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

(2022/C 386/13)

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

**'Yecla'**

**PDO-ES-A0606-AM02**

**Date of communication: 12.7.2022**

## DESCRIPTION OF AND REASONS FOR THE APPROVED AMENDMENT

1. **Alignment of the terminology used for the analytical parameters of total sugars with the legislation in force**

DESCRIPTION:

The 'total sugars' analytical parameter has been renamed 'total sugars expressed as glucose plus fructose' in accordance with Article 20 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/34 of 17 October 2018 ([2]), which provides for the determination of total sugars expressed in terms of fructose and glucose.

This amendment concerns point 2(a) (Analytical characteristics) of the product specification and does not affect the single document.

This is a standard amendment as it adapts the terminology used for the physical and chemical characteristics, but does not entail any change to the final product. The product retains the characteristics and profile described in the link, which result from the interplay between natural and human factors. It is therefore considered that this amendment does not fall into any of the categories provided for in Article 14(1) of Regulation (EU) 2019/33.

REASONS:

It was necessary to make the way in which the wines' total sugar content is expressed more specific.

2. **Increase of the volatile acidity limits**

DESCRIPTION:

The volatile acidity limit has been increased to 0,8 g of tartaric acid per litre for white and rosé wines. For red wines and liqueur wines, the volatile acidity must not exceed 1,2 g of tartaric acid per litre. In sparkling wines, it has increased to 1 g of tartaric acid per litre.

This amendment concerns point 2(a) (Analytical characteristics) of the product specification and point 4 of the single document.

These changes to the product specification should be classed as a standard amendment under Article 14 of Regulation (EU) 2019/33.

([1]) OJ L 9, 11.1.2019, p. 2.
([2]) OJ L 9, 11.1.2019, p. 46.

REASONS:

The current specification sets overly restrictive limits for volatile acidity, excluding products that have appropriate organoleptic characteristics and that correspond to the typical nature of 'Yecla' wines. Owing to the method of preparing and ageing the wines, wines are now spending time in wooden containers with a capacity exceeding 330 litres. When the capacity exceeds this limit, the terms 'Crianza' and 'Reserva' cannot be used. The wines that spend time in these containers usually have similar volatile acidity to the value they would have had if they had been in a 330-litre barrel, but this does not negatively affect the taste and therefore the aim is to align this parameter with the current ageing and winemaking trends. All of this will favour less interventionist production processes and fermentation with native yeasts, thus producing more distinctive wines.

This analytical parameter should therefore be revised for the reasons set out above so that part of the wineries' production that cannot currently use the PDO can be marketed under it.

3. **Reduction of the minimum actual alcoholic strength and minimum total alcoholic strength in red wines**

DESCRIPTION:

The minimum thresholds for actual alcoholic strength and total alcoholic strength in red wines have been reduced by 0,5 % vol.

This amendment concerns point 2(a) (Analytical characteristics) of the product specification and point 4 (Description of the wine(s)) of the single document.

These changes to the product specification should be classed as a standard amendment under Article 14 of Regulation (EU) 2019/33.

REASONS:

In the 'Yecla' PDO production area, grape varieties with very different characteristics grow together. The main variety is Monastrell, which coexists with the other authorised varieties, Tempranillo, Syrah, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Garnacha Tinta, Garnacha Tintorera and Petit Verdot.

In general, over the last decade, the markets have been demanding smoother, fruitier wines, which appeal to new generations of consumers entering wine culture. The oenologists at each winery must have the tools necessary to produce wines that appeal to national and international markets while retaining the characteristics offered by our production area and varieties.

Reducing the minimum thresholds on actual alcoholic strength and total alcoholic strength in red wines by 0,5 % vol. does not lead to a drop in quality; on the contrary, it broadens the range of options provided by the different grape varieties of the area, thereby allowing more subtle, complex and appealing wines to be produced.

4. **Increase of the total acidity limits**

DESCRIPTION:

The limit on total acidity in white, rosé and red wines has been increased to 7,5 g of tartaric acid per litre.

This amendment concerns point 2(a) (Analytical characteristics) of the product specification and point 4 (Description of the wine(s)) of the single document.

These changes to the product specification should be classed as a standard amendment under Article 14 of Regulation (EU) 2019/33.

