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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

(C/2025/821)

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

COMMUNICATING THE APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT

Cotnari

PDO-RO-A0135-AM03

Date of communication: 14 November 2024

DESCRIPTION AND REASONS FOR THE APPROVED AMENDMENT

1. Amendments increasing the vine and wine yields

The product specification has been amended by increasing the vine and wine yields for the varieties used to make Cotnari wines and for certain vintages or wine-making techniques used.

The amendment is due to the fact that over the last 10 years the vineyards have been consistently replanted with existing vine varieties in which the grapes ripen earlier and without quantitative losses, thanks to the climatic conditions characterised by rainfall of 554,7 mm, 380 mm of which falls during the growing season, providing the plants with the water they need to ripen the grapes, and thanks to milder winters and the fact that the vegetation period now begins on average 2 to 3 weeks earlier than 10 or 20 years ago. As a result, the grapes that reach maturity have an above-average weight per 100 berries. Therefore, it is necessary to increase the product yield for the geographical area.

Depending on the wine-making techniques used and the soil and weather conditions in the year of harvest, the grape yield per hectare and the wine yield may each be exceeded by up to 20 %, especially in good years.

Chapters V and VI of the product specification and section 5.2 of the single document have been amended.

2. Amendments to the information on wine-making technologies

The product specification has been amended to prohibit the use of continuous presses in the production of DOC Cotnari wines.

The total alcoholic strength of the base cuvée intended for the production of quality sparkling wines has also been amended and set at 9,0 % vol.

Chapter X of the product specification has been amended, with no change to the single document.

3. Amendments concerning a cultivation practice used in the geographical area

Chapter VIII of the product specification has been amended to simplify the conditions for the irrigation practice used, by requiring only prior notification to the competent authority.

Chapter VIII of the product specification has been amended, with no change to the single document.

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

4. **Amendments to certain analytical parameters for still/quality sparkling wines**

The product specification has been amended by revising the non-reductive dry extract parameter for still wines and the total alcoholic strength of quality sparkling wines, as the value set for the wine extract improves the quality of the wines.

Chapter XI of the product specification has been amended, with no change to the single document.

5. **Amendments to wine packaging and labelling requirements**

The product specification has been amended by revising some of the packaging requirements for wines to ensure compliance with legislation. The use of an optional back label is allowed, provided that the mandatory indications appear within the same visual field and that the text on the labels for all categories complies with legislation.

In addition, several optional indications that may be included on the label have been added. If the must, fermented must, or wine has come into contact with wood, it is necessary to expand and adapt the list of terms that may be used on the packaging or labelling of the wines to include other customary terms, such as 'fumé', 'smoked' and 'toasted', or 'sur lie', 'bâttonnage' or 'aged on the lees' for wines matured on lees.

Chapter XII of the specification and section 9 of the single document have been amended.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

1. **Name(s)**

Cotnari

2. **Geographical indication type**

PDO - Protected Designation of Origin

3. **Categories of grapevine products**

1. Wine

5. Quality sparkling wine

6. Quality aromatic sparkling wine

8. Semi-sparkling 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. *Analytical and organoleptic characteristics - still white wines*

CONCISE TEXTUAL DESCRIPTION

From an organoleptic point of view, the white wines are unctuous, ranging from greenish-yellow in colour (in young wines) to straw yellow and honey yellow (in aged wines); they have an aroma of raisins, walnut kernels and bitter almonds (Grasă de Cotnari), and a scent of ripe grapes with strong floral hints, fruitiness (Frâncușă), hints of hay, acacia flowers, fresh butter, a persistent taste of bread crust (Chardonnay), freshness, a flavour of tropical fruit and a scent of freshly cut sweet peppers and elderflower (Sauvignon). The specific aromatic varieties are intense in colour, with a scent of basil, mown hay and basil pears, and a flavour of rose petal jam (Tămâioasă românească), with hints of rose and lime blossom, a velvety taste redolent of vanilla and almond (Traminer roz), diverse hues from pink to dry onion skin and a scent of basil or roses (Busuioacă de Bohotin).

In accordance with the law, the maximum sulphur dioxide content as regards wines with a minimum sugar content, expressed as the sum of glucose and fructose, of five grams per litre, has been raised to 350 mg/l for Romanian white wines that may use the Cotnari protected designation of origin.

The values for maximum total acidity are subject to the limits laid down in the relevant European Union law.

