced:

‘Article 4

Proof of origin

Each stage in the production process is monitored, with all inputs and outputs being recorded. The traceability of the product is ensured by entering the olive-growers (agricultural holdings), pressers, packagers and intermediaries in special registers managed by the inspection body. All natural and legal persons entered in the relevant registers are subject to checks by the inspection body, according to the terms of the product specification and the corresponding control plan.’

The amendment does not affect the single document.

4. *This amendment concerns Article 5 of the product specification on the method of production and in particular the cultivation characteristics*

— A definition of the olive-growing plots has been introduced, and a minimum size of olive grove has been established.

— The maximum production per hectare has been increased from 12 000 kg per hectare to 15 000 kg per hectare.

— An estimate will be made by the inspection body before the maximum olive production is harvested from land intended for the production of ‘Terra d’Otranto’.

New version:

‘Article 5

Growing characteristics

(1) For the purposes of this product specification:

— the olive-growing plot consists of one or more contiguous olive cadastral parcels;

— the olive grove consists of one or more plots.

(2) The environmental and growing conditions of the olive groves intended for the production of extra virgin olive oil referred to in Article 1 are those that give the olives and the oil derived therefrom the specific quality characteristics.

The plants must be pruned at least once a year. Mowing, shallow ploughing and harrowing shall be done at least twice a year.

The plants must be evenly distributed over the entire area of the olive-growing plot.

The olive grove must have a minimum size of 1 hectare.

The plants must not show significant damage as a result of plant diseases such as to impair their productivity by more than 30 %, with the exception of plants pollarded and grafted with varieties permitted under this specification.

(3) Olives intended for the production of extra virgin olive oil with a protected designation of origin, as referred to in Article 1, must be harvested by 15 November each year.

(4) The maximum production of olives from olive plots dedicated to the production of extra virgin olive oil with a protected designation of origin as per Article 1 may not exceed 15 000 kg per hectare.

(5) Before harvesting, the inspection body estimates the maximum production of olives from plots intended for the production of extra virgin olive oil with a designation of origin for the reference oil-growing season, with a tolerance of 15 %.

The estimate of maximum production is carried out in agreement with the olive grower, in accordance with the time scales and procedures laid down in the inspection plan.

The fruit-to-oil yield may not exceed 20 %.'

The amendment does not affect the single document.

5. *This amendment concerns Article 6 of the product specification on the method of production and, in particular, the methods of oil extraction*

— The time within which oil extraction must take place has been reduced from 48 to 24 hours.

— The minimum quantity of each pressing batch has been established.

Points 4 and 6 of Article 6 (the points subject to amendment) are set out below:

'(4) The oil must be extracted within 24 hours of the olives being harvested.

(6) The minimum quantity of each batch of pressing olives suitable for PDO may not be less than 15 quintals, so that the oil obtained can be registered as "potential PDO".'

The amendment does not affect the single document.

6. *This amendment concerns Article 8 of the product specification and point 3.5 of the single document on packaging*

— The range of containers allowed for packaging the product has been widened.

New version:

'"Terra d'Otranto" extra virgin olive oil must be released for consumption in containers made of glass, ceramics, steel, aluminium, tin plate, or composite bag-in-box containers with a capacity not exceeding 3 litres.

The receptacles used must in any event protect the oil against ultraviolet rays.'

The amendment affects the single document.

7. *This amendment concerns Article 8 of the product specification and point 3.6 of the single document*

The article on labelling has been reworked, and the point governing the use on labels of names of holdings, estates and farms and their location has been deleted, as this provision has created various problems of interpretation over the years.

Article 8 on labelling is set out below:

'It is forbidden to add any description that is not expressly provided for in this product specification to the protected designation of origin "Terra d'Otranto", including the adjectives "fine", "chosen", "selected" or "superior".

Names, business names and brand names can be used truthfully provided they have no laudatory purport and are not such as to mislead the consumer.

The use of other geographical indications referring to municipalities and localities from which the olives are derived must be shown in different font no larger than that used for the protected designation of origin "Terra d'Otranto".

The name of the protected designation of origin "Terra d'Otranto" must appear on the label in distinct, indelible font in a colour that strongly contrasts with that of the label itself so that it is clearly distinguishable from the other information given on the label. The labels used for the designation must also comply with the labelling rules laid down in the legislation in force.

The year of harvest must be indicated on the label.'

The amendment affects the single document.

