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| **Transmission of an established geographical indication of spirit drinks** |

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**I. TECHNICAL FILE**

***1. Name and type***

**a. Name(s) to be registered**

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| ‘Estonian Vodka’ (et) |

**b. Category**

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| 15. Vodka |

**c. Applicant country(ies)**

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| Estonia |

**d. Application language:**

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| Estonian |

**e. Geographical indication type:**

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| PGI — Protected Geographical Indication |

***2. Contact details***

**a. Applicant name and title**

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| **Applicant name and title** | Estonian Spirit OÜ |
| **Legal status, size and composition (in the case of legal persons)** |  |
| **Nationality** | Estonian |
| **Address** | Merivälja tee 5-W409, Tallinn 11911 |
| **Country** | Estonia |
| **Telephone** | +3726300980 |
| **E-mail(s)** | sven@estonianspirit.com |

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| **Applicant name and title** | Remedia AS |
| **Legal status, size and composition (in the case of legal persons)** |  |
| **Nationality** | Estonian |
| **Address** | Mõisa tee 5, Kiiu alevik, Kuusalu vald, 74604, Harjumaa |
| **Country** | Estonia |
| **Telephone** | +3726060960 |
| **E-mail(s)** | drinks@remedia.ee |

**b. Intermediary details**

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| **Intermediary name** | Ministry of Rural Affairs of the Republic of Estonia |
| **Address** | Lai 39//41, 15056 Tallinn |
| **Country** | Estonia |
| **Telephone** | +3726256101 |
| **E-mail(s)** | info@agri.ee |

**c. Interested party details**

**d. Competent control authority details**

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| **Competent control authority name** | Veterinary and Food Board |
| **Address** | Väike-Paala 3, 11415 Tallinn |
| **Country** | Estonia |
| **Telephone** | +3726051710 |
| **E-mail(s)** | vet@vet.agri.ee |

**e. Control body details**

***3. Description of the spirit drink***

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| **Title — Product name** | ‘Estonian Vodka’ |
| **Physical, chemical and/or organoleptic characteristics** | - The minimum alcoholic strength by volume of ‘Estonian Vodka’ is 40 %.  - The ethyl alcohol used in the production of ‘Estonian Vodka’ is made from grain (rye, wheat) and/or potatoes, and drinking water.  - ‘Estonian Vodka’ is smooth-tasting, colourless and sediment-free. Its organoleptic characteristics arise from the raw materials used in its production. Depending on the main raw material used, the flavour profile of ‘Estonian Vodka’ may be characterised as follows:  Potatoes: give the vodka viscosity, sweetness and smoothness, and make it more full-bodied;  Rye: makes the vodka more full-bodied, robust and spicy;  Wheat: gives subtlety, smoothness and fruitiness. |
| **Specific characteristics (compared to spirit drinks of the same category)** | Ethyl alcohol produced from rye, wheat and/or potatoes grown in Estonia is used to produce ‘Estonian Vodka’.  The distinctive features of ‘Estonian Vodka’ are also influenced by the use of water of Estonian origin. The chemical composition of the water used in the distillation of ethyl alcohol must be as follows: 90 mg/l (±10 %) of calcium (Ca) and 20 mg/l (±10 %) of magnesium (Mg). If the water does not meet the requirements as regards Ca and Mg, it is strongly recommended that it should be brought into conformity. In other regards the water must meet the requirements for drinking water in Estonia. The importance of Estonian drinking water lies in the fact that distilled water may not be used in the blending of vodka. Instead, only natural, soft water may be used; if necessary, this may be further softened through reverse osmosis. Natural and soft Estonian drinking water emphasises the organoleptic characteristics of the main ingredients.  Therefore the specific features of ‘Estonian Vodka’ arise from the distinctive features of the cultivation of the cereals used (mainly winter cereals, in which organic farming is of great importance), the specificity of the use of potato as raw material and the composition of Estonian drinking water. |

***4. Defined geographical area***

**a. Description of the defined geographical area**

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| The geographical region of the raw material and the production activities is the territory of the Republic of Estonia. There are no geographical restrictions on the packaging of ‘Estonian Vodka’. |

