C/2025/6666

11.12.2025

Publication of an application for amendment pursuant to Article 26(2) of Regulation (EU) 2019/787 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the definition, description, presentation and labelling of spirit drinks, the use of the names of spirit drinks in the presentation and labelling of other foodstuffs, the protection of geographical indications for spirit drinks, the use of ethyl alcohol and distillates of agricultural origin in alcoholic beverages, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 110/2008

(C/2025/6666)

Within three months of the date of publication of this application, 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, in accordance with Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council ([1]), lodge an opposition with the Commission.

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF A UNION AMENDMENT

'Marc de Champagne / Eau-de-vie de marc de Champagne'

EU No: PGI-FR-02063-AM01

Date of application: 23.1.2020

1. Applicant and legitimate interest

Association des producteurs de boissons spiritueuses à indication géographique champenoises [Association of producers of spirit drinks bearing the Champagne geographical indication]

2. Heading in the product specification relating to the amendment(s)

- ☒ Name of product
- ☐ Category or legal name of the spirit drink
- ☐ Link
- ☐ Marketing restrictions
- ☒ Other: specific labelling rules

3. Description and reasons for the amendment(s)

3.1. *Explanation that the amendment(s) fall under the definition of the Union amendment as provided for in Article 31 of Regulation (EU) 2019/787*

The application involves changing the name of the geographical indication registered under Regulation (EU) 2019/787 to 'Marc champenois / Eau-de-vie de marc champenois'.

3.2. *Description of and reasons for amendment*

Name or use of name

Description:

The registered names 'Marc de Champagne' and 'Eau-de-vie de marc de Champagne' become 'Marc champenois' and 'Eau-de-vie de marc champenois' respectively.

([1]) Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 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).

Reasons:

1. Replacement of the name 'Marc de Champagne / Eau-de-vie de marc de Champagne' with 'Marc champenois / Eau-de-vie de marc champenois': When the technical file for the geographical indication (GI) was submitted to the European Commission pursuant to Article 20 of Regulation (EC) No 110/2008, the producers stated that they wanted the name of the GI to be changed to 'Marc champenois / Eau-de-vie de marc champenois' so that consumers were clearly informed of the link between the spirit drink and the Champagne wine region, whilst ensuring that the 'Champagne' PDO retained exclusive use of that designation. The word 'Champagne' has come to be used solely for sparkling wines. Still wines produced in the geographical area, which have historically been called '*vins natures de Champagne*', were recognised as a designation of origin in 1974 and, more recently, were registered as a PDO under the name '*Coteaux champenois*'.

   The names 'Marc de Champagne' and 'Eau-de-vie de marc de Champagne' have been replaced by the names 'Marc champenois' and 'Eau-de-vie de marc champenois' each time they appear in the technical file. Those names were granted national recognition under the Order of 30 December 2014, as amended on 12 February 2015, which is subject to European Union approval.

2. Specific labelling rules:

   As a result of the name change, the use of 'Marc champenois' and 'Eau-de-vie de marc champenois' as an additional name in the section of the technical file on labelling rules has become obsolete and has therefore been removed.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

1. **Name(s)**

'Marc champenois / Eau-de-vie de marc champenois'

2. **Member State to which the geographical area belongs**

France

3. **Geographical indication type**

Geographical indication

4. **Category or categories of the spirit drink**

6. Grape marc spirit

Combined Nomenclature code

22 – BEVERAGES, SPIRITS AND VINEGAR

2208 – Undenatured ethyl alcohol of an alcoholic strength by volume of less than 80 % vol; spirits, liqueurs and other spirituous beverages

5. **Description of the spirit drink**

'Marc champenois / Eau-de-vie de marc champenois' is white and clear. When 'Marc champenois' is aged in wood, it takes on a colour somewhere between straw-yellow and amber.

