C/2024/4138

28.6.2024

Publication of an application for registration of a name pursuant to Article 50(2), point (a), of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(C/2024/4138)

Following this publication, 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 lodge, in accordance with Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council [1], an opposition with the Commission within 3 months from the date of this publication.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'Nougat de Montélimar'

EU No: PGI-FR-03001- 22.9.2023

PDO ( ) PGI (X)

1. **Name(s)**

'Nougat de Montélimar'

2. **Member State or Third Country**

France

3. **Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff**

3.1. *Type of product*

Class 2.3. Bread, pastry, cakes, confectionery, biscuits and other baker's wares

3.2. *Description of the product to which the name in (1) refers*

'Nougat de Montélimar' is a confectionery consisting of:

— a cream-coloured batter aerated with egg whites and containing sweeteners, in particular honey;

— a filling consisting of almonds, possibly supplemented by pistachios.

It has two different types of texture in the mouth: the hard nougat must be bitten into and is brittle (or it is broken into pieces and crunchy) and the soft nougat is tender and chewy.

It may be presented cut into different shapes:

— either as rectangular or square bars, or as portions cut from these bars. In this case, the pieces have wafer paper on two sides that face each other, with pieces of the filling (almonds and possibly pistachios) being visible on the other sides.

— or as moulded forms;

— or broken into pieces, with a granulometry ranging from 1,6 mm to 15 mm. The broken pieces may be plain or coated with a thin film of vegetable fat.

[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).

'Nougat de Montélimar' has specific organoleptic characteristics due to the recipe, the use of the raw materials and the production method. It is characterised by a creamy colour that does not tend to yellow and the presence of pieces of roasted almonds (and optionally of pistachios) and a subtle aroma of honey and almonds. The batter is aerated and crystallised. It has a tender or hard texture depending on the cooking parameters (cooking time and residual humidity) or it is crunchy if served broken into pieces.

Furthermore, 'Nougat de Montélimar' has a density of between 0,75 and 1,15.

3.3. *Feed (for products of animal origin only) and raw materials (for processed products only)*

List of authorised ingredients:

Ingredients for the batter:

— Sugar (sucrose), icing sugar* (sucrose), glucose syrup;

— Honey, which must make up a minimum of 25 % by weight of the dry matter of the sweeteners (at the time of use);

— Dehydrated egg whites or fresh hen's egg whites, which are the only component authorised for aeration of the batter;

— Natural vanilla flavouring or vanilla pods*, which are the only authorised flavouring substances;

— wafer paper*;

— Water (used for making sugar syrup or rehydrating egg whites).

Ingredients for the filling:

— Almonds: A minimum of 30 % sweet almonds or a minimum of 28 % sweet almonds, supplemented by a minimum of 2 % pistachios, in the final product

— Pistachios*: green and peeled.

(*: optional ingredients)

No additives are authorised in the production of 'Nougat de Montélimar'.

3.4. *Specific steps in production that must take place in the demarcated geographical area*

Preparation of the batter, mixing in of the filling, mixing in of any sugar syrup, moulding and rolling of the batter, cooling of the batter.

3.5. *Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc. of the product the registered name refers to*

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3.6. *Specific rules concerning labelling of the product the registered name refers to*

The labelling of the products includes the registered name and the European Union PGI symbol in the same field of vision.

The name may be followed by the adjectives 'tender' or 'hard' depending on the texture of the nougat.

It may be specified that the nougat is 'cooked in a pot' if all steps in the production of the nougat are carried out at atmospheric pressure and in a pot (a metal container).

4. **Concise definition of the geographical area**

The geographical area covers the territory of the following 14 municipalities, based on the 2021 Official Geographic Code: Allan, Ancône, La Bâtie-Rolland, Châteauneuf-du-Rhône, La Coucourde, Espeluche, Malataverne, Montboucher-sur-Jabron, Montélimar, Puygiron, Rochefort-en-Valdaine, Saint-Marcel-lès-Sauzet, Sauzet, Savasse.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

The link between the product and the geographical area is based on the long-standing know-how of Montélimar nougat masters, which gives the nougat specific characteristics and a significant reputation.

5.1. *Specificity of the geographical area*

— Natural factors

'Nougat de Montélimar' is produced in the municipality of Montélimar, known as 'the door to Provence', and the surrounding municipalities. The area is located in the Rhône Valley, south of the department of Drôme and south of the 45th parallel. It is subject to a Mediterranean climate, with significant sunshine, and influenced by the Mistral, a predominantly dry regional wind that blows at an average speed of 50 km/h, with gusts of more than 100 km/h, and contributes to the dryness of the air.

