V

(Announcements)

OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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

(2023/C 34/08)

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

COMMUNICATING THE APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT

'Bonnezeaux'

PDO-FR-A0926-AM03

Date of communication: 11.11.2022

DESCRIPTION OF AND REASONS FOR THE APPROVED AMENDMENT

1. **Official Geographical Code**

The municipalities making up the geographical area and the area in immediate proximity have been updated in line with the Official Geographical Code.

This does not affect the perimeter of the demarcated geographical area.

Points 6 and 9 of the single document have been amended.

2. **Spacing between plants**

The minimum spacing between plants in the same row has been reduced from 1 m to 0,90 m.

The purpose of this amendment is to allow an increase in planting density for the vines without changing the spacing between rows.

A special provision has also been added for vines located on slopes steeper than 10 %, as those vines may have a minimum spacing between plants of 0,80 m.

The aim of this addition is to take account of the particular case of vines planted on steep slopes, where special arrangements are required during the planting stage (planting parallel to the slope rather than perpendicular to it).

Point 5 of the single document has been amended.

3. **Pruning**

The pruning rules have been harmonised for the designations of the Anjou Saumur area in the Loire Valley.

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

This harmonisation aims to improve operators' knowledge and simplify checks. This amendment gives winegrowers more flexibility in adapting to frosts, which are occurring later in the year.

Point 5 of the single document has been amended.

4. **Maturity**

The minimum sugar content of the grapes has been raised from 238 to 255 grams per litre. This increase was made to improve the quality of the wines, which are wines with residual sugars.

In order to take account of the difficulty of fermenting musts with the highest sugar content: the minimum actual alcoholic strength by volume has been lowered to 11 % for wines with a natural alcoholic strength by volume below 18 %; the actual alcoholic strength by volume is no longer subject to a ceiling for wines with a natural alcoholic strength by volume of at least 18 %.

Point 4 of the single document has been amended.

5. **Total alcoholic strength by volume after enrichment**

The maximum total alcoholic strength by volume after enrichment by partial concentration of the must has been reduced from 19 % to 18 %.

The single document has not been amended.

6. **Link**

The Link section has been edited, and the reference to the year 2018 has been changed to 2021.

Point 8 of the single document has been amended.

7. **Transitional measures**

Transitional measures no longer in force have been deleted.

The single document has not been amended.

8. **Main points to be checked**

Harvesting by hand in multiple passes has been added to the main points to be checked.

The single document has not been amended.

9. **Editorial amendments**

A certain number of editorial changes have been made to the specification.

These amendments do not require any amendments to the single document.

10. **Reference to the inspection body**

The reference to the inspection body has been reworded to align it with the wording used in other product specifications. This is a purely editorial amendment.

This amendment does not lead to any changes to the single document.

11. **Labelling**

The labelling rules have been specified and harmonised with respect to designations of the Anjou Saumur area in the Loire Valley. This is a purely editorial amendment.

Point 9 of the single document has been amended.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

1. **Name(s)**

Bonnezeaux

2. **Geographical indication type**

PDO – Protected Designation of Origin

3. **Categories of grapevine products**

1. Wine

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

BRIEF WRITTEN DESCRIPTION

These are still white wines made from grapes harvested when over-ripe (natural concentration on the vine, with or without noble rot). They are vigorous wines that have a great sweetness combined with a complex fruitiness (dried and exotic fruit, white flowers, etc.) and a light golden colour with green highlights. The wines have: A minimum natural alcoholic strength by volume of 15 %; A fermentable sugar content (glucose and fructose) after fermentation of at least 51 grams per litre. After fermentation, wines with a natural alcoholic strength by volume below 18 % have a minimum actual alcoholic strength by volume of 11 %. The total acid and total sulphur dioxide content are as laid down by EU legislation.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum total acidity	in milliequivalents per litre
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	25
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	

5. **Wine-making practices**

5.1. *Specific oenological practices*

1.

Specific oenological practice

Enrichment is permitted under the rules set out in the specification.

The use of wood chips is forbidden.

The wines must be aged until at least 15 March of the year following the harvest.

Besides the above provisions, the oenological practices concerning these wines must meet the requirements laid down at EU level and in the Rural and Maritime Fishing Code.

2. *Density*

Cultivation method

The minimum vine planting density is 4 000 plants per hectare. Spacing between vine rows must not exceed 2,50 metres, and spacing between plants in the same row must be at least 0,90 metres.

The controlled designation of origin may be used for the harvests of the vineyard parcels where the spacing between plants in the same row is below 0,90 metres but not less than 0,80 metres and where the steepness of the slope exceeds 10 %.

