C/2024/3933

20.6.2024

Publication of an application for the approval of a Union amendment to a product specification for a protected designation of origin in the wine sector pursuant to Article 97(4) first subparagraph in conjunction with Article 105 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council

(C/2024/3933)

Within 3 months from the date of this publication, the authorities of a Member State or of a third country, or a natural or legal person having a legitimate interest and established or resident in a third country, may lodge, in accordance with Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council [1], an opposition procedure with the Commission.

APPLICATION FOR A UNION AMENDMENT TO THE PRODUCT SPECIFICATION

'Cotnari'

PDO-RO-A0135-AM02

Date of application: 16.2.2023

1. Applicant and legitimate interest

'Domeniile Cotnari' Producers' Association

The 'Domeniile Cotnari' Producer Association manages the potential of the production of wines registered under the Cotnari PDO at national level.

The Cotnari Association, which manages the designation of origin exclusively, is a member of the National Inter-Professional Wine-Growing Organisation (ONIV), which in 2011 was recognised as the inter-professional organisation of agricultural producers (OIPA) for the wine sector, and which brings together, on the basis of voluntary participation, producer organisations involved in the production, processing, distribution, storage, transportation and sale of grapes, wine and products processed from grapes or wine, from all of Romania's wine-growing regions.

2. Heading in the product specification affected by the amendment(s)

☐ Name of product

☒ Category of the grapevine product

☐ Link

☐ Marketing restrictions

3. Description and reasons for amendment

3.1. *Inclusion of a new category of wine – semi-sparkling wine*

The product specification has been amended to include a new category of grapevine products as defined in Part II of Annex VII to Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013, i.e. semi-sparkling wine obtained exclusively in the area demarcated for the Cotnari PDO in accordance with the legislation in force and authorised to use the Cotnari PDO.

Chapters I, II, IV, XI and XII of the product specification and Sections 3, 4,7, and 8 of the single document have been amended.

The new category to be introduced harnesses the winegrowing potential of the Cotnari area as well as the PDO's reputation. Its inclusion reflects the growing consumption of effervescent wines in recent years.

[1] Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11.4.2024 on geographical indications for wine, spirit drinks and agricultural products, as well as traditional specialities guaranteed and optional quality terms for agricultural products, amending Regulations (EU) No 1308/2013, (EU) 2019/787 and (EU) 2019/1753 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 (OJ L, 2024/1143, 23.4.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1143/oj).

The decision to produce this category in this area arose from the intention to take full advantage of indigenous grape varieties with a high aromatic potential (primary aromas, fruitiness) by using them in the production of this wine category.

3.2. *Indication of analytical/organoleptic characteristics for semi-sparkling wine*

The specification has been supplemented to include information on the analytical and organoleptic characteristics of semi-sparkling wines, the introduction of which is being requested, in order to ensure compliance with the legislation on designations of origin by describing these parameters.

As a result, Chapter XI of the product specification and Section 4 of the single document have been amended.

3.3. *Description of the link with the geographical area for semi-sparkling wine*

The description of the link with the geographical area has been amended to include all the types of wine that can be produced under the Cotnari PDO once the new category of semi-sparkling wine has been added to the specification, so that the causal link is indicated for each product category obtained, as required by law.

Chapter II of the product specification and Section 8 of the single document have been amended.

3.4. *Inclusion in the labelling of indications specific to the semi-sparkling wine category*

The specification has been amended to include specific labelling requirements for the new category of wine introduced (semi-sparkling wine) concerning the inclusion on the labels of the terms required under the law indicating sugar content (brut nature, brut, extra brut, extra dry, sec, demi sec).

