OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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

(2021/C 24/18)

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

COMMUNICATION OF STANDARD AMENDMENT MODIFYING THE SINGLE DOCUMENT

'SAINT-MONT'

PDO-FR-A0711-AM01

Date of communication: 3.11.2020

DESCRIPTION OF AND REASONS FOR THE APPROVED AMENDMENT

1. **Demarcated geographical area**

The municipality of Riscle is replaced by 'Riscle (former municipality of Riscle)' following the merger of the municipalities of Riscle and Cannet.

This entails an amendment to point 6 of the single document.

2. **Variety**

The vine varieties are specified by the colour of the wine.

In the vine varieties of red wines and rosé wines, the adaptation varieties Manseng N and Tardif N are added. These two varieties native to the Pyrenean foothills respond to changes in the climate and to environmental and technical developments. In a time of global warming the late maturing of the Tardif N variety, and its peppery aromas and silky tannins, are an asset. Moreover, this variety has no particular sensitivity to botrytis. Manseng N is of particular interest because it matures with a lower alcohol volume. These two varieties have the potential to restore balance (more aromas and less alcohol) in the blend.

In the vine varieties of rosé wines, the complementary varieties of Cabernet-Sauvignon and Fer N become main varieties in order to be more present. In addition to the Cabernet Franc N and Merlot N already present, the white varieties that were initially included in the rules on the proportions of vine varieties, but were not listed under this heading, are added to the list of secondary varieties: 'Manseng B, Arrufiac B, Petit Courbu B, Courbu B, Petit Manseng B'.

These amendments require no changes to the single document.

3. **Proportion to be planted**

As a result of the modification of the vine varieties, the rules on proportions are described by colour of wine.

For red and rosé wines, rules on proportions relating to the addition of the new adaptation varieties are added: 'The proportion of all secondary Tardif N and Manseng N varieties must be less than or equal to 5 %.'

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

For white wines, the main grape variety is reaffirmed by increasing its minimum presence from 50 % to 60 % of the varietal mix.

Special provisions are added for small vine-growers providing grapes: 'With the exception of the provisions relating to the proportion of the adaptation varieties Tardif N and Manseng N, and with respect to each colour (white or red), the provisions on proportions do not apply to grape producers who do not make their own wine, who grow on less than 1,5 hectares per colour for the 'Saint-Mont' registered designation of origin and who maintain a proportion of main grape varieties equal to or greater than 50 % of the mix of vine varieties for the colour in question.' It is the case that 98 % of operators are members of cooperatives. Requiring these winegrowers to have all the varieties referred to in the specification on such small areas is likely to weaken them owing to the difficulty in implementing such large proportions in relation to their area. Moreover, there is a collective cellar arrangement allowing the blending rules to be complied with across the vine varieties present in the territory.

This amendment requires no changes to the single document.

4. **Spacing between vines**

The minimum spacing between vines in the same row is reduced from 0,9 metres to 0,8 metres.

This makes it possible to increase density by lowering the minimum distance between the vines. The increase in density results in greater competition between the vines, which develop deeper root systems, allowing the terroir to be expressed more markedly.

This entails an amendment to point 5 of the single document.

5. **Maximum crop load per parcel**

The maximum load for rosé wines is aligned with that of red wines, and thus decreases from 10 000 kg/ha to 9 500 kg/ha. As a result, the rosé and red parcels will be managed in the same way as regards the provisions of the control plan, i.e. maximum average load and harvesting. As the harvest weight is the same for red and rosé (9 500 kg), the two colours differ only in harvesting method.

This amendment requires no changes to the single document.

6. **Growing methods**

The words 'In order to preserve the characteristics of soils constituting a fundamental element of the terroir, vegetation cover must be maintained on the headlands surrounding the vineyard parcels in the demarcated parcel area' are replaced by 'Chemical weed control in headlands is prohibited', in order to allow more appropriate oversight of growing practices.

This amendment requires no changes to the single document.

