C/2025/3644

2.7.2025

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/2025/3644)

COMMUNICATION OF APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT

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

'Canon Fronsac'

PDO-FR-A0924-AM01 – 10.4.2025

1. **Name of product**

'Canon Fronsac'

2. **Geographical indication type**

☒ Protected designation of origin (PDO)

☐ Protected geographical indication (PGI)

☐ Geographical indication (GI)

3. **Sector**

☐ Agricultural products

☒ Wines

☐ Spirit drinks

4. **Country to which the geographical area belongs**

France

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

Conseil des vins de Fronsac [Fronsac Wine Board]

6. **Qualification as standard amendment**

The French authorities consider the application to meet the requirements of Regulations (EU) No 1308/2013 and (EU) 2024/1143.

The amendments to the product specification are standard amendments according to the definition laid down in Article 24(4) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143.

The application for an amendment to the 'Canon Fronsac' PDO does not involve any of the three situations constituting a Union amendment, specifically it does not:

(a) include a change in the name or in the use of the name, or in the category of product or products designated by the geographical indication;

(b) risk voiding the link to the geographical area;

(c) entail further restrictions on the marketing of the product. The French authorities therefore consider that the application is for a standard amendment.

[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).

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

1. *Geographical area*

The geographical area has been updated on the basis of the INSEE 2024 Official Geographic Code.

This amendment affects the 'Demarcated geographical area' section of the single document.

2. *Area in immediate proximity*

The area in immediate proximity has been updated on the basis of the INSEE 2024 Official Geographic Code.

This amendment affects the 'Further conditions' section of the single document.

3. *Vine varieties*

Cot N (or Malbec), which was initially included in the list of secondary varieties, has become a main grape variety.

The purpose of this amendment is to adapt the products to climate change. The Malbec variety is perfectly suited to the increase in temperatures seen in Gironde. This late variety ripens better in the late season and helps to counterbalance the Merlot, the alcoholic strength of which has been increasing with climate change.

Yearly tastings have confirmed that this change does not substantially alter the products' organoleptic characteristics.

This amendment affects the 'Link with the geographical area' section of the single document.

4. *Training method*

A requirement for dead vines to be removed from the parcels has been added.

The description of the area that can undergo chemical weed control has been amended. It is now expressed as 30 cm on either side of the vine row.

A requirement has been added to calculate the treatment frequency index.

These changes address societal and environmental challenges. They allow full advantage to be taken of the environmentally friendly practices put in place by operators.

These amendments do not affect the single document.

5. *Blending*

The text concerning blending has been amended to remove a repetition. This amendment aims to make the product specification easier to understand.

This amendment does not affect the single document.

6. *Analytical standards*

The analytical standards for packaged wines (volatile acidity and total sulphur dioxide content) have been deleted in order to apply the standards laid down in European legislation.

This amendment affects the 'Description of the wine(s)' section of the single document.

7. *Ageing*

The ageing period has been reduced by 2.5 months, lasting until 1 June of the year following the harvest.

The aim of this amendment is to produce fruitier wines. This will also make it possible to supply the market during the summer period and to diversify the range of wines by offering cuvée wines aged in barrels for one year or more, and fruity wines aged in vats. In this way, the wines can be supplied to large retailers and satisfy growing tourist demand in the region.

Yearly tastings have confirmed that this change has a minimal impact on the products' organoleptic characteristics.

This amendment does not affect the single document.

8. *Date of placing on the market for sale to the consumer*

After ageing, the wines are placed on the market for sale to the consumer from 30 June of the year following the year of harvest.

This amendment follows the reduction in the length of the ageing period and has no impact on the product.

This amendment does not affect the single document.

9. *Date for circulation between authorised warehouses*

This rule has been removed from the specification in order to allow wines to circulate between all operators and to remove any risk of unfair competition.

This amendment does not affect the single document.

10. *Link*

A sentence has been added in line with the amendment to the rules on blending and the addition of Cot N as a main grape variety.

The length of the ageing period has also been amended.

These amendments affect the 'Link with the geographical area' section of the single document.

11. *Transitional measures*

The transitional measures that had expired – concerning vine varieties and training methods – have been deleted.

This amendment aims to make the product specification easier to read.

These amendments do not affect the single document.

