C/2025/3214

13.6.2025

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/2025/3214)

COMMUNICATION OF APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT

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

'Graves'

PDO-FR-A1012 – AM04 19.3.2025

1. **Name of product**

'Graves'

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. **National authority communicating the standard amendment**

Syndicat viticole des graves et graves supérieures (Graves and Graves supérieures winegrowers' association)

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, i.e. they are not Union amendments within the meaning of Article 24(3) of that Regulation. Specifically, the amendments:

(a) do not include a change in the name or in the use of the name, or in the products or categories of products designated by the geographical indication;

(b) do not risk voiding the link to the geographical area referred to in the single document;

(c) do not entail further restrictions on the marketing of the product.

[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. *Inclusion of white wines with residual sugars*

The winegrowers' association wishes to repeal the 'Graves supérieures' PDO and include the wines with residual sugars currently covered by that designation in the 'Graves' designation. A single product specification currently covers both designations.

With this application, all references to 'Graves supérieures' PDO are deleted from the specification. The wines in question are now referred to as 'white wines with residual sugars'. There are no changes to the production requirements for these wines. An application for 'Graves supérieures' PDO to be repealed, drawn up by the producer group, will be sent to the European Commission.

The producers wish to have all products of their area grouped under a single designation to make their offer more coherent and easy to understand for consumers. There are no changes to the production requirements for dry white wine and red wine under the Graves designation.

According to Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013, white wine with residual sugars belongs to the 'wine' category.

Several sections of the single document have been updated as part of the amendment:

— Specific oenological practices – enrichment: A description of the enrichment method has been added for the white wine with residual sugars.

— Description of the wines: A description of the white wine with residual sugars has been added.

— Maximum yields: Maximum yields have been added for the white wines with residual sugars.

— Additional conditions

2. *Proportion of dead and missing vines and other growing requirements*

A rule specifying that dead vines must not be kept on the parcels but must be removed from them has been added to the specification.

The following has also been added:

— a ban on chemical weed control

— a grass cover requirement

— an obligation on operators to calculate their treatment frequency index.

The aim of these changes is to meet the expectations of the public and limit the impact of production inputs on biodiversity.

These amendments do not affect the single document.

3. *Transitional measures*

The transitional measures expired in 2020 and have therefore been deleted from the specification.

This amendment does not affect the single document.

4. *Labelling*

The producer group proposes to add the following provision to the specification:

From the 2026 vintage onwards, the labelling of the wines must include the collective identifier laid down in the statutes of the Graves winegrowers' association, which is made available to all operators.

The producer group believes identifying the designation more clearly will help improve the visibility of the products, safeguard the reputation of the name and guide consumers when making a purchase.

The group therefore wishes to introduce uniform labelling rules for wines bearing the 'Graves' designation and impose the application of statutes laying down a mandatory collective identifier. The identifier will allow it to run smooth communication and promotion campaigns covering all the products.

Moreover, the larger geographical unit is now 'Vin de Bordeaux' or 'Grand Vin de Bordeaux', as is customary for the region.

The 'Further conditions' section of the single document has been amended accordingly.

5. *Deletion of the date of circulation between authorised warehouses*

The date of entry into circulation of the wines between authorised warehouses has been deleted to allow the wines to circulate between all the operators located in the area.

The single document is not affected.

6. *Control body*

The information about the control body has been reworded to align it with the wording used in other product specifications. This is a purely editorial amendment.

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 single document is not affected.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

1. **Name(s)**

Graves

2. **Geographical indication type**

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)**

1. *Still red wine*

The red wines are produced from a balanced mix of vine varieties in which Cabernet Sauvignon N provides aromas and structure, Merlot N brings fragrance and suppleness and Cabernet Franc N, Petit-Verdot N, Malbec N and Carmenère N complement them. When young, the wines typically develop red fruit aromas with spicy, roasted notes. Elegant and structured, fine and aromatic, the wines age harmoniously, with their bouquet potentially taking on a fine smokiness. Depending on vintage and origin, the wines take 5-10 years to reach their peak. Minimum natural alcoholic strength by volume: 11 %; total alcoholic strength by volume after enrichment: 13,5 %. Malolactic fermentation is mandatory for the red wines. The malic acid content must not exceed 0,30 g per litre. The fermentable sugar content must not exceed 3 g per litre.

The other analytical characteristics of the red wines must be within the limits laid down in EU legislation.