7. **Provisions relating to old vines**

In order to preserve certain vines of historical and genetic interest which are at risk of being grubbed up between now and the period from 2021 to 2040 because they will no longer meet the densities required by the product specification, the following special provisions are added:

'Vineyard parcels in place on the date of approval of this specification that have a planting density of less than 4 000 vines per hectare, do not comply with one or more of the provisions relating to spacing between rows and spacing between vines in the same row, and are entered in the 'old vines' register of the 'Saint-Mont' registered designation of origin, shall have, for harvesting, the right to the registered designation of origin until they are grubbed up.' The 'old vines' register is subject to an annual review against the following criteria:

— the vines must have been planted before 1982,

— the vines must be trained on a vertical trellis system, and the height of the foliage when trellised must be at least 0,6 times the spacing between the rows,

— the maximum yield is 50 hl/ha for parcels with a planting density of more than 3 600 vines per hectare,

— the maximum yield is 45 hl/ha for parcels with a planting density of less than 3 600 vines per hectare but more than 3 200 vines per hectare,

— the maximum yield is 40 hl/ha for parcels with a planting density of less than 3 200 vines per hectare but more than 2 600 vines per hectare.'

This amendment requires no changes to the single document.

8. **Sugar content of the grapes**

Since vine varieties have been added, the sugar content is specified for these varieties, for red and rosé wines.

Tardif N and Manseng N: 189 grams of sugars per litre of must for red wines

Tardif N and Manseng N: 180 grams of sugars per litre of must for rosé wines

This amendment requires no changes to the single document.

9. **Blending**

Blending rules for adaptation varieties are added for rosé wines and red wines: 'The wines are made from a blend in which the combined proportion of the Tardif N and Manseng N adaptation varieties is less than or equal to 10 %'.

In the blend of red wines, the Tannat variety is reaffirmed by increasing the minimum percentage from 50 % to 60 %.

In the blend of white wines, the Gros Manseng variety is reaffirmed by increasing the minimum percentage from 50 % to 60 %.

In the blend of rosé wines:

— The text 'The wines are made from a blend in which at least the main variety and the complementary varieties are present' is changed to 'The wines are made from a blend in which at least two main varieties are present.' This is because in some vintages Tannat is unsuitable for making rosé (gap between phenolic and technological maturity; difficulty in finding a balance between ABV and acidity). On the other hand, Cabernet-Sauvignon and Fer N would be better suited to rosé production (lower ABV). These new blending rules give more scope in the production of rosés.

— The white varieties are described as follows: 'The wines are made from a blend in which the proportion of the white varieties Manseng B, Arrufiac B, Petit Courbu B, Courbu B and Petit Manseng B is less than or equal to 10 %'.

— The following are deleted: 'In the blending, no variety may exceed 70 %' and 'In the blend, the main grape variety is present in the highest proportion'.

This amendment requires no changes to the single document.

10. **Oenological charcoal**

The use of charcoal, previously prohibited, is permitted in a specific and limited way: 'The use of oenological charcoal is authorised in the production of rosé wines for musts up to a maximum of 20 % of the volume of rosé wine produced by the winemaker concerned for the harvest in question.' The aim is to focus use on batches of lower organoleptic or analytical quality (particularly as regards aromatic alterations linked to oxidation) without changing the product's typical features.

This entails an amendment to point 5 of the single document.

11. **Circulation between authorised warehouses**

Point IX(5)(b) of Chapter 1 concerning the date of entry into circulation of the wines between authorised warehouses is deleted.

This amendment requires no changes to the single document.

12. **Record-keeping**

The 'old vine' register is added to the list of compulsory registers following the addition of a special provision for the preservation of certain parcels of vines of genetic interest.

This amendment requires no changes to the single document.

13. **Production waiver declaration**

The paragraph concerning the production waiver is simplified in order not to make a distinction between different colours of wines.

This amendment requires no changes to the single document.

14. **Main points to be checked**

A documentary and a field check are added for the 'old vine' parcels.

This amendment requires no changes to the single document.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

1. **Name of the product**

Saint-Mont

2. **Geographical indication type**

PDO – Protected Designation of Origin

3. **Categories of grapevine product**

1. Wine

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

Red wines

The red wines have a minimum natural alcoholic strength by volume of 12 %.

Each batch of wine ready to be marketed, in bulk or packaged form, has:

— a total alcoholic strength not exceeding 13,5 % after enrichment in the case of red wines,

— for red wines, a malic acid content not exceeding 0,4 grams per litre,

— a fermentable sugar (glucose + fructose) content not exceeding:

— 3 grams per litre for red wines with a natural alcoholic strength by volume not exceeding 14 %,

— 4 grams per litre for wines with a natural alcoholic strength by volume exceeding 14 %.

The total acidity, volatile acidity and total sulphur dioxide content are as laid down in EU legislation.

The red wines have an intense colour. On the palate the taste is usually characterised by a good aromatic concentration, often revealing notes of red and black fruit. The tannin structure gives these wines a good storage potential, allowing them to acquire complex aromas of candied fruit and spices, often combined with woody tones from ageing in barrels.