In the case of vineyard parcels where the planting density is at least 3 300 but less than 4 000 plants per hectare, the harvests are eligible for the controlled designation of origin provided that they comply with the rules on trellising and foliage height laid down in the specification The spacing between the rows of the vines must not exceed 3 metres, and the spacing between plants in the same row must be at least 1 metre.

3. *Pruning*

Cultivation method

The vines are pruned with a maximum of 12 buds per plant, using either the cane pruning, spur pruning or mixed pruning method. At the phenological stage corresponding to 11 or 12 leaves (separate buds), the number of fruit-bearing branches for the year per plant must not exceed 10.

4. *Harvest*

Cultivation method

The grapes are harvested by hand in multiple passes.

5. *Irrigation*

Cultivation method

Irrigation is not permitted.

5.2. *Maximum yields*

30 hectolitres per hectare

6. Demarcated geographical area

All stages of production take place in the geographical area encompassing the following municipality of the department of Maine-et-Loire, on the basis of the Official Geographical Code of 2021: Bellevigne-en-Layon (only the territory of the delegated municipality of Thouarcé).

Maps showing the geographical area can be viewed on the website of the National Institute of Origin and Quality.

7. Wine grape variety(-ies)

Chenin B

8. Description of the link(s)

8.1.

1. *Information on the geographical area*

a) *Description of the natural factors relevant to the link*

The geographical area lies in the very heart of Anjou's wine-growing region, and in 2021 it was limited to the delegated municipality of Thouarcé. This municipality is located in the department of Maine-et-Loire and its territory is divided by the River Layon. The hamlet of Bonnezeaux is perched high up on a steep slope on the right bank of the river. The name 'Bonnezeaux' seems to refer to sources of ferruginous water.

The vineyards grow on three slopes that sit next to each other and face south-west. They are called 'La Montagne', 'Beauregard' and 'Fesles' and form a strip 2 800 metres long and 500 metres wide. The steepness of these slopes is approximately 15 % to 20 %. It is particularly marked on the western side of 'Beauregard' and on the middle slope, aptly called 'La Montagne', which begins near the hamlet of Petit Bonnezeaux. To the north of these three demarcated slopes there is a slightly undulating plateau with an average altitude of 90 m. The River Layon runs at an altitude of 29 metres.

The geological substratum belongs to the Saint-Georges-sur-Loire series, which is a schist-and-sandstone complex dating back to the upper Ordovician – lower Devonian period. It is sometimes covered by gravelly-clayey or sandy-clayey formations of the Cenomanian, in particular on the 'Fesles' slope. Erosion has exposed the slaty basement, while the sand and clay have remained in place near the shore and on the plateau. As a consequence, the parcels that are precisely demarcated for the grape harvest are fairly shallow and very rich in coarse fragments. Their colour is greenish grey and occasionally resembles the colour of wine lees. They have water reserves below 100 mm and excellent drainage capacity.

The geographical area has an attenuated oceanic climate and limited irrigation. It is sheltered from maritime mists by the higher slopes of Choletais and Mauges. The slopes are locally exposed to the prevailing winds from the southwest and west. Annual rainfall is approximately 550 mm to 600 mm, compared to over 800 mm on the slopes of Choletais and Mauges. Rainfall during the growing cycle of the vine is approximately 100 mm lower than the average in the department. Typically southern flora grows specifically on these slopes owing to their relative aridity and temperatures that are higher than in surrounding areas.

b) *Description of the human factors relevant to the geographical link*

The Chenin B variety, which probably originates in the Anjou region, has found a prime location in Bonnezeaux. It is a hardy variety that expresses its potential in challenging soil conditions.

Producers quickly recognised the benefits of late harvesting this variety using specific techniques. Count Odart wrote the following in his 1845 'Traité des cépages' treatise on vines: 'We should also add the condition of not harvesting the grapes until around All Saints' Day, when the grapes are over-ripe and their skin is sphacelous after being softened by the rains.' In other words, late harvesting is typical. In his 1816 work 'Topographie de tous les vignobles connus', Jullien noted that 'For the good vintages, the grape-pickers pass through the vines several times; the grapes picked in the first two passes are used for only the most mature wines, providing the wines for export, and the grapes from the third pass are used for wines for domestic consumption.'