General analytical characteristics:

— Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume): —

— Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume): —

— Minimum total acidity (in milliequivalents per litre):

— Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre): —

— Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre): —

2. *Still dry white wine*

The white wines are elegant and fleshy. Made from the Semillon B variety, they generally take on floral notes and a natural unctuousness, sometimes combined with freshness. When combined with Sauvignon B, which brings a lively, expressive quality, and Muscadelle B, which imparts a slight muskiness, the wines often have aromas of flowers and citrus fruit, sometimes with exotic or menthol notes. The practice sometimes used of maturing the wines in barrels increases their richness and complexity after a few years of ageing. Minimum natural alcoholic strength by volume: 10,5 %; total alcoholic strength by volume after enrichment: 13 %. The fermentable sugar content must not exceed 4 g per litre.

The other analytical characteristics of the dry white wines must be within the limits laid down in EU legislation.

General analytical characteristics:

— Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume): —

— Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume): —

— Minimum total acidity (in milliequivalents per litre):

— Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre): 13,27

— Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre): —

3. *White wine with residual sugars*

White wine with residual sugars is made from overripe grapes harvested by hand in successive selections, mainly of the Semillon B variety. This variety produces round, generous wines of a golden colour with aromas of candied fruit. Possible blending with Sauvignon B or Muscadelle B adds a note of freshness. Well suited to a few years of ageing, the wines can also be enjoyed young. Minimum natural alcoholic strength by volume: 13,5 %; minimum actual alcoholic strength by volume: 12 %. The fermentable sugar content after enrichment must not exceed 34 g per litre.

The other analytical characteristics of the white wines with residual sugars must be within the limits laid down in 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): 25

— Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre): —

5. **Winemaking practices**

5.1. *Specific oenological practices*

1. Density and spacing

Cultivation method

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

2. Pruning rules

Cultivation method

Pruning is carried out at the unfolded leaves stage (Lorenz stage 9) at the latest. Vines are pruned with a maximum of 12 buds per plant, using the following techniques:

— spur or cane pruning;

— spur pruning to two cordons or fan pruning to four arms.

3. Irrigation

Cultivation method

For the production of red and dry white wines, 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.

4. Enrichment

Specific oenological practice

Subtractive enrichment techniques are permitted for the red wines up to a concentration rate of 15 %.

The red wines' total alcoholic strength by volume must not exceed 13,5 % after enrichment.

The white wines' total alcoholic strength by volume must not exceed 13 % after enrichment.

The white wines with residual sugars may be enriched using rectified concentrated grape must or chaptalisation, but their total alcoholic strength by volume must not exceed 15 % after enrichment. Enrichment by partial concentration of musts for use in wine production is permitted, subject to a 10 % concentration limit for the volumes enriched using this method, allowing the total alcoholic strength by volume to be increased to 19 %.

5.2. *Maximum yields*

1. Red wine

65 hectolitres per hectare

2. White wine

68 hectolitres per hectare

3. White wine with residual sugars

48 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 26 February 2020: Arbanats, Ayguemorte-les-Graves, Beautiran, Bègles, La Brède, Budos, Cabanac-et-Villagrains, Cadaujac, Canéjan, Castres-Gironde, Cérons, Cestas, Eysines, Gradignan, Guillos, Le Haillan, Illats, Isle-Saint-Georges, Landiras, Langon, Léogeats, Léognan, Martillac, Mazères, Mérignac, Pessac, Podensac, Portets, Pujols-sur-Ciron, Roaillan, Saint-Médard-d'Eyrans, Saint-Michel-de-Rieufret, Saint-Morillon, Saint-Pardon-de-Conques, Saint-Pierre-de-Mons, Saint-Selve, Saucats, Talence, Toulenne, Villenave-d'Ornon and Virelade; and in the part of the municipality of Coimères corresponding to Section A, 'des Herrères', of the first page of the land register (1934 revised plan) certified to be in accordance with the updated land register on 5 November 2010.

7. **Wine grape varieties**

Cabernet Franc N

Cabernet Sauvignon N

Carmenère N

Cot N – Malbec

Merlot N

Muscadelle B

Petit Verdot N

Sauvignon B – Sauvignon blanc

Sauvignon gris G – Fié gris

Semillon B

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

The geographical area of the 'Graves' protected designation of origin is a strip some 10 km wide situated on the left bank of the Garonne, beginning north of Bordeaux and ending south-east of Langon.

As the name suggests, the 'Graves' region consists of soils made up of shingles, pebbles, largely coarse gravel and sand mixed with silt and clay, based in places on calcareous rock but generally on pure sand, iron-rich sandstone (alios) or clay. The area spans 43 municipalities of the Gironde department.