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

White and rosé wines

White and rosé wines have a minimum natural alcoholic strength by volume of 11,50 %.

Each batch of wine ready to be marketed, in bulk or packaged form, has:

— a total alcoholic strength not exceeding 12,5 % after enrichment in the case of white and rosé wines,

— a fermentable sugar (glucose + fructose) content not exceeding:

— 4 grams per litre for white and rosé wines.

The total acidity, volatile acidity and total sulphur dioxide content are as laid down in EU legislation.

The rosé wines have a colour that is sometimes intense and the nose is usually characterised by notes of red fruit. On the palate their lively aftertaste makes the wines harmonious and gives them a good balance between richness and acidity.

The white wines are very aromatic, rich and balanced thanks to the presence of the Gros Manseng B variety.

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

5. **Wine-making practices**

a. *Essential oenological practices*

Essential oenological practice

— The rosé wines are made by direct pressing.

— For the production of rosé wines, the use of oenological charcoal is authorised for musts up to a maximum of 20 % of the volume of rosé wines produced by the winemaker concerned for the harvest in question.

— Reductive methods of enrichment are permitted for the red wines, with the maximum partial concentration rate set at 10 % relative to the volumes used.

— After enrichment, the wines' total alcoholic strength by volume must not exceed 13,5 % for the reds and 12,5 % for the whites and rosés.

In addition to the provisions above, all winemaking practices must also comply with the requirements laid down at EU level and in the Rural and Maritime Fishing Code.

Growing method

— Planting density

The minimum planting density of the vines is 4 000 plants per hectare.

The distance between the rows is 2,5 metres or less, and the spacing between plants in the same row is between 0,8 metres and 1,1 metres.

These provisions do not apply to vines planted on terraces.

For vines planted on terraces, the distance between vines in the same row is between 0,9 metres and 1,1 metres.

— Pruning rules

The vines are pruned by either single or double Guyot pruning or by short pruning (trained using the cordon de Royat method), with a maximum per vine of:

— 12 count buds for the Tannat N variety,

— 18 count buds for the Petit Courbu B and Petit Manseng B varieties,

— 16 count buds for other varieties.

Whichever pruning technique is used, the number of fruit-bearing branches per vine, at the 'véraison' [onset of ripening] stage, must not exceed:

— 10 for the Tannat N variety,

— 16 for the Petit Courbu B and Petit Manseng B varieties,

— 12 for other varieties,

— irrigation may be authorised,

— the Tannat N variety and the varieties intended for the production of red wines are harvested manually.

b. *Maximum yields*

Red wines

63 hectolitres per hectare

Rosé wines

68 hectolitres per hectare

White wines

69 hectolitres per hectare

6. **Demarcated geographical area**

The grapes are harvested and the wines made, developed and aged on the territory, or on part of the territory, of the following municipalities in the Gers department:

Municipalities whose territory falls entirely within the geographical area: Aignan, Arblade-le-Bas, Armous et Cau, Aurensan, Beaumarchès, Bernède, Bouzon-Gellenave, Castelnavet, Caumont, Corneillan, Couloumé-Mondebat, Courties, Fusterouau, Gazax et Baccarisse, Ju-Belloc, Labarthète, Ladevèze-Ville, Ladevèze-Rivière, Lannux, Lasserrade, Lelin-Lapujolle, Louslitges, Loussous-Débat, Lupiac, Margouët-Meymes, Maulichères, Peyrusse-Grande, Peyrusse-Vieille, Plaisance, Pouydraguin, Projan, Riscle (former municipality of Riscle), Sabazan, Saint-Aunix-Lengros, Saint-Mont, Saint-Pierre-d'Aubézies, Sarragachies, Tasque, Termes-d'Armagnac, Tieste-Uragnoux, Tourdun and Verlus.

Municipalities part of whose territory falls within the geographical area: Averon-Bergelle, Dému, Marciac and Seailles.

7. **Main wine grape variety(ies)**

Arrufiac B - Arrufiat

Cabernet Franc N

Cabernet-Sauvignon N

Courbu B - Gros Courbu

Fer N - Fer Servadou, Braucol, Mansois, Pinenc

Gros Manseng B

Merlot N

Petit Courbu B

Petit Manseng B

Tannat N

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

The geographical area is equidistant – around 100 kilometres – from the Pyrenees to the south and from the Atlantic Ocean to the west. It extends over a hilly area on both sides of the valleys of the river Adour and one of its tributaries, the Arros.