As a result, Chapter XII of the product specification has been amended, while the single document has remained unchanged.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

1. **Name of product**

Cotnari

2. **Geographical indication type**

PDO - Protected Designation of Origin

3. **Categories of grapevine products**

1. Wine

5. Quality sparkling wine

6. Quality aromatic sparkling wine

8. Semi-sparkling wine

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

4.1. *Analytical and organoleptic characteristics - still white wines*

From an organoleptic point of view, the white wines are unctuous, ranging from greenish-yellow in colour (in young wines) to straw yellow and honey yellow (in aged wines); they have an aroma of raisins, walnut kernels and bitter almonds (Grasă de Cotnari), and a scent of ripe grapes with strong floral hints, fruitiness (Frâncușă), hints of hay, acacia flowers, fresh butter, a persistent taste of bread crust (Chardonnay), freshness, a flavour of tropical fruit and a scent of freshly cut sweet peppers and elderflower (Sauvignon). The specific aromatic varieties are intense in colour, with a scent of basil, mown hay and basil pears, and a flavour of rose petal jam (Tămâioasă românească), with hints of rose and lime blossom, a velvety taste redolent of vanilla and almond (Traminer roz), diverse hues from pink to dry onion skin and a scent of basil or roses (Busuioacă de Bohotin).

In accordance with the law, the maximum sulphur dioxide content as regards wines with a minimum sugar content, expressed as the sum of glucose and fructose, of five grams per litre, has been raised to 350 mg/l for Romanian white wines that may use the Cotnari protected designation of origin.

The values for maximum total acidity are subject to the limits laid down in the relevant European Union law.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	15,00
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	11,00
Minimum total acidity	4,5 grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	18
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	200

4.2. *Analytical and organoleptic characteristics - still rosé wines*

From an organoleptic point of view, the rosé wines are unctuous, ranging from greenish-yellow in colour (in young wines) to straw yellow and honey yellow (in aged wines); they have an aroma of raisins, walnut kernels and bitter almonds (Grasă de Cotnari), and a scent of ripe grapes with strong floral hints, fruitiness (Frâncușă), hints of hay, acacia flowers, fresh butter, a persistent taste of bread crust (Chardonnay), freshness, a flavour of tropical fruit and a scent of freshly cut sweet peppers and elderflower (Sauvignon). The specific aromatic varieties are intense in colour, with a scent of basil, mown hay and basil pears, and a flavour of rose petal jam (Tămâioasă românească), with hints of rose and lime blossom, a velvety taste redolent of vanilla and almond (Traminer roz), diverse hues from pink to dry onion skin and a scent of basil or roses (Busuioacă de Bohotin).

The values for maximum total acidity are subject to the limits laid down in the relevant European Union law.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	15,00
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	11,00
Minimum total acidity	4,5 grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	18
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	200

4.3. *Physical, chemical and organoleptic characteristics - still red wines*

The red wines have ruby-red highlights when young and brick-red highlights when old; they have an odour of dried red fruits, plums and black cherries and a velvety flavour with a discernible, pleasant fruitiness.

The values for maximum total acidity are subject to the limits laid down in the relevant European Union law.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	15,00
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	12,00
Minimum total acidity	4,5 grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	20
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	150

4.4. *Analytical and organoleptic characteristics - quality sparkling wines*

As regards their organoleptic properties, the PDO quality sparkling wines stand out as fine, fresh and natural wines, with fermentation aromas and floral hints. They are bright greenish-yellow to pale yellow in appearance/colour, with a long-lasting mousse, for white sparkling wines, and more or less intense pink hues for rosé sparkling wines. The effervescence of the Cotnari PDO sparkling wines is intense at first; the bubbling subsequently lessens but is nevertheless sufficiently long-lasting and fine, showcasing the nobility and subtlety of the Cotnari wines. They have a fresh, fine scent specific to the variety from which they are obtained, and a floral, light taste, with a flavour and aroma redolent of autolysed yeast. The quality sparkling wines have an excess pressure of at least 3,5 bar at 20 °C.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	11,00
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	10,00
Minimum total acidity	3,5 grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	11
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	185

4.5. *Analytical and organoleptic characteristics - quality aromatic sparkling wines*