REASONS:

In the 'Yecla' PDO production area, grape varieties with very different characteristics grow together. The main variety is Monastrell, while the other red varieties are Tempranillo, Syrah, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon Garnacha Tinta, Garnacha Tintorera and Petit Verdot and the white varieties are Macabeo, Airen, Merseguera, Malvasía, Chardonnay, Moscatel de Grano Menudo, Sauvignon Blanc and Verdejo.

In general, over the last decade, the markets have been demanding smoother, fruitier wines, which appeal to new generations of consumers entering wine culture. This has led to earlier harvests with a lower alcoholic strength, which can result in a slight increase in the total acidity.

5. **Changes to the organoleptic descriptions**

DESCRIPTION:

This amendment adapts the organoleptic characteristics so that they can be better verified by means of sensory analysis.

This amendment concerns point 2(b) (Organoleptic characteristics) of the product specification and point 4 (Description of the wine(s)) of the single document.

These changes to the product specification should be classed as a standard amendment under Article 14 of Regulation (EU) 2019/33, as they do not represent a change to the product, which retains the characteristics and profile described in the link as resulting from the interaction between natural and human factors. It is therefore considered that this amendment does not fall into any of the categories provided for in Article 14(1) of Regulation (EU) 2019/33.

REASONS:

This amendment does not result in a reduction in the quality requirements of the wines produced, which are clearly defined. It simply classifies them in a clearer and more logical way, helping wineries and certifiers to carry out organoleptic assessment of the wines.

In addition, the implementation of standard UNE-EN-ISO 17065 in the verification of the specification makes it necessary to amend the organoleptic description of the wines covered so that their characteristics can be linked to descriptors that can be assessed by a tasting panel meeting the criteria laid down in standard UNE-EN-ISO 17025.

6. **Changes to specific oenological practices**

DESCRIPTION:

The minimum natural alcoholic strength by volume is expressed in degrees Baumé (°Bé) instead of % vol. It has also been reduced to 11 °Bé in red grapes intended for red wines and increased to 13 °Bé in red grapes intended for liqueur wines.

This amendment concerns point 3(a) (Specific oenological practices) of the product specification and point 5.1 (Specific oenological practices) of the single document.

These changes to the product specification should be classed as a standard amendment under Article 14 of Regulation (EU) 2019/33.

REASONS:

The change to °Bé is due to the fact that it is the most common way of measuring the sugar content in must based on its density, and avoids the constant use of conversion tables.

This change therefore simplifies the procedure for measuring the strength of the grapes when they reach the wineries. It also brings the wines' strength into line with the current crop situation and with market trends by slightly decreasing or increasing the values, given that in the 'Yecla' PDO production area, grape varieties with very different characteristics grow together. The main variety is Monastrell, which coexists with the other authorised varieties, Tempranillo, Syrah, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Garnacha Tinta, Garnacha Tintorera and Petit Verdot.

In general, over the last decade, the markets have been demanding smoother, fruitier wines, which appeal to new generations of consumers entering wine culture. The oenologists at each winery must have the tools necessary to produce wines that appeal to national and international markets while retaining the characteristics offered by our production area and varieties.

7. **Change to the extraction yield**

DESCRIPTION:

The rate of conversion of grapes into wine, making reference to the appropriate pressure to extract the must, has been increased, raising the maximum yield from 70 to 74 litres of wine per 100 kilograms of grapes.

This amendment concerns point 3(b) (Restrictions on making the wines) of the product specification and point 5.1 (Relevant restriction on making the wines) of the single document.

These changes to the product specification should be classed as a standard amendment under Article 14 of Regulation (EU) 2019/33.

REASONS:

Like any agri-food industry, the wine sector has undergone a technological revolution in recent years. This development, far from coming to an end, continues to offer new tools for oenologists to make wines more attractive, durable and eco-friendly.

Not only do practices such as limiting extraction to 70 % of the must do nothing to improve the quality of the wine, they also limit the specialists in many ways when it comes to extracting the best from the grapes in each production cycle.

Oenological practices should focus on the production of quality wine, drawing on the knowledge, experience and ability of each team of specialists to apply the best existing or future techniques which comply with the specification for the production of wines covered by the 'Yecla' PDO.