These soils are the result of a long and complex geological history, closely linked to the origins of the Garonne, changes in its course and successive glacial periods during the quaternary era. During those periods Pyrenees glaciers eroded valleys, creating gravel and boulders which rivers would then carry downstream to the Bordeaux region. Gravel hillocks of all types and sizes are all that remain of these successive deposits.

The soils which have since formed there are all highly permeable owing to their high gravel and shingle content. 'Graves' wines owe their structure and image of excellence to these soils, although they are not the only soils that give the wines their qualities. By encouraging the flow of water, the slopes ensure perfect surface drainage, also supported by a large hydrographic network of small streams, tributaries of the Garonne. In these types of soil, the vines' water supply is very well regulated.

The vineyards benefit from a particular and favourable climate. To the west they are protected from harsh weather by pine forests playing an important temperature-regulating role, the proximity of the Garonne ensures natural aeration and ventilation, shielding them from high temperatures and excessive humidity, and maritime influences help moderate spring frost. The area's vineyard landscapes, consisting of gentle slopes where bright, polished pebbles reflect light onto the grapes, are set between the river and pine forests.

Home to the great white and red wines of Bordeaux, the 'Graves' area is the birthplace of techniques still used to this day. In this maritime climate, vine growing has required the use of *échalas* (support poles) since the 17th and 18th centuries, followed by widespread trellising and rigorous pruning to ensure a well-distributed grape harvest and sufficient leaf area for photosynthesis and optimum ripeness.

In line with the Decree of 4 March 1937 establishing the 'Graves' controlled designation of origin, the parcel area defined for the grape harvest is divided into parcels characterised by natural sanitation, owing either to their drainage quality or to their position on a hilltop or slope. It excludes locations that are subject to spring frost for reasons of geography or topography, either because they are too far from the Garonne or because they are encircled by forest blocking the flow of cold air masses.

The precisely defined parcels ensure optimum development of the local vine varieties, which have been selected over time for their keeping and ageing qualities, allowing the wines to be transported over long distances.

The stony, warm and not very fertile soil of this area naturally limits red wine production, but nevertheless enables the Cabernet Sauvignon N and Merlot varieties to achieve optimum ripeness, helped also by the temperature regulation resulting from the proximity of the Garonne. The wines thereby obtained have good structure and are subsequently aged as necessary in order to achieve maturity and optimum expression before being placed on the market for consumers.

The sandier soils and soils with a clayey matrix are better suited to producing the white wines covered by the designation, made mainly from the Sauvignon B and Semillon B vine varieties. These varieties provide a freshness which combines with their finesse and fruity, floral notes.

The minimum planting density is high so as to ensure a sufficient harvest without overloading the vines, thereby guaranteeing the grapes' ripeness and optimum concentration.

The 'Graves' controlled designation of origin acquired international renown thanks to the nearby port of Bordeaux, where a busy trade developed to market the wines across the globe, combined with the winemaking area's unique location and soil conditions.

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

Area in immediate proximity

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, based on the Official Geographic Code in force on 26 February 2020: Barsac, Béguey, Bieujac, Bommes, Cadillac, Fargues, Langoiran, Loupiac, Le Pian-sur-Garonne, Preignac, Rions, Saint-Loubert, Saint-Maixant, Saint-Pierre-d'Aurillac, Sainte-Croix-du-Mont, Sauternes and Castets et Castillon (only the part corresponding to the territory of the former municipality of Castets-en-Dorthe before it was merged with Castillon-de-Castets on 1 January 2017).

Larger geographical unit

Legal framework:

National legislation

Type of further condition:

Additional provisions relating to labelling

Description of the condition:

The labels of wines entitled to the controlled designation of origin may specify the larger geographical unit 'Vin de Bordeaux' or 'Grand Vin de Bordeaux'.

The size of the letters used for this larger geographical unit must not be larger, in either height or width, than two thirds of the size of the letters forming the name of the controlled designation of origin.

Indication of the sugar content

Legal framework:

National legislation

Type of further condition:

Additional provisions relating to labelling

Description of the condition:

The labels of the white wines must indicate the fermentable sugar (glucose + fructose) content in accordance with EU legislation.

Collective identifier

Legal framework:

National legislation

Type of further condition:

Additional provisions relating to labelling

Description of the condition:

From the 2026 vintage onwards, the labelling of the wines must include the collective identifier laid down in the statutes of the Graves winegrowers' association, which is made available to all operators.

Link to the product specification

https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/boagri/document_administratif-9297c0a9-87a6-466b-ad0e-c7d12f75277d