12. *References*

The contact details of the National Institute of Origin and Quality (Institut national de l'origine et de la qualité, INAO) have been updated.

The arrangements for inspecting the product specification have been amended.

These amendments do not affect the single document.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

1. **Name(s)**

Canon Fronsac

2. **Type of geographical indication**

PDO – Protected designation of origin

3. **Categories of grapevine product**

1. Wine

3.1. *Combined Nomenclature code*

— 22 – BEVERAGES, SPIRITS AND VINEGAR

2204 – wine of fresh grapes, including fortified wines; grape must other than that of heading 2009

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

The wine is a still, dry red wine. The wines have a minimum natural alcoholic strength by volume of 11 %. After enrichment, the wines' total alcoholic strength by volume must not exceed 13,5 %. Every batch of wine sold (in bulk or packaged) has a malic acid content of no more than 0,30 grams per litre. Every batch of wine sold (in bulk or packaged) has a fermentable sugar content (glucose and fructose) of no more than 3 grams per litre. Every batch of wine sold (in bulk) has a volatile acidity level less than or equal to 13,26 milliequivalents per litre, or 0,79 g per litre expressed in acetic acid (0,65 g per litre expressed in H_2SO_4). Every batch of wine sold (in bulk) has a total sulphur dioxide content less than or equal to 140 mg per litre. The total acidity is that laid down by EU legislation. The wine is produced using the Merlot N variety, often accompanied by the Cabernet Franc N and Cabernet Sauvignon N varieties, which provide freshness and structure, increasing the wines' ageing potential and aromatic complexity. The Malbec variety is the fourth most planted variety behind the Merlot, the Cabernet Franc and the Cabernet Sauvignon. It too thrives in calcareous, clay-gravel or clay-limestone soils. Together with the Merlot and the Cabernets it gives the wine greater tannic breadth, with aromas of small black fruits and liquorice. These grape varieties result in a wine with an intense red colour with purple or ruby tints and a powerful nose often marked by aromatic notes of red fruits (blackberry, cherry, blackcurrant). During ageing, these can evolve into a complex bouquet, sometimes with truffle notes, other times with gamey or spicy notes, depending on the type of soil. The other analytical values comply, by default, with the EU legislation.

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. **Winemaking practices**

5.1. *Specific oenological practices*

Subtractive enrichment techniques are permitted up to a concentration rate of 15 %. After enrichment, the wines' total alcoholic strength by volume must not exceed 13,5 %. In addition to the above provisions, the oenological practices adopted for the wines must comply with the obligations laid down in EU legislation and in the Rural and Fisheries Code.

Cultivation method

The minimum vine planting density is 5 000 plants per hectare. The spacing between vine rows must not exceed 2 metres, and the spacing between plants in the same row must be at least 0,80 metres.

Pruning is carried out at the unfolded leaves stage (Lorenz stage 9) at the latest, using the following techniques: single or double Guyot pruning, spur (short) pruning (cordon or fan pruning), or cane (long) pruning with a maximum of 12 buds per plant. Under no circumstances may the canes overlap.

Irrigation during the vine growing season is permitted only if persistent drought disrupts the sound physiological development of the vines and the ripening of the grapes.

5.2. *Maximum yields*

65 hectolitres per hectare

6. **Demarcated geographical area**

The grapes are harvested and the wines made, developed and aged in the following municipalities of the department of Gironde, based on the Official Geographic Code in force on 20 February 2024: Fronsac and Saint-Michel-de-Fronsac.