The quality aromatic sparkling wine obtained from Tămâioasă Românească is straw-yellow with greenish highlights, and has an abundant mousse and fine, persistent bubbles. It has a fine, intense and ample frankincense aroma, with hints of basil, roses and freshly mown hay. The taste is harmonious, pleasant and lively, due to the acid/sweet balance. The quality aromatic sparkling wine obtained from Busuioacă de Bohotin is pink in colour with purplish hues, an abundant mousse and fine, persistent bubbles. The specific muscat aroma is fine and intense, with notes of citrus fruit, basil and rose petals, and discreet aromas of fresh red fruit in the aftertaste. The taste is pleasant and lively, thanks to the balance between acidity and sugar content. The sparkling wine is balanced in its aromas, taste and persistence. The quality aromatic sparkling wines have an excess pressure of least 3 bar at 20 °C.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	10,00
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	6,00
Minimum total acidity	3,5 grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	11
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	185

4.6. *Analytical and organoleptic characteristics - semi-sparkling wines*

Visual appearance: clear, transparent, with fine, greenish-yellow, pink effervescence.

Aroma: fresh, characteristic of the grape variety.

Taste: acid, finely effervescent, floral, fruity, depending on the typical character of the wine.

Excess pressure when kept at a temperature of 20 °C: min. 1 bar and max. 2,5 bar.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	15,00
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	7,00
Minimum total acidity	5,0 grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	18
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	235

5. **Wine making practices**

a. *Specific oenological practices*

Cultivation method

Irrigation is permitted only during years of drought, subject to ONVPV (National Office of Vine and Wine) notification, when the water content in soil at a depth of 0-100 cm decreases to 50 % of the AHI (active humidity interval), applying reasonable irrigation standards (400-600 m3/ha).

Green harvesting – reducing the number of grape clusters at veraison when the potential production exceeds the maximum limits permitted under the product specification.

b. *Maximum yields*

1. at full maturity of the grapes at the time of harvesting, for Grasă de Cotnari, Pinot gris, Chardonnay, Muscat Ottonel, Traminer roz

11 000 kilograms of grapes per hectare

2. at full maturity of the grapes at the time of harvesting, for Tămâioasă Românească, Sauvignon, Busuioacă de Bohotin

12 500 kilograms of grapes per hectare

3. at full maturity of the grapes at the time of harvesting, for Fetească albă, Fetească neagră

13 000 kilograms of grapes per hectare

4. at full maturity of the grapes at the time of harvesting, for Frâncușă

14 000 kilograms of grapes per hectare

5. at full maturity of the grapes at the time of harvesting, for Grasă de Cotnari, Pinot gris, Chardonnay, Muscat Ottonel, Traminer roz

82,50 hectolitres per hectare

6. at full maturity of the grapes at the time of harvesting, for Tămâioasă Românească, Sauvignon, Busuioacă de Bohotin

94,00 hectolitres per hectare

7. at full maturity of the grapes at the time of harvesting, for Frâncușă

105,00 hectolitres per hectare

8. at full maturity of the grapes at the time of harvesting, for Fetească albă, Fetească neagră

97,50 hectolitres per hectare

6. **Demarcated geographical area**

6.1. The area demarcated for the production of wines with the 'Cotnari' controlled designation of origin comprises the following localities in the counties of Iași and Botoșani:

Iași County

— The municipality of Cotnari: the villages of Cotnari, Hodora,Cârjoaia, Bahluiu, Iosupeni, Lupăria;

— The municipality of Cepleniţa: the villages of Cepleniţa, Buhalniţa, Zlodica;

— The municipality of Scobinți: the villages of Scobinți, Bădeni, Zagavia, Fetești;

— The town of Hârlău: the town of Hârlău;

— The municipality of Deleni: the villages of Deleni, Maxut, Feredeni, Slobozia, Poiana;

— The municipality of Cucuteni: the villages of Cucuteni, Băiceni, Săcărești;

— The municipality of Todirești: the villages of Todirești, Băiceni;

— The municipality of Balș: the villages of Balș, Boureni, Coasta Măgurii.

Botoșani County

— The municipality of Frumușica: the villages of Frumușica, Rădeni.

6.2. One of the following single vineyard designations may be added to the 'Cotnari' controlled designation of origin, depending on the wishes of producers: Dealul Castel, Dealul Episcopului, Dealul Paraclis, Dealul Mândrului, Zlodica, Țiglăi, Dealul Cătălina, Cârjoaia, Lupăria, Cepleniţa, Dealul lui Vodă, Buhalniţa, Scobinți, Dealul Furcilor, Dealul Stânca, Hodora, Zagavia, Dealul Naslău, Hârlău, Deleni, Cucuteni, Boureni, Balș, Coasta Măgurii.