As a result of the findings and analyses made by several generations of producers, 'Bonnezeaux' wines now rank among the finest in Anjou. To quote the French translation, entitled 'Nouvelle Géographie Universelle', [of A New Geographical, Historical, and Commercial Grammar] by British geographer William Guthrie (1708-1770), published in 1802: 'Anjou wines can be divided into three classes. Those in the first class come from the villages of Faye, Saint-Lambert, Rablé, Maligny, Chavagne and Thouarcé, home to the Bonnezeaux vineyards.'

A number of references to these prestigious vineyards have been made since then. The phylloxera crisis curbed their growth severely, with only one local market continuing to receive supplies. Through the serious efforts of the union of 'Bonnezeaux' producers, who wanted to keep yields low and maintain the practice of harvesting grapes in multiple passes, the wine first made a comeback on the French market before being exported abroad again. The controlled designation of origin 'Bonnezeaux' was recognised on 6 November 1951.

8.2.

2. *Information on the quality and characteristics of the product*

These wines are appreciated because of their vigour. Their great sweetness, which is related to a high fermentable sugar content, is combined with a fruitiness that is often complex (dried fruit, exotic fruit, white flowers, etc.) and perhaps unexpected considering the generally light golden colour of the wines and their green highlights. The balance between acidity, alcohol and smoothness allows the wines to acquire even more complexity over the years.

3. *Causal interactions*

These vineyards, with their steep southwest-facing slopes and shallow and stony soils with exceptional thermal properties, are favourable to early growth and the maturation of the Chenin B variety. As a result of the prevailing winds that sweep the slopes and the extremely low water supply of the vines growing on skeletal soil, the grapes are concentrated on the vine through wilting or drying typical of these vineyards. The producers have managed to make the best of this particularity. The very low yields show how committed the producers are to the quality of the grapes.

'Bonnezeaux' wines owe their fine reputation to the late harvesting of the Chenin B grape on these slopes, which is carried out in multiple passes so as to select very ripe grapes. The history and renown of 'Bonnezeaux' wines are closely linked to those of Anjou and 'Coteaux du Layon' wines.

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

API

Legal framework:

National legislation

Type of further condition:

Derogation concerning production in the demarcated geographical area

Description of the condition:

The area in immediate proximity, defined by derogation for wine-growing, production and ageing, comprises the territory of the following municipalities of the department of Maine-et-Loire, on the basis of the Official Geographical Code of 2021:

Aubigné-sur-Layon, Beaulieu-sur-Layon, Bellevigne-en-Layon (only the territory of the delegated municipalities of Champ-sur-Layon, Faveraye-Mâchelles, Faye-d'Anjou and Rablay-sur-Layon), Blaison-Saint-Sulpice, Brissac Loire Aubance (only the territory of the delegated municipalities of Alleuds, Brissac-Quincé, Charcé-Saint-Ellier-sur-Aubance, Luigné, Saint-Rémy-la-Varenne, Saint-Saturnin-sur-Loire, Saulgé-l'Hôpital and Vauchrétien), Brossay, Chalonnes-sur-Loire, Chaudefonds-sur-Layon, Chemillé-en-Anjou (only the territory of the delegated municipalities of Chanzeaux and Valanjou), Denée, Doué-en-Anjou (only the territory of the delegated municipality of Brigné), Les Garennes-sur-Loire, Lys-Haut-Layon (only the territory of the delegated municipality of Tigné), Mozé-sur-Louet, Mûrs-Erigné, Rochefort-sur-Loire, Saint-Melaine-sur-Aubance, Savennières, Soulaines-sur-Aubance, Terranjou, Val-du-Layon.

Labelling: optional terms

Legal framework:

National legislation

Type of further condition:

Additional provisions relating to labelling

Description of the condition:

The optional terms whose use, under EU provisions, may be regulated by the Member States, are marked on the labels in letters that may not be larger, either in height, width or thickness, than twice the size of the letters forming the name of the controlled designation of origin.

Labelling: geographical designation 'Val de Loire'

Legal framework:

National legislation

Type of further condition:

Additional provisions relating to labelling

Description of the condition:

The size of the letters of the geographical name 'Val de Loire' may not be larger, either in height or width, than two-thirds of the size of the letters forming the name of the controlled designation of origin.

Labelling: smaller geographical unit

Legal framework:

National legislation

Type of further condition:

Additional provisions relating to labelling

Description of the condition:

Wines with the controlled designation of origin may specify a smaller geographical unit on their labels, provided that: — it is a registered location; — it appears on the harvest declaration. The name of the registered location must be printed in letters no larger, either in height or in width, than half the size of the letters forming the name of the controlled designation of origin.

Link to the product specification

https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/gedei/site/bo-agri/document_administratif-2bee3ad4-2dc7-4d79-9977-b2e2f0980fbb