**b. NUTS area**

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| EE | ESTONIA |

***5. Method for obtaining the spirit drink***

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| **Title — Type of method** |  |
| **Method** | ‘Estonian Vodka’ is a spirit drink that is prepared using ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin obtained following fermentation with yeast from rye, wheat and/or potatoes grown in the Republic of Estonia. The production process of ‘Estonian Vodka’ is as follows, starting from the production of ethyl alcohol:    - Grain that is to be processed (rye, wheat) is kibbled to wholegrain consistency, in order to retain the distinctive characteristics of the raw material. That means that the grain must not be de-husked, polished or processed in any other way. The only permitted method is dry milling, in which 25 % of the flour must consist of particles measuring more than 1 mm. This coarse milling is the traditional method of producing spirit in Estonia. Thanks to coarse milling, the cereals used in the production of ethyl alcohol retain their specific characteristics that are later expressed in the organoleptic characteristics of ‘Estonian Vodka’;  - Potatoes that are to be processed are washed and crushed without peeling, in order to retain the distinctive organoleptic characteristics of the raw material;  - The mashing of potatoes or cereals takes place at a temperature of 55-57 C, after which the mash is thermally processed at between 80-90 C, during which it must be ensured that the mash does not come to the boil. This is followed by the sweetening of the mash at 55-57 C; green malt, malted cereals or other natural enzymes are added to the mash. From there, the mash is transported to fermentation vats, where the yeast is added. The fermentation process takes about 72 hours.  - During sweetening, fermentation and distillation, the water must possess the required chemical composition to ensure that the yeasts obtain the nutrients required to become active — 90 mg/l (±10 %) of calcium (Ca) and 20 mg/l (±10 %) of magnesium (Mg). If the water does not meet the requirements as regards Ca and Mg, it is strongly recommended that it should be brought into conformity. In other regards the water must meet the requirements for drinking water in Estonia;  - The fermented mash is then transported to the distillation stage.  The ethyl alcohol used in the production of ‘Estonian Vodka’:  \* must be produced in the Republic of Estonia;  \* is distilled and/or rectified;  \* possesses the distinctive organoleptic characteristics of the raw material;  \* is a sediment-free, colourless liquid;  \* minimum alcoholic strength by volume: 96.0;  \* requirements for maximum levels of residues are laid down in Annex I to the product specification.  - The water used in the production of vodka must be of Estonian origin, and it must be drinking water that meets the requirements of the Water Act. It is forbidden to use distilled water in the production of ‘Estonian Vodka’. In addition, the water must be soft; this may be further softened using reverse osmosis filters. The only additives that may be used are organic flavouring compounds made using local grain and/or potatoes. It is prohibited to add any artificial substances or sugar. If necessary, ‘Estonian Vodka’ may undergo additional filtration. |