7. **Wine grape varieties**

Cabernet Franc N

Cabernet Sauvignon N

Carmenère N

Cot N – Malbec

Merlot N

Petit Verdot N

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

a) Description of the natural factors relevant to the link: The geographical area of the 'Canon Fronsac' protected designation of origin, located on the right bank of the River Dordogne where it meets the River Isle, lies in the south-west of the geographical area of the 'Fronsac' protected designation of origin, in the municipalities of Saint-Michel-de-Fronsac and Fronsac. That designation is located in the north-east of the department of Gironde, separated from Libourne to the east by the Isle valley. Bordering the Atlantic, the Gironde region has a temperate maritime climate with moderate temperature variations, which makes it suitable for winegrowing. The rather steep hillsides and the proximity of the two rivers, the Dordogne and the Isle, help to protect the vines against frost and the build-up of cold air. The maritime climate is unpredictable, in some years resulting in periods of rain and low pressure in autumn, or, conversely, in hot and very sunny late seasons. This variability creates a notable 'vintage effect'. The rather steep hillsides and the proximity of the two rivers, the Dordogne and the Isle, help to protect the vines against frost and the build-up of cold air. The landscape is marked by rocky elevations overlooking the Dordogne. These include the 61-metre summit of Tertre de Canon, topped by magnificent châteaux with far-reaching views over the Dordogne valley. The landscape is typical of the winegrowing landscapes of Libourne, comprising small hills and valleys, with hillsides edged by a wooded overhang, overlooking the Dordogne and covered in vineyards. The vineyards are dotted with villages of limestone houses with tiled roofs and churches built in the 11th, 12th and 13th centuries. The parcels intended for grape harvesting form part of a precisely demarcated area which excludes alluvial areas in the lower Dordogne valley, meaning vines are grown only on the hillsides. From the base to the heights of the plateau there is a succession of Tertiary formations: - outcrops of 'molasse du Fronsadais' in the Dordogne valley, characterised by sand of varying coarseness and sometimes accompanied by sandstone or sandy clay; - 'Castillon' limestone forming an overhang, mostly covered in trees, that runs the length of the plateau along the Dordogne; - 'Calcaire à Astéries' [starfish limestone], very varied in nature, of varying compactness, fossiliferous or in shelves intermingled with clay and limestone sand and covered with thin sandy-clay or gravel colluvium. The Canon Fronsac vineyards are located on the molassic slopes, where calcareous brown soils have formed, with the vast majority on the plateau on a bed of 'Calcaire à Astéries', where clay-limestone or clay-sandy soils have formed.

b) Description of the human factors relevant to the link: Under the Roman occupation of Gaul during the *Pax Romana*, the Romans were the first to establish the fledgling reputation of the Fronsac region, the history of which is closely linked to the emergence of the 'Canon Fronsac' protected designation of origin. The Romans considered as good vines only those vines that were arranged in tiered rows on the hillside. In the 17th century, the arrival of Cardinal Richelieu paved the way for the renown that Fronsac wines would come to enjoy in aristocratic high society. Upon acquiring the lands of Fronsac in 1633, he handed them down to the children of his younger sister. In the 18th century, Louis-François Armand du Plessis, known as 'Fronsac' and great-grandnephew of Cardinal Richelieu and the Marshal Duke of Richelieu, inherited the Duchy of Fronsac. The Marshal, famed for his libertine ways and a friend of Casanova, did more for the reputation of Fronsac wines than any other statesman. During the courtship parties he held at his residence – an Italian-style pleasure palace – he would advocate the use of these wines at the court of Versailles. As a result, Fronsac and Canon Fronsac wines would become the height of fashion in Paris, and were said to be 'Richelieu's *tisane* [herbal infusion] of choice'. However, the defining moment for the quality of the Canon Fronsac vineyards came at the end of the 18th century, when merchants from Libourne (Fontemoing, Boyer and Lafon) purchased estates whose wines came to enjoy a greater reputation and higher prices. These individuals revolutionised winegrowing by planting carefully chosen varieties in place of old haphazard vines, and by ageing the wines. Thus, according to Professor Henri Enjalbert, Canon Fronsac became 'the historic cradle of

the great Libournais wines' (Enjalbert, H. – Les Grands Vins de Saint-Emilion, Pomerol et Fronsac [The great wines of Saint-Emilion, Pomerol and Fronsac] – 1983). The designation 'Canon Fronsac', the name of which was simplified in 1964, was initially recognised by decree of 1 July 1939 under the name 'Côtes de Canon Fronsac'. For several decades, this designation's agricultural area has been devoted entirely to vine cultivation. As with all Libournais wines, production has remained a family affair, comprising around 50 wine-growing estates with an average surface area of six hectares. In 2010, the vineyards of the 'Canon Fronsac' protected designation of origin covered 270 hectares, with an average annual production of 11 000 hectolitres.