'Marc champenois / Eau-de-vie de marc champenois' is characterised by complex aromas that has a range of notes, from floral and fruit-flesh notes to warmer, more chocolatey ones. As it ages, it acquires woody and vanilla notes.

Its content of volatile substances other than ethyl and methyl alcohol is at least 300 grammes per hectolitre of pure alcohol. When sold to the consumer, eau-de-vie de marc has a minimum alcohol by volume of 40 %.

'Marc champenois / Eau-de-vie de marc champenois' is a spirit obtained by distilling grape marc intended for the production of 'Champagne' PDO sparkling wines, with an alcohol by volume of not more than 71 %.

Depending on the cultivation methods, the geographical indication 'Marc champenois / Eau-de-vie' covers two product types: white, unaged, marc spirit and wood-aged marc spirit.

The gentle and gradual pressing of the grapes and the low extraction yield of the juice intended for the 'Champagne' PDO lead to a more moist marc, which, when distilled in 'Marc champenois / Eau-de-vie de marc champenois', gives a richness and an aromatic complexity that provide a range of notes, from floral and fruit-flesh notes to warmer and chocolatey notes. As it ages, it acquires woody and vanilla notes.

6. **Demarcation of the geographical area**

The geographical areas in which the grapes may be harvested, where the marc is pressed, stored and fermented and where 'Marc champenois / Eau-de-vie de marc champenois' is distilled and matured (the stage of resting and, where appropriate, ageing) are set out in Article V of the Law of 22 July 1927 on the 'Champagne' registered designation of origin, repealing and replacing Article 17 of the Law of 6 May 1919, subject to the following provisions:

— In the district of Vitry-le-François (department of Marne), the demarcated parcel area is the area approved by the relevant national committee of the National Institute of Origin and Quality at its session of 7 and 8 November 1990. Maps of the area were submitted to the town halls concerned.

— In the following municipalities in the department of Aube, Arsonval, Cunfin, Dolancourt and Jaucourt, the demarcated parcel area is the area approved by the relevant national committee of the National Institute of Origin and Quality at its sessions of 23 June 1994, 8 September 1994 and 19 May 1995. Maps of the area were submitted to the town halls of the municipalities concerned.

— In the following municipalities in the department of Aube, Marcilly-le-Hayer and La Villeneuve-au-Châtelot, no parcel area was demarcated in line with the decision of the relevant national committee of the National Institute of Origin and Quality at its session of 10 September 1997.

— In the following municipalities in the department of Aube, Brienne-le-Chateau, Epagne, Précy-Saint-Martin and Saint-Léger-sous-Brienne and the following municipalities in the department of Marne, Esclavolle-Lurey, Potangis, Saint-Quentin-le-Verger et Villiers-aux-Corneilles, no parcel area was demarcated in line with the decisions of the relevant national committee of the National Institute of Origin and Quality at its sessions of 23 and 24 June 1994, 7 and 8 September 1994, 18 and 19 May 1995 and 6 and 7 September 1995.

— In the municipality of Fontaine-sur-Aÿ (department of Marne), the demarcated parcel area is the area approved by the relevant national committee of the National Institute of Origin and Quality at its session of 9 and 10 September 1999. Maps of the area were submitted to the town hall of the municipality concerned.

— In the following municipalities in the department of Marne, Corfélix, Corrobert, Le Thoult-Trosnay, Verdon, Reuves and Broussy-le-Petit, no parcel area was demarcated in line with the decision of the relevant national committee of the National Institute of Origin and Quality at its session of 5 and 6 September 2001.

7. **Method of production of the spirit drink**

Raw material

The marc is obtained by the vinification of grapes that meet the production requirements (vine varieties, vineyard management, harvest, ripeness of the grapes and pressing) laid down in the specification for 'Champagne' PDO.

Storage of the marc and subsequent fermentation:

The grape marc is fermented before distillation. It is stored in silos within 72 hours of pressing. Fermentation takes place in airtight conditions.