8. *This amendment concerns Article 9 of the product specification and point 5 of the single document concerning the link*

— The link has been reworked to bring it into line with the introduction of the 4 varieties and the new situation that has arisen in the 'Terra d'Otranto' PDO production area due to *Xylella fastidiosa*.

The text on the link is as follows:

'The product owes its characteristics to the particular soil and climatic conditions: the area's environmental factors and specific cultivars give "Terra d'Otranto" oil a distinctive character.

The lands, though vast, are largely homogeneous; they are derived from Cretaceous limestone, on which layers of tertiary limestone are laid down with limestone, sandy and clayey Pliocene and Pleistocene sediments; they are types of brown or red earth and are often found in alternating layers, resting on limestone rocks.

In terms of topography, the area is characterised by extensive plains bordered and broken up by low, rolling hills. The area lacks surface watercourses but benefits from a significant subterranean network of watercourses which gives the whole region a decidedly karst quality. Due to its coastal nature and low altitude, the area has a mild, warm climate.

The olive-growing heritage of this area was originally characterised by the predominance of the native Cellina di Nardò and Ogliarola leccese varieties, which dominated olive oil production for decades.

The plant health situation in the Salento area changed with the spread of the *Xylella fastidiosa* subspecies *Pauca* bacterium, which particularly hit the two traditional varieties grown there (Cellina di Nardò and Ogliarola salentina). After a very challenging time for operators, the sector started to look for solutions within the area itself.

For years, operators had been looking to update the "Terra d'Otranto" PDO product specification, which today has resulted in the continuation of production activity in the olive and olive oil sector through first two, and now four tolerant/resistant varieties – Leccino, FS17, Lecciana and Leccio del Corno – allowing greater quality and yield, while making the PDO oil more environmentally sustainable.

This attests to the willingness and foresight of operators in the "Terra d'Otranto" PDO oil consortium to seek solutions capable of reviving certified olive growing in Salento, which, while respecting the history, values and territory of the region, looks forward to the prospect of further development, inevitably leading to the gradual integration of traditional varieties with cultivars that have proven tolerant/resistant to *Xylella*.

And all of this has been possible without any change in the historical framework and geographical tradition of the area concerned: Salento, and the "Terra d'Otranto" PDO in particular, have always been a production area characterised by a specific extra virgin olive oil and, above all, by a sector comprising producers, processors and bottlers with the same agro-industrial capacity and the same relationship with the land.

The quality of an extra virgin olive oil is only partially influenced by the genotype, as it is strongly affected by interactions with the environment and the production inputs of local operators, during both the production and processing stages.

The combined action of natural factors consisting of the specific soil and climatic conditions, and human factors consisting of know-how, agricultural practices and technology geared to the specificities of the territory, lead to a product with specific chemical, sensory and marketing-related characteristics, uniform and easily identifiable, comparable to that described in the product specification.

It has been amply demonstrated in the scientific literature that environmental conditions are able to influence the acid composition and numerous compounds of the unsaponifiable fraction, in particular the content of polyphenols and volatile compounds, which are strongly influenced by the average temperature and precipitation.

This means that the introduction of the four new varieties will not change the basic characteristics of the "Terra d'Otranto" PDO, which remain the same as recognised initially, unchanged by geographical, natural and human factors; these varieties complement the previous ones and allow for the expression of values that are of greater interest and extremely useful for the further qualitative development of the extra virgin oil produced, with the introduction of specific technical, agronomic and qualitative conditions for the product itself, including with reference to the enhanced need to pursue environmentally sustainable production.

Confirming the fact that the environmental pressure exerted by the soil and climate conditions on the genetic component determines the phenotypic expression of the plants, over the past decade it has been found that:

— from an organoleptic point of view, the 4 varieties have characteristics very similar to those of traditional cultivars, producing very harmonious and complex oils;

— the soil and climate conditions of the "Terra d'Otranto" PDO area have a significant impact on the chemical and organoleptic characteristics of the oils produced;

— the 4 varieties have a high degree of adaptability on the marginal soils making up much of Salento, i.e. shallow, skeletal soils with low fertility;

— the 4 varieties have good resistance to drought; in particular, Leccino and Lecciana are also suitable for arid growing conditions;

— the oleic acid content of the oils obtained from the 4 new varieties is similar to that obtained from Cellina di Nardò and Ogliarola salentina;

— the time of harvesting the olives from all 4 varieties is in line with the product specification, in order to obtain the highest quality oil.'