7. **Wine grape variety(ies)**

Busuioacă de Bohotin Rs - Schwarzer Muscat, Muscat fioletovîi, Muscat violet cyperus, Muscat rouge de Frontignan

Chardonnay B - Gentil blanc, Pinot blanc Chardonnay

Fetească albă B - Păsărească albă, Poama fetei, Mädchentraube, Leanyka, Leanka

Fetească neagră N - Schwarze Mädchentraube, Poama fetei neagră, Păsărească neagră, Coada rândunicii

Frâncușă B - Vinoasă, Mildweisser, Mustoasă de Moldova, Poamă creață

Grasă de Cotnari B - Dicktraube, Grasă, Köver szölö

Muscat Ottonel B - Muscat Ottonel blanc

Pinot Gris G - Affumé, Grau Burgunder, Grauburgunder, Grauer Mönch, Pinot cendré, Pinot Grigio, Ruländer

Sauvignon B - Sauvignon Blanc

Traminer Roz Rs - Rosetraminer, Savagnin roz, Gewürztraminer

Tămâioasă românească B - Busuioacă de Moldova, Muscat blanc à petit grains

Tămâioasă românească B - Rumanische Weihrauchtraube, Tamianka, Tămâioasă albă de Drăgășani

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

8.1. *Link with the geographical area - Details of the geographical area*

Most of the vineyards in the Cotnari region lie on Quaternary deposits, particularly the diluvial-colluvial ones of Coasta Cotnarilor, and not so much, if at all, on alluvial deposits on meadows (owing to climate-related restrictions). Only in small areas are vines rooted in parent Sarmatian rocks or their weakly developed soils (Cotea et al., 2006).

Diluvial and colluvial deposits are frequent on the hillsides as a result of downhill creep and rainwash. In the easternmost part of the wine-growing area there are also saline and alkaline soils, formed on saliferous deposits. The soils derived from this parent material are generally propitious to wine-growing (Cotea et al., 2006).

The climate of the wine-growing region has been sub-divided into six microclimates; the predominant microclimate, characterising 45 % of the total area, is the one found on slopes exposed to the south, south-east and west, with an inclination of 5-20 °, enjoying generous sunshine and well sheltered from the cold northern and north-eastern winds. The temperatures on those slopes are the highest in the wine-growing region, which makes them ideal for vine cultivation.

8.2. *Link with the geographical area - product details*

The still wines are full-bodied wines with specific floral or fruity aromas that are typical of the variety, due to the long and dry autumn season and the influence of the noble rot specific to this area. They have aromas of citrus fruit, honey, acacia blossom and elderflower, with hints of vanilla and almonds when aged for a short time.

The quality sparkling wine has a reductive note at first, and then acquires hints of citrus fruit and hay and discreet notes of autolysed yeast. The bouquet comes from the particular flavour of green walnut kernels, basil pears, honey and raisins and is redolent of the noble rot of the long dry autumns of the Cotnari region.

The quality aromatic sparkling wines have intense and ample aromas, with hints of basil, roses and freshly mown hay; they have an abundant mousse and fine, persistent bubbles; the taste is pleasant, lively and harmonious.

The semi-sparkling wines have a fine effervescence, are yellow-greenish or pink in colour, and are characterised by freshness; they have floral (basil, acacia, roses) or fruity aromas (citrus fruit, pears) that are redolent of bread crust.

8.3. *Link with the geographical area - causal interaction*

The still wines obtained in the Cotnari PDO region are different from one another, due to the various characteristics of the varieties from which they are produced, which in turn are influenced by the terroir.

The long and dry autumns that are specific to the Cotnari area contribute to the emergence of noble rot, which makes the wines full-bodied and aromatically diverse; wines with residual sugar obtained from grapes harvested when the grape berries are botrytised develop into naturally sweet wines. These wines are well-suited for ageing, as their alcoholic strength is often more than 12 % by volume.