General analytical characteristics

— Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume) 15,00

— Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume) 11,00

— Minimum total acidity 4,5 in grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid

— Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre) 18

— Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre) 200

2. *Analytical and organoleptic characteristics - still rosé wines*

CONCISE TEXTUAL DESCRIPTION

From an organoleptic point of view, the rosé wines are unctuous, ranging from greenish-yellow in colour (in young wines) to straw yellow and honey yellow (in aged wines); they have an aroma of raisins, walnut kernels and bitter almonds (Grasă de Cotnari), and a scent of ripe grapes with strong floral hints, fruitiness (Frâncușă), hints of hay, acacia flowers, fresh butter, a persistent taste of bread crust (Chardonnay), freshness, a flavour of tropical fruit and a scent of freshly cut sweet peppers and elderflower (Sauvignon). The specific aromatic varieties are intense in colour, with a scent of basil, mown hay and basil pears, and a flavour of rose petal jam (Tămâioasă românească), with hints of rose and lime blossom, a velvety taste redolent of vanilla and almond (Traminer roz), diverse hues from pink to dry onion skin and a scent of basil or roses (Busuioacă de Bohotin).

The values for maximum total acidity are subject to the limits laid down in the relevant European Union law.

General analytical characteristics

— Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume) 15,00

— Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume) 11,00

— Minimum total acidity 4,5 in grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid

— Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre) 18

— Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre) 200

3. *Physical, chemical and organoleptic characteristics - still red wines*

CONCISE TEXTUAL DESCRIPTION

The red wines have ruby-red highlights when young and brick-red highlights when old; they have an odour of dried red fruits, plums and black cherries and a velvety flavour with a discernible, pleasant fruitiness.

The values for maximum total acidity are subject to the limits laid down in the relevant European Union law.

General analytical characteristics

— Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume) 15,00

— Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume) 12,00

— Minimum total acidity 4,5 in grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid

— Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre) 20

— Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre) 150

4. *Analytical and organoleptic characteristics - quality sparkling wines*

CONCISE TEXTUAL DESCRIPTION

As regards their organoleptic properties, the PDO quality sparkling wines stand out as fine, fresh and natural wines, with fermentation aromas and floral hints. They are bright greenish-yellow to pale yellow in appearance/colour, with a long-lasting mousse, for white sparkling wines, and more or less intense pink hues for rosé sparkling wines. The effervescence of the Cotnari PDO sparkling wines is intense at first; the bubbling subsequently lessens but is nevertheless sufficiently long-lasting and fine, showcasing the nobility and subtlety of the Cotnari wines. They have a fresh, fine scent specific to the variety from which they are obtained, and a floral, light taste, with a flavour and aroma redolent of autolysed yeast.

Total alcoholic strength of the cuvées intended for the production of quality sparkling wines: minimum 9,0 % by volume.

The quality sparkling wines have an excess pressure of at least 3,5 bar at 20 °C.

General analytical characteristics

— Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume) 11,00

— Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume) 10,00

— Minimum total acidity 3,5 in grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid

— Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre) 11

— Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre) 185

5. *Analytical and organoleptic characteristics - quality aromatic sparkling wines*

CONCISE TEXTUAL DESCRIPTION

The quality aromatic sparkling wine obtained from Tămâioasă Românească is straw-yellow with greenish highlights, and has an abundant mousse and fine, persistent bubbles. It has a fine, intense and ample frankincense aroma, with hints of basil, roses and freshly mown hay. The taste is harmonious, pleasant and lively, due to the acid/sweet balance. The quality aromatic sparkling wine obtained from Busuioacă de Bohotin is pink in colour with purplish hues, an abundant mousse, and fine, persistent bubbles. The specific muscat aroma is fine and intense, with notes of citrus fruit, basil and rose petals, and discreet aromas of fresh red fruit in the aftertaste. The taste is pleasant and lively, thanks to the balance between acidity and sugar content. The sparkling wine is balanced in its aromas, taste and persistence.

The quality aromatic sparkling wines have an excess pressure of least 3 bar at 20 °C.

General analytical characteristics

— Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume) 10,00

— Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume) 6,0

— Minimum total acidity 3,5 in grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid

— Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre) 11

— Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre) 185

6. *Analytical and organoleptic characteristics - semi-sparkling wines*

CONCISE TEXTUAL DESCRIPTION

Semi-sparkling wines

Visual appearance: clear, with fine, greenish-yellow, pink effervescence.