The amendment affects the single document.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'Terra d'Otranto'

EU No: PDO-IT-1519-AM01 – 17.7.2025

PDO (X) PGI ( )

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

'Terra d'Otranto'

2. **Member State or Third Country**

Italy

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

3.1. *Combined Nomenclature code*

15 – ANIMAL, VEGETABLE OR MICROBIAL FATS AND OILS AND THEIR CLEAVAGE PRODUCTS; PREPARED EDIBLE FATS; ANIMAL OR VEGETABLE WAXES

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

Extra virgin olive oil with the 'Terra d'Otranto' protected designation of origin must have the following characteristics when released for consumption:

— Organoleptic evaluation

Colour: green or yellow with slight green tints;

Fruitiness: median ≥ 1

Pungency: median ≥ 1

Bitterness: median ≥ 1

Moreover, depending on the time of harvest and the prevalence of varieties, the fruitiness is supplemented hints of olive leaf, freshly mown grass, cardoon, artichoke, chicory, tomato and fruits of the forest.

— Chemical assessment

Total maximum acidity by weight not exceeding 0,35 g of oleic acid per 100 g of oil;

peroxide value: < = 12 meq O_2.

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

The Protected Designation of Origin 'Terra d'Otranto' may be used only for extra virgin olive oil obtained from the following olive varieties that are planted in the olive groves, either on their own or in combination: Cellina di Nardò, Ogliarola (known locally as Ogliarola leccese or salentina), Leccino, FS17 (known as Favolosa), Lecciana and Leccio del Corno, to at least 60 %.

Other varieties present in the grove may also be used, providing they do not account for more than 40 %.

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

The cultivation, production and pressing of 'Terra d'Otranto' extra-virgin olive oil must take place within the production area specified under point 4.

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

'Terra d'Otranto' extra virgin olive oil must be released for consumption in containers made of glass, ceramics, steel, aluminium, tin plate, or composite bag-in-box containers with a capacity not exceeding 3 litres.

The receptacles used must, in any event, allow the oil to be protected against ultraviolet rays.

'Terra d'Otranto' extra-virgin olive oil must be packaged within the geographical production area, to ensure that the product's origin is controlled and to avoid the product being transported in bulk outside this area, which could cause it to deteriorate and lose the specific characteristics described in point 3.2, especially the distinctive cardoon/artichoke/chicory hints in the oil. The composition of the oil, characterised by a significant level of polyunsaturated fatty acids, means that it is likely to lose organoleptic quality and distinctiveness if exposed to oxygen in the air when being transferred, pumped, transported and unloaded – operations that are carried out more frequently if bottling takes place outside the production area.

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

It is forbidden to add any description that is not expressly provided for in this product specification to the protected designation of origin 'Terra d'Otranto', including the adjectives 'fine', 'chosen', 'selected' or 'superior'.

Names, business names and brand names can be used truthfully provided they have no laudatory purport and are not such as to mislead the consumer.

The use of other geographical indications referring to municipalities and districts from which the olives are derived must be shown in different font no larger than that used for the protected designation of origin 'Terra d'Otranto'.

The name of the protected designation of origin 'Terra d'Otranto' must appear on the label in distinct, indelible font in a colour that strongly contrasts with that of the label itself so that it is clearly distinguishable from the other information given on the label. The labels used for the designation must also comply with the labelling rules laid down in the legislation in force.

The year of harvest must be indicated on the label.

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

The production area for olives used to produce 'Terra d'Otranto' extra virgin olive oil comprises areas under olives that are able to yield products with the quality characteristics provided for in this product specification, including the entire province of Lecce; the province of Taranto, with the exclusion of the following municipalities: Ginosa, Laterza, Castellaneta, Palagianello, Palagiano, Mottola, Massafra, Crispiano, Statte and the part of the municipality of Taranto marked in the land registry with the letter A; and the following municipalities in the province of Brindisi: Brindisi, Cellino S. Marco, Erchie, Francavilla Fontana, Latiano, Mesagne, Oria, Sandonaci, San Pancrazio Salentino, San Pietro Vernotico, Torchiarolo and Torre S. Susanna.

The above geographical area extends in an arc between the Ionian and Adriatic seas, from the *Murge* plateau in the province of Taranto and from the furthest slopes of the *Murge di Sud-Est* in the province of Brindisi, via the Tavoliere di Lecce plain, to the *Serre* hills at confluence of the Ionian and the Adriatic.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

The product owes its characteristics to the particular soil and climate conditions: the area's environmental factors and specific cultivars give 'Terra d'Otranto' oil a distinctive character.