The increase in yield from 70 litres to 74 litres per 100 kilograms of grapes is based on the fact that, when subjected to slightly higher pressure in the presses, some of the varieties in this production area, such as Monastrell, Cabernet, Garnacha Tintorera and Merlot, produce musts with a concentration of very high-quality polyphenols, which under the existing rules must be discarded in order not to exceed the current limit.

The quality of the wines produced from some varieties under the 'Yecla' PDO which are less rich in anthocyanins and polyphenols would be improved by adding this valuable 4 % of wine with a higher concentration of these compounds.

8. **Changes to cultural practices**

DESCRIPTION:

Certain cultural practices – the regulation of irrigation by the Regulatory Board's managing body and minimum planting densities – have been removed. The wording of the text has also been revised to indicate that both gobelet training and trellising are permitted, with a view to obtaining products of the highest quality.

This amendment concerns point 3(c) (Cultural practices) of the product specification and point 5.1 of the single document.

These changes to the product specification do not result in any changes in the characteristics of the final product, and should be classed as a standard amendment under Article 14 of Regulation (EU) 2019/33.

REASONS:

The specification has not been updated since its creation, and we aim to bring it into line with the practices that are actually needed in our area.

The cultural practices that currently appear in our production rules, such as the regulation of irrigation by the Regulatory Board's managing body and the minimum planting densities, not only do nothing to improve the quality of the wine, they also limit the farmers in many ways when it comes to obtaining the best grapes for each production cycle.

In addition, sufficient controls are already considered to be in place in the form of the production yields (kg/ha) laid down and regulated by the product specification.

The regulation of irrigation and the minimum planting densities have therefore been removed and the wording of the description of the cultural practices has been updated in order to make it more operational and up to date and to adapt it to the wine-growers' needs.

9. **Amendment of the maximum yield per hectare in hl/ha**

DESCRIPTION:

Because the extraction yield for must or wine is being amended, the maximum yield per hectare is also being amended.

This amendment concerns point 5 (Maximum yield) of the product specification and point 5.2 of the single document.

These changes to the product specification should be classed as a standard amendment under Article 14 of Regulation (EU) 2019/33.

REASONS:

Adjustment of the maximum yield due to the amendment of the extraction yield of must or wine per 100 kilograms of harvested grapes.

10. **Change to the name of a variety**

DESCRIPTION:

The name Malvasia has been changed to 'Malvasia Aromatica' or 'Malvasia de Sitges'.

The amendment concerns point 6 (Grape varieties) of the production specification and does not affect the single document as this is considered a secondary variety.

These changes to the product specification should be classed as a standard amendment under Article 14 of Regulation (EU) 2019/33.

REASONS:

To use the correct nomenclature for this variety.

11. **Changes to the wording of the natural factors of the link**

DESCRIPTION:

The text concerning the abundance of iron and the altitude of the area has been deleted and the maximum altitude at which the vineyards are currently located has been updated.

This amendment concerns point 7(a) (Details of the geographical area, Natural factors) of the product specification and point 8 of the single document.

These changes to the product specification should be classed as a standard amendment under Article 14 of Regulation (EU) 2019/33 as the link, despite changes to the wording in places, has not been altered.

REASONS:

Giving the average altitude of the crop and the minimum and maximum altitude of the area leads to confusion. We have opted to leave only the minimum and maximum altitude (the latter having increased) of vine cultivation. Recent vineyard plantations in the north have increased the maximum altitude of vine cultivation under our designation. The reference to the abundance of iron has been deleted, as modern wine-making techniques have eliminated the problem of iron casse.

12. **Change to the compulsory declarations**

DESCRIPTION:

The date by which the winegrowers must declare their harvest and the wineries must submit the declaration of unused certification labels in the winery has been amended.

This amendment concerns section 8 of the product specification and does not affect the single document.

These changes to the product specification should be classed as a standard amendment under Article 14 of Regulation (EU) 2019/33.

REASONS:

Due to the characteristics of our main variety Monastrell, in some years the harvest takes longer, potentially lasting until November. In the event of such harvests, fermentation ends at the start of December. Even when all the requirements for pre-selecting winemaking tanks for PDO protection are met, the wineries in the production process do not decide on the intended use of their output until the end of fermentation. In these cases, the winegrowers find out the final destination of their output after 30 November, so it is sensible to extend this deadline.