It is prohibited to enrich or add preservatives to the marc.

Distillation

Lees may be added up to 20 % of the weight of the marc.

The distilling capacity of each device must not exceed 70 hl of pure alcohol per 24-hour period.

The distillation of grape marc for a particular production year takes place no later than 31 May following the grape harvest.

The clear spirit that is produced and contained in the daily collector at the end of the distillation process has an alcoholic strength by volume less than or equal to 71 % at a temperature of 20 °C.

The amount of alcohol obtained after distillation must be between 28 and 35 litres of pure alcohol per 4 000 kg of pressed grapes.

Fermented marc is distilled using the following methods:

— by single batch distillation with second distillation (*repasse*);

— by batch distillation with vessels in a cascade arrangement, combined with multi-stage distillation with reflux; or

— by continuous steam distillation, combined with multi-stage distillation with reflux.

The boilers, heads, swan-neck pipes and serpentine condensers of the stills used in single batch distillation with second distillation and the columns used in the other distillation methods are made of copper.

In accordance with distillation principles, the load capacity or, where applicable, the capacity of column-based equipment must be no more than:

— 25 hl for the boiler, in the case of single distillation with second distillation; and

— 20 hl for vessels of which there are no more than five in the discontinuous cascade arrangement.

The maximum number of plates is:

— 15 per column, of which there must be no more than two, in the discontinuous cascade arrangement;

— 25 in the depletion zone and 30 in the concentration zone, in multi-stage distillation.

Maturation

The ‘white’ (unaged) spirit is matured in vats after distillation for at least three months before being sold.

This takes place in inert containers to prevent the spirit taking on any colour.

The aged spirit is matured in oak casks with a capacity of no more than 10 hectolitres for a period of at least 24 months from the date of casking.

The use of wood chips is prohibited.

Finishing

Using caramel to adjust the colour and sweetening to round off the final flavour are authorised, provided that their effect on the obscuration of the spirit is less than 4 % by volume. Obscuration, expressed as % by volume, is obtained by calculating the difference between the actual alcoholic strength by volume and the gross alcoholic strength by volume.

8. **Specific rules concerning packaging**

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9. **Specific labelling rules**

9.1. *Rules for affixing the name of the geographical indication*

Spirits for which the geographical indication 'Marc champenois / Eau-de-vie de marc champenois' is requested cannot be declared for production or sold unless the name 'Marc champenois / Eau-de-vie de marc champenois', followed by the words '*indication géographique*' [geographical indication], are printed on the transport documents, declarations, brochures, labels and containers.

None of the terms comprising the geographical indication 'Marc champenois / Eau-de-vie de marc champenois' may appear separately. The indication thus always forms an indivisible whole.

9.2. *Terms relating to ageing*

The following terms relating to a period of ageing may be used to complement the 'Marc champenois / Eau-de-vie de marc champenois' geographical indication only under the following conditions:

— the term '*Vieux*' may be used for spirits aged for at least four years;

— the terms '*Très vieux*' or 'VSOP' may be used for spirits aged for at least eight years;

— the terms '*Hors d'âge*' or 'XO' may be used for marc spirits aged for at least 10 years.

These optional terms must appear on the labelling, either before or after the geographical indication, in characters that are either the same size or smaller, in both height and width.

10. **Description of the link between the spirit drink and its geographical origin**

Specific characteristics of the spirit drink attributable to the geographical area

'Marc champenois / Eau-de-vie de marc champenois' is white and clear. When 'Marc champenois / Eau-de-vie de marc champenois' is aged in wood, it takes on a colour that spans from straw yellow to amber.

The gentle and gradual pressing of the grapes and the low extraction yield of the juice intended for the 'Champagne' PDO lead to a more moist marc, which, when distilled gives a richness and aromatic complexity ranging from floral and fresh fruit-pulp notes to warmer and chocolatey notes. As it ages, the 'Marc champenois / Eau-de-vie de marc champenois' acquires woody and vanilla notes.