The vineyards produce still red wines using the Merlot N variety, which is well suited to the clay-limestone slopes, where it ripens well. This variety is often combined with the Cabernet Franc N and Cabernet Sauvignon N varieties, which provide freshness and structure, increasing the ageing potential and aromatic complexity of these wines. The Malbec variety is the fourth most planted variety behind the Merlot, the Cabernet Franc and the Cabernet Sauvignon. It too thrives in calcareous, clay-gravel or clay-limestone soils. Together with the Merlot and the Cabernets it gives the wine greater tannic breadth, with aromas of small black fruits and liquorice. These grape varieties result in wines with an intense red colour with purple or ruby tints and a strong aroma often marked by aromatic notes of red fruits (blackberry, cherry, blackcurrant). During ageing, these can evolve into a complex bouquet, sometimes with truffle notes, other times with gamey or spicy notes, depending on the type of soil. The old Bordeaux varieties of Carmenère N and Petit Verdot N (each up to a maximum of 10 %) may supplement the above vine varieties. From very early on, the Canon area, characterised by its slopes, small hills, rocky valleys, hydrography (the presence of groundwater), sunny hillsides, climate and easily accessible ports, stood out as a choice winegrowing area. It was demarcated for the first time by a judgment of 19 May 1928 and on appeal by a judgment of the Bordeaux Court of 11 July 1932, giving landowners in this choice location the right to add the designation 'Canon' to the name 'Côtes de Fronsac'. That judgment defines the area by its outer boundaries in part of the municipality of Saint-Michel-de-Fronsac and part of the municipality of Fronsac. The parcel area designated for production of wine with the 'Canon Fronsac' designation includes the parcels located either on calcareous plateaux, whose permeability allows for easy drainage, or on the molassic slopes, which facilitate the flow of water. Moreover, the parcels located on modern alluvial deposits (known as *palus*) on the riverside are excluded, as referred to in the judgment of the Bordeaux Court of 1932. These demarcated parcels ensure optimum development of the local vine varieties, in particular Merlot N. These varieties have been selected over time for their keeping and ageing qualities. In order to preserve the characteristics of the soils, which are a fundamental factor, no substantial alterations may be made to the shape or contours of the landscape or the natural pedological sequence of the parcels intended for the production of wines under the 'Canon Fronsac' protected designation of origin. These demarcated parcels ensure optimum development of the local vine varieties selected over time. From the first appearance of vines on the slopes of Canon, people have slowly been adapting the cultivation to the particular terroir and climate. Since the 17th and 18th centuries, *échalas* [support poles] have been used, followed by trellising, and the pruning method has been adapted to ensure a well-distributed grape harvest and sufficient leaf area for photosynthesis and optimum ripeness. Planting density was already being taken into consideration at that time to avoid having too many plants per vineyard. At the same time, expertise on wine ageing has gradually grown as a result of the constant desire to improve on the part of the winegrowers who, thanks to the exceptional terroir, produce wines that can be aged for a very long time. The wines are aged for several months, which is necessary to stabilise them and to achieve the combination of tannins and anthocyanins that gives them their ample roundness and ensures optimal development before being placed on the market. This region, which is part of the Libourne landscape, became very well known two centuries ago, as shown by Cocks and Féret's work 'Les vins de Bordeaux' [The wines of Bordeaux] (1868), which states that '... Canon's beautiful hillside produces a full-bodied, firm, warm, fragrant wine with finesse, elegance and universal renown'. Today, the 'Canon Fronsac' designation retains its historical reputation among the great Bordeaux wines thanks to a strict demarcation of parcels and practices derived from ancient and environmentally friendly traditions.

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:

Wines with the protected designation of origin may specify on their labels the broader geographical unit 'Vin de Bordeaux' or 'Grand Vin de Bordeaux'. The name of the broader geographical unit must be printed in letters no larger, either in height or in width, than two thirds of the size of the letters forming the name of the protected designation of origin.

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 making, developing and ageing the wines, comprises the territory of the following municipalities of the department of Gironde, on the basis of the Official Geographic Code in force on 20 February 2024: Galgon, Lugon-et-l'Ile-du-Carnay, La Rivière, Saillans, Saint-Aignan, Saint-Germain-de-la-Rivière and Villegouge.

Link to the product specification

https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/boagri/document_administratif-b0eb7c82-3441-4923-952b-3e6b78a45ded