Due to the nature of operations in the wineries, allowing only 10 days to submit the declaration of certification labels is a very tight deadline, and it should therefore be extended to the following month.

13. **Other amended requirements**

DESCRIPTION:

The text 'The limit on litres of must or wine per 100 kilograms of harvested grapes may exceptionally be modified to a maximum of 74 litres in certain marketing years by the managing body, on its own initiative or at the request of the producers concerned, prior to the harvest and subject to the necessary consultation and checks' has been deleted.

This amendment concerns section 8 of the product specification and does not affect the single document.

These changes to the product specification should be classed as a standard amendment under Article 14 of Regulation (EU) 2019/33.

REASONS:

As this yield has been permanently increased (see the amendment concerning the extraction yield), it is not necessary to increase it on an ad hoc basis.

14. **Updating of the control information**

DESCRIPTION:

The details of the competent authority and the delegated control body have been updated.

This amendment concerns section 9 of the product specification and does not affect the single document.

These changes to the product specification should be classed as a standard amendment under Article 14 of Regulation (EU) 2019/33.

REASONS:

The opportunity is being taken to update this information.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

1. **Name of the product**

Yecla

2. **Geographical indication type**

PDO – Protected Designation of Origin

3. **Categories of grapevine product**

1. Wine

3. Liqueur wine

4. Sparkling wine

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

1. WINE – White Wines

CONCISE TEXTUAL DESCRIPTION

— Appearance: clean and brilliant, pale yellow to golden yellow tones, may have a greenish tinge at the rim.

— Aroma: clean and fruity and/or floral aromas. If the wine has been aged in wood, these are balanced with the typical aromas provided by the barrel.

— Taste: good acidity, fruity. If the wine has been aged in wood, the classic notes that this brings to the wine as a whole are perceptible. Semi-sweet and sweet wines are balanced in terms of alcoholic strength, acidity and residual sugar content.

* If the sugar content is greater than or equal to 5 g/l, the maximum sulphur content is 250 mg/l.

| General analytical characteristics | |
|---|---|
| Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume) | |
| Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume) | 10,5 |
| Minimum total acidity | 4,5 grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid |
| Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre) | 13,3 |
| Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre) | 200 |

2. WINE – Rosé Wines

CONCISE TEXTUAL DESCRIPTION

— Appearance: clean and brilliant, ranging from pale salmon to pink.

— Aroma: fruity and/or floral aromas.

— Taste: good acidity, balanced, fruity. Semi-sweet and sweet wines are balanced in terms of alcoholic strength, acidity and residual sugar content.

* If the sugar content is greater than or equal to 5 g/l, the maximum sulphur content is 250 mg/l.

| General analytical characteristics | |
|---|---|
| Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume) | |
| Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume) | 11 |
| Minimum total acidity | 4,5 grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid |
| Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre) | 13,3 |
| Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre) | 200 |

3. WINE – Red Wines

CONCISE TEXTUAL DESCRIPTION

— Appearance: medium to strong intensity of colour. Colour of violet-tinged cherry, purple, garnet, may contain purple shades or cherry-red, ruby-red or brick hues.

— Aroma: fresh and/or ripe fruit, of good intensity. Where fermented or aged in wood, there will be a balance between fruit and wood. Slight over-ripening, spices, balsamic notes, traces of oak.

— Taste: multi-layered with good persistence, body, warmth and mature and soft tannins, very balanced. Semi-sweet and sweet wines are balanced in terms of alcoholic strength, acidity and residual sugar content.

* If the sugar content is greater than or equal to 5 g/l, the maximum sulphur content is 200 mg/l.

| General analytical characteristics | |
|---|---|
| Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume) | |
| Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume) | 12 |
| 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. LIQUEUR WINE

CONCISE TEXTUAL DESCRIPTION

— Appearance: that of the type of wine: white, rosé or red.

— Aroma: of good intensity associated with the ageing, very intense and characteristic when made with Monastrell grapes.

— Taste: well balanced between sweetness and bitterness, full-bodied, unctuous with a long finish.