The lands, though vast, are largely homogeneous; they are derived from Cretaceous limestone, on which layers of tertiary limestone are laid down with limestone, sandy and clayey Pliocene and Pleistocene sediments; they are types of brown or red earth and are often found in alternating layers, resting on limestone rocks.

In terms of topography, the area is characterised by extensive plains bordered and broken up by low, rolling hills. The area lacks surface watercourses but benefits from a significant subterranean network of watercourses which gives the whole region a decidedly karst quality. Due to its coastal nature and low altitude, the area has a mild, warm climate.

The olive-growing heritage of this area was originally characterised by the predominance of the native varieties Cellina di Nardò and Ogliarola leccese, which dominated olive oil production for decades.

The plant health situation in the Salento area changed with the spread of the *Xylella fastidiosa* subspecies *Pauca* bacterium, which particularly hit the two traditional varieties grown there (Cellina di Nardò and Ogliarola salentina). After a very challenging time for operators, the sector started to look for solutions within the area itself.

For years, operators had been looking to renew the quality references in the product specification of the PDO, which today has resulted in the continuation of production activity in the olive and olive oil sector through initially two, and now four tolerant/resistant varieties – Leccino, FS17, Lecciana and Leccio del Corno – allowing greater quality and yield, together with greater environmental sustainability of the PDO oil.

This attests to the willingness and foresight of the operators in the 'Terra d'Otranto' PDO oil consortium to seek solutions capable of reviving certified olive growing in Salento, which, while respecting its own history, values and territory, looks forward to the prospect of further development, inevitably leading to the gradual integration of traditional varieties with cultivars that have proven tolerant/resistant to *Xylella*.

And all of this has been possible without any change in the historical framework and geographical tradition of the area concerned: Salento, and the 'Terra d'Otranto' PDO in particular, have always been a production area characterised by a specific extra virgin olive oil and, above all, by a sector comprising producers, processors and bottlers with the same agro-industrial capacity and the same relationship with the land.

The quality of an extra virgin olive oil is only partially influenced by the genotype, as it is strongly affected by interactions with the environment and the production inputs of local operators, during both the production and processing stages.

The combined action of natural factors consisting of the specific soil and climatic conditions, and human factors consisting of know-how, agricultural practices and technology geared to the specificities of the territory, lead to a product with specific chemical, sensory and marketing-related characteristics, uniform and easily identifiable, comparable to that described in the product specification

It has been amply demonstrated in the scientific literature that environmental conditions are able to influence the acid composition and numerous compounds of the unsaponifiable fraction, in particular the content of polyphenols and volatile compounds, which are strongly influenced by the average temperature and precipitation.

This means that the introduction of the four new varieties will not change the basic characteristics of the 'Terra d'Otranto' PDO, which remain the same as recognised initially, unchanged by geographical, natural and human factors; these varieties complement the previous ones and allow for the expression of values that are of greater interest and extremely useful for the further qualitative development of the extra virgin oil produced, with the introduction of specific technical, agronomic and qualitative conditions for the product itself, including with reference to the enhanced need to pursue environmentally sustainable production.

Confirming the fact that the environmental pressure exerted by the soil and climate conditions on the genetic component determines the phenotypic expression of the plants, over the past decade it has been found that:

— from an organoleptic point of view, the 4 varieties have characteristics very similar to those of traditional cultivars, producing very harmonious and complex oils;

— the soil and climate conditions of the 'Terra d'Otranto' PDO area have a significant impact on the chemical and organoleptic characteristics of the oils produced;

— the 4 varieties have a high degree of adaptability on the marginal soils making up much of Salento, i.e. shallow, skeletal soils with low fertility;

— the 4 varieties have good resistance to drought; in particular, Leccino and Lecciana are also suitable for arid growing conditions;

— the oleic acid content of the oils obtained from the 4 new varieties is similar to that obtained from Cellina di Nardò and Ogliarola salentina;

— the time of harvesting the olives of the 4 varieties is in line with the product specification, in order to obtain the highest quality oil.

Reference to publication of the product specification

https://www.masaf.gov.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeAttachment.php/L/IT/D/1%252F9%252F8%252FD.a56bd25591ba82c2da99/P/BLOB%3AID%3D3342/E/pdf?mode=download