Aroma: fresh, characteristic of the grape variety.

Taste: acid, finely effervescent, floral, fruity, depending on the typical character of the wine.

Excess pressure when kept at a temperature of 20 °C: min. 1 bar and max. 2,5 bar.

General analytical characteristics

— Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume) 15,00

— Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume) 7,00

— Minimum total acidity 5,0 in grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid

— Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre) 18

— Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre) 235

5. **Wine-making practices**

5.1. *Specific oenological practices*

1. Practices used in the vineyards

Cultivation method

Irrigation is permitted only during years of drought, subject to ONVPV (National Office of Vine and Wine) notification, when the water content in soil at a depth of 0-100 cm decreases to 50 % of the AHI (active humidity interval), applying reasonable irrigation standards (400-600 m^3/ha).

Green harvesting – reducing the number of grape clusters at veraison when the potential production exceeds the maximum limits permitted under the product specification.

2. Wine-making practices

Specific oenological practice

Wine produced under the Cotnari controlled designation of origin has a natural and actual alcoholic strength of not less than 10,5 % vol. and a total alcoholic strength of not more than 15 % vol. The maximum limit for total alcoholic strength may be up to 20 % volume for wines that have been produced without any enrichment. Must enrichment and acidification must be carried out in compliance with the applicable regulations.

The Pinot Gris, Traminer Rosé and Busuioacă de Bohotin varieties may be used to make white or rosé wines, at the producer's discretion.

The Feteasca neagră variety may be used to make red, rosé or white wines. If white wines are made, they must be declared under the white wine category in the production declaration and may subsequently be blended with white wines.

Wines bearing the Cotnari controlled designation of origin must undergo fermentation exclusively within the area defined in the product specification.

5.2. *Maximum yields*

1. at full maturity of the grapes at the time of harvesting, for Grasă de Cotnari, Pinot gris, Chardonnay, Muscat Ottonel, Traminer roz

11 000 kilograms of grapes per hectare

2. at full maturity of the grapes at the time of harvesting, for Tămâioasă Românească, Sauvignon, Busuioacă de Bohotin

12 500 kilograms of grapes per hectare

3. at full maturity of the grapes at the time of harvesting, for Fetească albă, Fetească neagră

13 000 kilograms of grapes per hectare

4. at full maturity of the grapes at the time of harvesting, for Frâncușă

14 000 kilograms of grapes per hectare

5. at full maturity of the grapes at the time of harvesting, for Grasă de Cotnari, Pinot gris, Chardonnay, Muscat Ottonel, Traminer roz

82,50 hectolitres per hectare

6. at full maturity of the grapes at the time of harvesting, for Tămâioasă Românească, Sauvignon, Busuioacă de Bohotin

94,00 hectolitres per hectare

7. at full maturity of the grapes at the time of harvesting, for Frâncușă

105,00 hectolitres per hectare

8. at full maturity of the grapes at the time of harvesting, for Fetească albă, Fetească neagră

97,50 hectolitres per hectare

6. **Demarcated geographical area**

The area demarcated for the production of wines comprises the following settlements in the counties of Iași and Botoșani:

Iași County

— municipality of Cotnari - villages: Cotnari, Hodora, Cârjoaia, Bahluiu, Iosupeni, Lupăria;

— municipality of Ceplenița - villages: Ceplenița, Buhalnița, Zlodica;

— municipality of Scobinți - villages: Scobinți, Bădeni, Zagavia, Fetești;

— town of Hârlău - the town of Hârlău;

— municipality of Deleni - villages: Deleni, Maxut, Feredeni, Slobozia, Poiana;

— municipality of Cucuteni - villages: Cucuteni, Băiceni, Săcărești;

— municipality of Todirești - villages: Todirești, Băiceni;

— municipality of Balș - villages: Balș, Boureni, Coasta Măgurii.

Botoșani County

— municipality of Frumușica - villages: Frumușica, Rădeni.

One of the following single vineyard designations may be added to the 'Cotnari' controlled designation of origin, depending on the wishes of producers: Dealul Castel, Dealul Episcopului, Dealul Paraclis, Dealul Mândrului, Zlodica, Țiglăi, Dealul Cătălina, Cârjoaia, Lupăria, Ceplenița, Dealul lui Vodă, Buhalnița, Scobinți, Dealul Furcilor, Dealul Stânca, Hodora, Zagavia, Dealul Naslău, Hârlău, Deleni, Cucuteni, Boureni, Balș, Coasta Măgurii.