The vine plantations are spread over slopes at the heart of an agricultural region devoted to mixed cultivation and livestock farming, where the cultivation of maize has an important role.

It covers the territory of 46 municipalities.

Temperatures are mild and fairly homogeneous throughout the geographical area. There is a strong rainfall gradient from west to east, from 1 000 mm per year to 800 millimetres per year.

The summer and early autumn are hot and often dry, particularly as a result of the southerly 'foehn' wind, which blows frequently during this period.

The geological substrate is varied. To the west it is mainly composed of 'Sables Fauves' [tawny sands], a marine formation from the Tertiary period, the southern boundary of which coincides with the border of the geographical area. These are topped by ancient alluvial sheets, where pebbles emerge and form colluvium on the slopes.

Further east the 'Sables Fauves' disappear and are replaced by molasse, with calcareous beds an obvious feature of the landscape.

The soils that have developed on this substrate are:

— either clay-limestone soils that have developed on the molasse,

— or leached acid soils that have developed on 'Sables Fauves' and pebbly colluvium.

These soils have a low mineral-element content.

Excess water is drained away by the slopes, and in the western part of the area by the sandy and stony nature of the soil.

The complex structure of the terrain, following the main Adour and Arros valleys, often arranged along tectonic lines, and then split into secondary ridges, forms a patchwork of locations oriented in various directions.

The morphology of the valleys is clearly asymmetrical. The west-facing slope is often steep, unlike the east-facing side, which slopes gently.

In addition to the red and 'clairet' wines produced in a large area of the Adour basin and intended for the inhabitants of the Pyrenean mountains, white wines have been produced in the west of the geographical area since the end of the Middle Ages. These were exported to northern Europe from the 17th century.

The successive arrival of powdery mildew, downy mildew and phylloxera, as well as the high demand for wine for distillation into Armagnac, resulted in a significant reduction in the areas of vines intended for the production of quality wines, which lost ground to 'Piquepoules', low vines used for the production of wines for distillation.

Finally, the mechanisation of agriculture in the middle of the 20th century led to an expansion of areas under maize and exacerbated the decline in wine-growing areas.

The first association to defend 'Saint-Mont' wines was set up in 1957. It initiated the renewal, in 1970, of a vineyard based on local vine varieties such as the red Tannat N, Cabernet Franc N, Cabernet-Sauvignon N and Fer N and the white Arrufiac B, Courbu B, Gros Manseng B and Petit Manseng B varieties.

The 'Saint-Mont' registered designation of origin was recognised in 2011.

The red wines have an intense colour. On the palate the taste is usually characterised by a good aromatic concentration revealing notes of red and black fruit. The tannin structure gives these wines a good storage potential, allowing them to acquire complex aromas of candied fruit and spices, often combined with woody tones from ageing in barrels.

The rosé wines have a colour that is sometimes intense and the nose is usually characterised by notes of red fruit. On the palate their lively aftertaste makes the wines harmonious and gives them a good balance between richness and acidity.

The white wines are very aromatic, rich and balanced thanks to the presence of the Gros Manseng B variety.

The vineyards are located on the most favourable plots, grouped into islands of cultivation spread over well-oriented slopes with low mineral content and well-drained soils.

The geographical area is in the Adour river basin, with the stock of vines dominated by the Tannat N variety and the Gros Manseng B and Petit Manseng B varieties, which are particularly suited to the rather damp climate of the geographical area and to the deep soils. However, their position at a crossroads between several wine-growing regions has enriched the vineyards with inputs from the surrounding regions and more particularly in relation to their plant heritage and the Garonne river basin trio of Cabernet Franc N, Cabernet-Sauvignon N and Merlot N, the establishment of which is also facilitated by the oceanic climate.

The practices implemented by producers have led to the compulsory manual harvesting of varieties intended for the production of red wines.

A period of post-fermentation ageing in the tank was introduced to produce a wine with complex aromas, and above all to ensure that the tannins become round and silky. This means that the wines are aged until at least 1 March in the year following the harvest.

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

Legal framework:

National legislation

Type of further condition:

Additional provisions relating to labelling

Description of the condition:

The ‘AOC Saint-Mont’ designation may be supplemented with the name of the larger geographical unit, ‘Sud-Ouest’ [South-West], in line with the provisions of the specification.

Link to the product specification

https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/gedei/site/bo-agri/document_administratif-81a8636c-9714-494d-aae4-be44e3f2820d