— Human factors

This confectionery originates in the Middle East. Phoenician merchants brought it to the shores of Europe, and recipes for white nougat reached Provence in the Middle Ages.

Nougat was mentioned for the first time in 1097, in writings on the history of the city of Montélimar, in connection with the legendary character Adhémar le Rouge. Originally made using nuts, the nougat was later produced with almonds, as the almond tree became acclimatised locally, thanks to the work of Ardèche agronomist Olivier de Serre at the end of the 16th century.

'Nougat de Montélimar' made with honey and almonds was mentioned for the first time in the archives of the city of Montélimar in 1701. The city offered 100 kg of the nougat to Philippe V of Spain, a grandson of Louis XIV, when he visited the city. This launched the fashion of giving nougat as a gift.

After 1899, Emile Loubet, French senator and mayor of Montélimar, who became President of the Republic, played an important role in promoting 'Nougat de Montélimar' in France and abroad by offering it to a number of prominent figures. Cartoons from that time showed him with a bar of 'Nougat de Montélimar'.

At the beginning of the 18th century, it was above all confectioners who made this nougat, in the form of bars or loaves that could be broken. The profession of nougat master developed gradually, as did the shapes of the cut nougat and the packaging. Notable producers of 'Nougat de Montélimar' established their own boutiques starting in 1760. Some of them still operate today. With the emergence of tourism, National Road 7 (RN7), which passes through the city centre of Montélimar, became increasingly busy. The permanent traffic jams on that road provided an opportunity for the 22 nougat masters of the period, who set up shop along the way, to increase their sales. That illustrious era is now symbolised by a box in the shape of an RN7 milestone (created in 1930), often used for 'Nougat de Montélimar'. That period ended in 1968 with the opening of the A7 motorway, but the nougat masters collaborated to market the product together in the motorway rest areas.

This important network of nougat masters in and around Montélimar enabled nougat production traditions to live on locally. 'Nougat de Montélimar' is made according to a specific know-how developed over several centuries using ingredients that comply with old recipes. This dynamic sector currently comprises a dozen businesses employing 200 people. The training of master confectioners and nougat makers is of strategic importance. They must take into account the type of material used, the characteristics of the raw materials and the conditions on the production day (air humidity, ambient temperature) in order to adapt cooking times and temperatures and obtain the desired texture. They must be able to judge how well cooked the batter is.

Several old works contain the recipe for 'Nougat de Montélimar': The 'Grand Dictionnaire Universel' by Pierre Larousse (19th century); The 'Livre du Pâtissier' by Jules Gouffé (a famous cook and confectioner) in the 19th century; The 'Codétalloz', a true methodical encyclopaedia for sugar processors published in 1937.

Since 1965, the Chambre syndicale nationale de la confiserie (the chamber of trade unions for the confectionery sector) has chosen to codify certain traditional French products such as 'Nougat de Montélimar' in a code of practice, the Code des Usages de la Confiserie.

The current method of production respects the product's history. The batter is made exclusively from egg whites and from sweeteners that consist of a minimum of 25 % quality honey, sugar, icing sugar and glucose syrup. This last ingredient has been used since the 19th century and must not account for more than 25 % to 35 % of the sweeteners, depending on the expected texture. No additives are authorised, other than vanilla (vanilla pods or natural flavouring). The filling consists of a minimum of 30 % whole and roasted sweet almonds, to which may be added peeled green pistachios.

Production starts with the cooking of a 'base' of water, sugars and honey, which is mixed with the egg whites that have been beaten to stiff peaks (until foamy), without 'breaking' them. To this mixture is added the sugar syrup cooked at high temperature. The resulting batter is cooked slowly to stabilise it. The different cooking processes are monitored by a master confectioner or nougat maker.

The cooking can be done in a pot at atmospheric pressure or in a vacuum cooker, which reduces cooking times and temperatures.

The sweet almonds, either peeled or unpeeled, are roasted until crunchy to the core and then mixed into the batter at the end of cooking. After this, the batter is either rolled or smoothed between two sheets of wafer paper or moulded in imaginative moulds. These varied shapes could already be found in the catalogues of nougat masters at the beginning of the 20th century, particularly during festive periods (Christmas, Easter). The product may take the form of bars, dominoes, moulded shapes or broken pieces of hard nougat. These broken pieces may be used to prepare specialities with 'Nougat de Montélimar', such as ice cream, chocolate or nougat cream.