Due to the climate of the area, the wines' bouquet is diverse, with characteristic, floral notes of tropical fruit, with a good balance of sugars, alcohol and acidity.

The almost perfect balance between rainfall, sunshine and evapotranspiration of groundwater in the shelter created by Coasta Dealul Mare - Hârlău in the long, dry and very sunny autumns ensures optimum maturation for varieties such as Grasă de Cotnari, giving the wines aromas of honeycomb, honey and raisins and an intense colour (with hints of amber in aged wines).

The quality sparkling wines are balanced wines, with a well-integrated acidity that is also due to the wines being produced in the northernmost vineyards of Moldavia. The middle growing season for the varieties cultivated, which are able to withstand moderate frost and drought and have optimal heliothermal resources, enables slow accumulation of the typical aromas of the varieties, resulting in wines with specific characteristics.

The slow accumulation of the typical aromas of the varieties in the quality aromatic sparkling wines is due to the warm and very sunny summers, as well as the mean temperature values in September, which allow the production of wines with a rich bouquet and characteristic note.

The quality sparkling wines and quality aromatic sparkling wines are obtained in particular from grapes, picked by hand, of native varieties with an aromatic potential such as Tămâioasă românească, Fetească albă, Francușă and Busuioacă de Bohotin, but also international varieties that have adapted to the local Cotnari terroir, expressing its authenticity and drawing on the area's traditional wine-making methods, which incorporate factors specific to Moldavia.

The traditional style is supplemented, however, by modern wine-making techniques that focus on highlighting and expressing as fully as possible the fruitiness and freshness of the quality sparkling wines and quality aromatic sparkling wines imparted in particular by varieties with increased aromatic potential.

These wines are bright wines, with an abundant mousse and fine bubbles and specific floral or fruity aromas.

The sparkling wines evince a good balance between acidity and sugar content, showcasing the specific character and nobility of the Cotnari vineyards. The Cotnari PDO area is a Romanian wine-growing area with its own specific character, where the tradition of cultivating Romanian varieties has been maintained. It is here that we find the highest proportion of old Romanian varieties, such as Grasă de Cotnari, Tămâioasă românească, Fetească albă, Francușă, Busuioacă de Bohotin and Fetească neagră.

The wines bear the imprint of the aromatic varieties (redolent of dried apricots, beeswax, freshly mown hay, basil pears), but this also depends to a large extent on how and for how long the maceration and fermentation processes take place to allow the aromatic substances to be extracted from the grape skin.

Old varieties like the Frâncușă and Busuioacă de Bohotin come into their own in the form of valuable sparkling wines, straw-yellow or pale/bright pink in colour, with a long and constant fizz, with floral notes of elderflower or acacia blossom or fruity notes of basil pears, green apricots, grapefruit, lemon rind and green apple, and with a medium mineral body in which fruity notes predominate.

In the past, these varieties were held in high esteem in rulers' courts and would often be found on the lavish tables of the boyar aristocracy. The wines used to feature a logo showing the Vlădoianu castle, which was built in 1901 by Vlădoianu, a boyar who, in addition to being the governor of the Romanian National Bank, was a distinguished wine grower. In time, the logo became an inspiration in the written story of the Cotnari wines.

Semi-sparkling wines are successfully obtained from grape varieties grown in the Cotnari region such as Fetească albă, Tămâioasă românească and Frâncușă, but also Chardonnay and Sauvignon, which, thanks to the sheltered temperate-continental climate, with its long and very sunny autumns, retain the quality characteristics typical of the region, with a good alcohol-acidity balance and a floral, fruity, fresh and lively taste.

9. **Specific further requirements (packaging, labelling, other requirements)**

Marketing conditions

Legal framework:

in national legislation

Type of further condition:

Additional provisions relating to labelling

Description of the condition:

The labels of the wines in the quality sparkling wine and quality aromatic sparkling wine categories also include the terms required by the applicable legislation indicating sugar content (brut nature, brut, extra brut, extra dry, sec, demi sec).

Link to the product specification

https://www.onvpv.ro/sites/default/files/caiet_sarcini_doc_cotnari_modif_cf_cerere_2_no_track_changes_final.pdf