7. **Wine grape variety(-ies)**

Busuioacă de Bohotin Rs - Schwarzer Muscat, Muscat fioletovîi, Muscat violet cyperus, Muscat rouge de Frontignan

Chardonnay B - Gentil blanc, Pinot blanc Chardonnay

Fetească albă B - Păsărească albă, Poama fetei, Madchentraube, Leanyka, Leanka

Fetească neagră N - Schwarze Madchentraube, Poama fetei neagră, Păsărească neagră, Coada rândunicii

Frâncușă B - Vinoasă, Mildweisser, Mustoasă de Moldova, Poamă creață

Grasă de Cotnari B - Dicktraube, Grasă, Köver szölö

Muscat Ottonel B - Muscat Ottonel blanc

Pinot Gris G - Affumé, Grau Burgunder, Grauburgunder, Grauer Mönch, Pinot cendré, Pinot Grigio, Ruländer

Sauvignon B - Sauvignon Blanc

Traminer Roz Rs - Rosetraminer, Savagnin roz, Gewürztraminer

Tămâioasă românească B - Busuioacă de Moldova, Muscat blanc à petit grains

Tămâioasă românească B - Rumanische Weihrauchtraube, Tamianka, Tămâioasă albă de Drăgășani

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

8.1. *Link with the geographical area - Details of the geographical area*

Most of the vineyards in the Cotnari region lie on Quaternary deposits, particularly the diluvial-colluvial ones of Coasta Cotnarilor, and not so much, if at all, on alluvial deposits on meadows (owing to climate-related restrictions). Only in small areas are vines rooted in parent Sarmatian rocks or their weakly developed soils (Cotea et al., 2006).

Diluvial and colluvial deposits are frequent on the hillsides as a result of downhill creep and rainwash. In the easternmost part of the wine-growing area there are also saline and alkaline soils, formed on saliferous deposits. The soils derived from this parent material are generally propitious to wine-growing (Cotea et al., 2006).

The climate of the wine-growing region has been sub-divided into six microclimates; the predominant microclimate, characterising 45 % of the total area, is the one found on slopes exposed to the south, south-east and west, with an inclination of 5-20°, enjoying generous sunshine and well sheltered from the cold northern and north-eastern winds. The temperatures on those slopes are the highest in the wine-growing region, which makes them ideal for vine cultivation.

8.2. *Link with the geographical area - product details*

The still wines are full-bodied wines with specific floral or fruity aromas that are typical of the variety, due to the long and dry autumn season and the influence of the noble rot specific to this area. They have aromas of citrus fruit, honey, acacia blossom and elderflower, with hints of vanilla and almonds when aged for a short time.

The quality sparkling wine has a reductive note at first, and then acquires hints of citrus fruit and hay and discreet notes of autolysed yeast. The bouquet comes from the particular flavour of green walnut kernels, basil pears, honey and raisins and is redolent of the noble rot of the long dry autumns of the Cotnari region.

The quality aromatic sparkling wines have intense and ample aromas, with hints of basil, roses and freshly mown hay; they have an abundant mousse and fine, persistent bubbles; the taste is pleasant, lively and harmonious.

8.3. *Link with the geographical area - causal interaction*

The still wines obtained in the Cotnari PDO region are different from one another, due to the various characteristics of the varieties from which they are produced, which in turn are influenced by the terroir.

The long and dry autumns that are specific to the Cotnari area contribute to the emergence of noble rot, which makes the wines full-bodied and aromatically diverse; wines with residual sugar obtained from grapes harvested when the grape berries are botrytised develop into naturally sweet wines. These wines are well-suited for ageing, as their alcoholic strength is often more than 12 % by volume.

Due to the climate of the area, the wines' bouquet is diverse, with characteristic, floral notes of tropical fruit, with a good balance of sugars, alcohol and acidity.

The almost perfect balance between rainfall, sunshine and evapotranspiration of groundwater in the shelter created by Coasta Dealul Mare - Hârlău in the long, dry and very sunny autumns ensures optimum maturation for varieties such as Grasă de Cotnari, giving the wines aromas of honeycomb, honey and raisins and an intense colour (with hints of amber in aged wines).