5.2. *Specificity of the product*

The composition and organoleptic characteristics of 'Nougat de Montélimar' are specific.

It is characterised by a creamy colour that does not tend to yellow and the presence of pieces of roasted almonds (and optionally of pistachios) and a subtle aroma of honey and almonds. The batter has a tender or hard texture depending on the cooking parameters (cooking time and residual humidity) or it is crunchy if served broken into pieces.

The batter, which is aerated solely with the help of hen's egg whites whipped to a foam and crystallised, has a density of 0,75 to 1,15, reflecting its stability and texture. This nougat has a subtle aroma of honey and almonds resulting from its composition, which is particularly rich in honey (a minimum of 25 % of the sweeteners) and roasted almonds (a minimum of 30 % of the final product, or a minimum of 28 % of the final product, to which are added a minimum of 2 % pistachios).

It has two different types of texture in the mouth: the hard nougat must be bitten into and is brittle (or it is broken into pieces and crunchy) and the soft nougat is tender and chewy.

It may be presented cut into different shapes, moulded, or in broken pieces of hard nougat with a granulometry ranging from 1,6 to 15 mm.

5.3. *Causal link*

Historically, there are several reasons why nougat production became established in Montélimar. First of all, the recipe for white nougat was developed in Provence in the Middle Ages, and particularly in Montélimar, located in an area where the local air's dryness is favourable to the production of this honey-rich, hygroscopic confectionery, which becomes sticky and keeps less well in more humid climates. Honey and almonds were traditional regional produce. Known since the 10th century, 'Nougat de Montélimar' soon started being offered to visiting sovereigns, and later on it was distributed and recognised internationally thanks to French President Emile Loubet (1899). Montélimar is also located along National Road 7. This road played a key role in spreading the reputation of 'Nougat de Montélimar' throughout France at the beginning of the 20th century.

The ingredients selected and the recipe in line with long-standing know-how endow 'Nougat de Montélimar' with specific characteristics.

The batter is aerated using a single aeration agent, hen's egg whites, which are whipped to a foam. When carefully mixed with the cooked syrups and then cooled, it contributes to the aerated and crystallised texture of the product, which has a density below 1,15.

Honey and almonds have always been important ingredients. Using quality honey for a minimum of 25 % of the sweeteners gives the nougat its subtle aroma of honey. The roasted sweet almonds, which account for at least 30 % of the product, contribute to the texture in the mouth and the subtle aroma of almonds. They may traditionally be supplemented by green pistachios, which give a colourful touch and a subtle taste to 'Nougat de Montélimar'. Depending on cooking temperatures and times, the nougat obtained is tender or hard.

The establishment of nougat masters in Montélimar, in some cases for more than a century, and their concentration in this nougat capital, has perpetuated the know-how of 'Nougat de Montélimar' confectioners, who master the delicate steps of the recipe. The reputation of 'Nougat de Montélimar' has been widespread throughout France since the end of the 19th century and continues to be strong. Nowadays, every year, Montélimar nougat masters produce more than 1 500 tonnes of the nougat, which is marketed throughout the country.

'Nougat de Montélimar' has become an integral part of the cultural heritage of the inhabitants of Montélimar. The nougat capital regularly organises the 'Nougat de Montélimar' festival. The image of the product is showcased during local activities, at sporting and cultural events, and in tourist and gastronomic publications. The nougat and confectionery museum in Montélimar and the nougat masters' workshops open to visitors further highlight this product. Specific studies on the reputation of 'Nougat de Montélimar' were carried out in 1994 and 2014. The survey organised by the polling institute CSA in 2014 confirmed the reputation of this product name among the French: 78 % of respondents under the age of 35 and 94 % of those over 35 associate the city of Montélimar with nougat. These figures are even better than in the 1994 survey, where 75 % of consumers spontaneously mentioned nougat when they were told about the city of Montélimar, and vice versa.

'Nougat de Montélimar' is a delicacy associated with folk festivities, family celebrations and childhood.

Reference to publication of the product specification

https://extranet.inao.gouv.fr/fichier/CDC-NougatMontelimar-QCOMUE1-postCP1212.pdf