Details of the geographical area or origin relevant to the link

Natural factors

The geographical area covered by the 'Champagne' PDO is situated in the north-east of France and spans municipalities in the departments of Aisne, Aube, Haute-Marne, Marne and Seine-et-Marne.

The landscape is characterised by steep-slope vineyards established on three imposing geomorphological structures, namely the Côte d'Île-de-France, the Côte de Champagne and the Côte des Bar. They are predominantly chalky, preferably with an easterly or southerly exposure.

The vineyards, which owe their distinctiveness to their northerly location, are influenced by two different climates:

— an oceanic climate providing regular rainfall, with limited temperature differences between seasons and

— a continental climate, giving rise to frost, sometimes with destructive effects, and providing sunshine in summer, which helps the grapes to ripen.

Human factors

'Marc champenois / Eau-de-vie de marc champenois' is traditionally made from marc obtained from the pressing of the grapes used to produce the 'Champagne' PDO: Chardonnay (B), Pinot Noir (N) and Meunier (N), which have a good balance between acidity and potential alcohol.

This raw material owes its quality to the specific production conditions of the 'Champagne' PDO. Harvesting whole bunches ensures that the quality of each fresh bunch is preserved until it reaches the press. Gentle pressing, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the Champagne PDO specification, preserves a number of aromatic compounds in the marc. The conditions in which the grapes are harvested and transported and the short time between pressing and the marc being placed in silos mean that the marc undergoes very little oxidation before fermentation. As it comes primarily from the vinification of white juice, it is fermented anaerobically.

Distillation is carried out either by distillers located at a fixed spot at the heart of the vineyards, who distil, mature and market the spirit themselves or through the intermediary of winemakers or champagne merchants, or by travelling distillers, who work to order on behalf of winegrowers.

Causal link

'Marc champenois / Eau-de-vie de marc champenois' draws its main characteristics from the raw material used to produce it, which is obtained from grapes used for the 'Champagne' PDO. The link between 'Marc champenois / Eau-de-vie de marc champenois' and the geographical area is based on:

The specific quality of the grape harvest in the Champagne region:

The vineyards of the Champagne region owe their distinctiveness to their northerly location. The soil and climatic conditions in the geographical area have led to the emergence of a specific method of vineyard management, reflected, in particular, in the choice of grape varieties. The three main grape varieties are Chardonnay B (29 %), Pinot Noir N (38 %) and Meunier N (32 %). These grape varieties, and the conditions of the geographical area, provide the raw material with the right balance between acidity and potential alcohol, which is conducive to the production of spirits.

Careful handling of the grapes:

Local methods for picking and pressing the grapes are tailored to producing sparkling wine. In accordance with the conditions for producing the 'Champagne' PDO, the grapes are harvested in whole bunches and transported in perforated crates. Although most of the grapes are from black varieties, they are usually pressed using a technique that produces white juice. The technique in the Champagne region of gentle pressing and the production of white juice gives rise to marc of a special quality, not least because a number of aromatic compounds are not removed during these processes. The conditions in which the grapes are harvested and transported and the short time between pressing and the marc being placed in silos mean that the marc undergoes very little oxidation.

The anaerobic preservation of the marc ensures that it is fermented under the right conditions for distillation.

The expertise of the distillers and cellar masters helps to ensure that 'Marc champenois / Eau-de-vie de marc champenois' allows the aromas obtained from the raw material to flourish: in the case of unaged marc, with very floral and fruit-flesh notes, which may become warmer and more chocolatey, or, depending on the stage of ageing of the aged spirits, notes of wood and vanilla which 'Marc champenois / Eau-de-vie de marc champenois' acquires as it ages.

Link to the product specification

https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/gedei/site/bo-agri/document_administratif-86676e69-a69d-40ab-bb0e-acfabbcf1d0f