***6. Link with the geographical environment of origin***

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| **Title — Product name** | ‘Estonian Vodka’ |
| **Details of the geographical area or origin relevant to the link** | Vodka has been produced in Estonia for more than 500 years, and the first written evidence of vodka production in Estonia is a provision of the statutes of the brewers’ company of the Great Guild of Tallinn from 1485, in which ‘residents of the conurbation of Tõnismäe and manor owners who are not authorised to brew are prohibited from selling vodka to residents of the outlying districts of the city or to residents of the city by the keg or beaker’ (Otu Ibus, ‘Ühe tööstusharu ajalugu’ [The History of an Industry], p. 11, Eesti Raamat, Tallinn 1977 and ‘Eesti Piiritustööstuse muuseum’ [Museum of the Estonian Spirits Industry], p. 47, Valgus, Tallinn 1973). In the 19th century, potatoes began to be used in the production of ethyl alcohol in addition to rye and wheat. The use of potatoes increased particularly in the first half of the 20th century, when most ethyl alcohol was made using potatoes. In addition, Estonia was entered in the Guinness Book of World Records in 1997 (p. 92) as the country in which the strongest ethyl alcohol made from potatoes (98 % vol.) was produced. The good conditions for cultivating grains and particularly winter grains in Estonia and the country’s characteristically mineral-rich water ensure that ‘Estonian Vodka’ possesses the distinctive taste and aroma described in this file. |
| **Specific characteristics of the spirit drink attributable to the geographical area** | The principal distinctive features of the spirit drink attributable to Estonia as a geographical area are the main raw ingredients — rye, wheat and potatoes cultivated in Estonia, from which the ethyl alcohol used to produce ‘Estonian Vodka’ is prepared. 100 % of rye and 50 % of wheat is cultivated as a winter crop. The growth period of winter crops in Estonia is 11 months, in comparison with the maximum 8-month period in Central Europe. It should also be pointed out that Estonia has one of the highest proportions of organic farming in the European Union, which is demonstrated by the fact that in 2015 organic farmland made up nearly 17 % of all farmland in Estonia (data from the Estonian Organic Farming Register, Annex II). In addition, Estonian fertiliser use per hectare of agricultural land was less than half the EU 27 average in 2010 (Eurostat, Annex II). Such a large proportion of organic farming ensures that the pure and authentic final characteristics of the main raw ingredient in ‘Estonian Vodka’ are preserved. Winter rye is one of the most common cereal species in organic farming. Organic fields make up one third of the area under winter rye crops. Winter rye is the main raw material used in the production of spirit in Estonia. The distinctive characteristics of winter rye are also expressed in its chemical composition, which differs significantly from other cereals in terms of its higher mineral content. A reference table comparing the mineral content of winter rye and other cereals can be found in Annex II to the supporting materials of the technical dossier, but it may be mentioned here that rye has a greater nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, calcium and magnesium content than other cereals. Therefore the predominant use of winter cereals in the production of the ethyl alcohol in ‘Estonian Vodka’ is one of the most important factors influencing the specific organoleptic characteristics of ‘Estonian Vodka’. For centuries rye and wheat have been the main cereals cultivated in Estonia. Rye and wheat cultivated in Estonia are not merely ordinary cereals, but all rye and half of all wheat cultivated are winter crops. In comparison with other cereals, these winter crops are significantly more mineral-rich and therefore give ‘Estonian Vodka’ distinctive organoleptic characteristics. The combination of all of these characteristics ensures that the specific characteristics of the pure and authentic cereals are expressed in the vodka. Based on the main raw materials used, the flavour profile of ‘Estonian Vodka’ can be described as follows:  Potatoes: give the vodka viscosity, sweetness and smoothness, and make it more full-bodied;  Rye: makes the vodka more full-bodied, robust and spicy;  Wheat: gives subtlety, smoothness and fruitiness.  In addition to cereals, centuries of potato cultivation and the production of ethyl alcohol from potatoes are also very characteristic of Estonia. In itself, the use of potatoes as a raw material in the production of vodka is so distinctive that the final product itself possesses a distinctive flavour and aroma profile. In addition to the rye, wheat and potatoes, the water used in the production of the vodka also influences its distinctive characteristics. Estonian drinking water is also very mineral-rich, which affects the flavour profile of ‘Estonian Vodka’ as well. Distilled water may not be used in the production of ‘Estonian Vodka’; instead natural, soft water must be used. In addition to the raw ingredients, the production methods influence the specific characteristics of ‘Estonian Vodka’. The coarse milling of the rye or wheat (to wholegrain consistency) used in the production of ethyl alcohol is distinctive to Estonia. That means that the grain must not be de-husked, polished or processed in any other way in advance, and in subsequent dry milling, 25 % of the milled flour must consist of particles measuring more than 1 mm in diameter. As a result of these coarse grains, the flavour profile of the grains is better expressed, and this is first expressed in the ethyl alcohol and later in the vodka.  There has been a very strong tradition of potato cultivation in Estonia since the introduction of the potato to Europe. Ever since then, potatoes have been used to produce ethyl alcohol, and as a result Estonia has also been dubbed a ‘potato republic’. This is proven by the fact that Estonia was entered in the Guinness Book of World Records in 1997 (p. 92) as the country in which the strongest ethyl alcohol made from potatoes (98 % vol.) was produced. Ethyl alcohol is mostly produced from cereals (wheat, rye) or maize, while potatoes are used much less often. The production of ethyl alcohol in Estonia originated from potatoes, and vodka produced from potatoes is in and of itself a very specific product that is now only produced in relatively small quantities. For this reason, vodka produced from potatoes is such a specific and rare product that it cannot be compared with other products in the same category. |
| **Causal link between the geographical area and the product** |  |

***7. EU, national or regional requirements***

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| **Title** | Requirements for defining, describing, presenting, labelling and protecting geographical indications of spirit drinks |
| **Legal reference** | Regulation (EC) No 110/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 January 2008 on the definition, description, presentation, labelling and the protection of geographical indications of spirit drinks and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 1576/89. |
| **Description of the requirement(s)** | General requirements for spirit drinks. |

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| **Title** | Requirements for labelling spirit drinks that arise from general requirements for labelling food |
| **Legal reference** | Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004. |
| **Description of the requirement(s)** | General requirements for labelling food and for producing food (including alcohol), which also apply to spirit drinks. |

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| **Title** | General requirements for drinking water in Estonia |
| **Legal reference** | Water Act (RT I 1994, 40, 655), https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/106012016014 |
| **Description of the requirement(s)** | General requirements regarding drinking water, in the context of the production of food (including alcohol) in Estonia. |

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| **Title** | Requirements for the production of food, including alcohol, in Estonia. |
| **Legal reference** | Food Act (RT I 1999, 30, 415), https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/101092015031 |
| **Description of the requirement(s)** | General requirements for the production of food, including alcohol, in Estonia. |

***8. Supplement to the geographical indication***

***9.*** ***Specific labelling rules***

**II. Other information**

***1. Supporting material***

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| --- | --- |
| File name: | Lisa I .docx |
| Description: | Annex I Product specification of ethyl alcohol used to produce ‘Estonian Vodka’ |
| Document type | Product specification |

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| File name: | Lisa II.jpg |
| Description: | The Estonian Crop Research Institute on the cereals used in the production of spirit in Estonia |
| Document type | Other |

***2. Link to the product specification***

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| Link: | http://www.agri.ee/sites/default/files/content/ministeerium/2016/estonian-vodka-tehniline-toimik-2016.pdf |