* If the sugar content is greater than or equal to 5 g/l, the maximum sulphur content is 200 mg/l.

| General analytical characteristics | |
|---|---|
| Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume) | |
| Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume) | 15 |
| Minimum total acidity | 3,5 grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid |
| Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre) | 20 |
| Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre) | 150 |

5. SPARKLING WINE

CONCISE TEXTUAL DESCRIPTION

— Appearance: where the base wine is white, pale yellow to golden yellow tones predominate. Where the base wine is rosé, the wines have pink tones, and may have tints of raspberry, strawberry, redcurrants or salmon. Where the base wine is red, the wines have red tones with violet, purple, garnet, cherry or ruby tints.

— Aroma: with floral or fruity aromas specific to the variety.

— Taste: balanced between sugar and acidity.

| General analytical characteristics | |
|---|---|
| Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume) | |
| Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume) | 11,5 |
| Minimum total acidity | 4,5 grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid |
| Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre) | 16,7 |
| Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre) | 235 |

## 5. **Wine-making practices**

### 5.1. *Specific oenological practices*

1.

Specific oenological practice

The grapes must have a minimum strength of 11 °Bé for red grapes and 10 °Bé for white grapes; for liqueur wines, the minimum strength must be 13 °Bé.

2.

Relevant restriction on making the wines

— For the extraction of must from fresh grapes in winemaking involving fermentation off skins, or of wine from fermented grape marc in red winemaking, the only mechanised systems permitted are those that do not damage or tear the solid parts of bunches. The use of high-speed centrifugal crushers is prohibited.

— The use of continuous presses is prohibited.

— In the extraction of must or wine and its separation from the grape marc, the yield must not exceed 74 litres of finished wine per 100 kilograms of harvested grapes. In no case may batches of must or wine obtained by applying unsuitable pressure be used to make protected wines.

3.

Cultural practice

The training and pruning systems used in vineyards are the traditional gobelet system and its variants, and trellising and its variants.

### 5.2. *Maximum yields*

1. NON-IRRIGATED PLANTATIONS OF WHITE VARIETIES

4 500 kilograms of grapes per hectare

2.

33,3 hectolitres per hectare

3. NON-IRRIGATED PLANTATIONS OF RED VARIETIES

4 000 kilograms of grapes per hectare

4.

29,6 hectolitres per hectare

5. IRRIGATED PLANTATIONS OF WHITE VARIETIES

9 000 kilograms of grapes per hectare

6.

66,6 hectolitres per hectare

7. IRRIGATED PLANTATIONS OF RED VARIETIES

7 000 kilograms of grapes per hectare

8.

51,8 hectolitres per hectare

6. **Demarcated geographical area**

The grape-growing area for the wines covered by the designation of origin is formed of the areas of land included in the vineyard register, all located within the municipality of Yecla in the region of Murcia.

The winemaking area matches the grape-growing and ageing areas.

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

MONASTRELL

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

Yecla has a dry continental climate with hot summers and very cold winters. Average annual rainfall is 300 millimetres. The annual sunshine exceeds 3 000 hours.

The most important characteristic in terms of the relief of this area is the considerable altitude of the high plateau.

The endorheic nature of the river basins in the area is notable characteristic of the water system. The soils are, among other things, calcareous and deep with good permeability and especially poor in organic matter. There is archaeological evidence of vine-growing since the first century BC.

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

Legal framework:

In national legislation

Type of further condition:

Additional provisions relating to labelling

Description of the condition:

The following must appear on the labels of the packaged wines: 'Denominación de Origen Yecla' or 'Denominación de Origen Protegida Yecla'. The labels are examined by the inspection body that verifies compliance with the requirements of the product specification.

The packaging in which the wines are dispatched must bear guarantee seals or certification labels, in both cases numbered, which are issued by or use numbering provided by the control body and are affixed at the winery itself (single-use).

**Link to the product specification**

https://www.carm.es/web/integra.servlets.Blob?ARCHIVO=Pliego_Condiciones_DOP_Yecla__definitivo[1].pdf&TABLA=ARCHIVOS&CAMPOCLAVE=IDARCHIVO&CAMPOIMAGEN=ARCHIVO&IDTIPO=60&VALORCLAVE=77958