The quality sparkling wines are balanced wines, with a well-integrated acidity that is also due to the wines being obtained in the northernmost vineyards of Moldavia. The middle growing season for the varieties cultivated, which are able to withstand moderate frost and drought and have optimal heliothermal resources, enables slow accumulation of the typical aromas of the varieties, resulting in wines with specific characteristics.

The slow accumulation of the typical aromas of the varieties in the quality aromatic sparkling wines is due to the warm and very sunny summers, as well as the mean temperature values in September, which allow the production of wines with a rich bouquet and characteristic note.

The quality sparkling wines and quality aromatic sparkling wines are obtained in particular from grapes, picked by hand, of native varieties with an aromatic potential such as Tămâioasă românească, Fetească albă, Francușă and Busuioacă de Bohotin, but also international varieties that have adapted to the local Cotnari terroir, expressing its authenticity and drawing on the area's traditional wine-making methods, which incorporate factors specific to Moldavia.

The traditional style is supplemented, however, by modern wine-making techniques that focus on highlighting and expressing as fully as possible the fruitiness and freshness of the quality sparkling wines and quality aromatic sparkling wines imparted in particular by varieties with increased aromatic potential.

These wines are bright wines, with an abundant mousse and fine bubbles and specific floral or fruity aromas.

The sparkling wines evince a good balance between acidity and sugar content, showcasing the specific character and nobility of the Cotnari vineyards. The Cotnari PDO area is a Romanian wine-growing area with a distinct character, where the tradition of growing Romanian varieties has been carefully preserved. The region is home to the largest proportion of old Romanian varieties, such as Grasă de Cotnari, Tămâioasă românească, Fetească albă, Francușă, Busuioacă de Bohotin and Fetească neagră.

The wines bear the imprint of the aromatic varieties (redolent of dried apricots, beeswax, freshly mown hay, basil pears), but this also depends to a large extent on how and for how long the maceration and fermentation processes take place to allow the aromatic substances to be extracted from the grape skin.

Old varieties like the Frâncușă and Busuioacă de Bohotin come into their own in the form of valuable sparkling wines, straw-yellow or pale/bright pink in colour, with a long and constant fizz, with floral notes of elderflower or acacia blossom or fruity notes of basil pears, green apricots, grapefruit, lemon rind and green apple, and with a medium mineral body in which fruity notes predominate.

In the past, these varieties were held in high esteem in rulers' courts and would often be found on the lavish tables of the boyar aristocracy. The wines used to feature a logo showing the Vlădoianu castle, which was built in 1901 by Vlădoianu, a boyar who, in addition to being the governor of the Romanian National Bank, was a distinguished wine grower. In time, the logo became an inspiration in the written story of the Cotnari wines.

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

Marketing conditions

Legal framework:

in national legislation

Type of further condition:

Additional provisions relating to labelling

Description of the condition:

The labels of the wines in the quality sparkling wine and quality aromatic sparkling wine categories also include the terms required by the applicable legislation indicating sugar content (brut nature, brut, extra brut, extra dry, sec, demisec).

Additional provisions relating to labelling

Legal framework:

in national legislation

Type of further condition:

Additional provisions relating to labelling

Description of the condition:

The labelling may also use optional terms, as follows.

The indications 'fermentat in barrique' [fermented in barrels], 'maturat in barrique' [matured in barrels], 'fermentat în prezența așchiilor de stejar' [fermented in the presence of oak chips] and 'maturat în prezența așchiilor de stejar' [matured in the presence of oak chips] may be shown on the labelling in Romanian, or terms in languages of international use, such as any of the following indications, may be used to inform the consumer that the said process is employed:

— 'fume' or 'smoked' or 'toasted' in English, whether or not accompanied by the term describing the intensity of the heat treatment applied to the oak wood used, i.e. 'light', 'medium' or 'heavy'.

— 'fumé' or 'fumée' in French, whether or not accompanied by the term describing the intensity of the heat treatment applied to the oak wood used, i.e. 'légère', 'moyenne', 'forte' or 'petite fumé', 'demi fumé', 'intense fumé'.

For wines that undergo a period of maturation or ageing on lees, the label may include terms such as 'sur lie', 'bâtonnage' and 'aged on the lees'.

Link to the product specification

https://www.onvpv.ro/sites/default/files/caiet_sarcini_doc_cotnari_aprobat_rue_1913_2021_categorii_modif_cf_cerere_1316_10.07.2024_no_track_changes.pdf