

**Publication of an application pursuant to Article 6(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs**

(2010/C 319/07)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006. Statements of objection must reach the Commission within six months from the date of this publication.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

**COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006**

**'VINAGRE DE JEREZ'**

**EC No: ES-PDO-0005-0723-15.10.2008**

**PGI ( ) PDO ( X )**

**1. Name:**

'Vinagre de Jerez'

**2. Member State or third country:**

Spain

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

**3.1. Type of product:**

Class 1.8. Other products listed in Annex I to the Treaty (spices, etc.)

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

Vinagre de Jerez is the product that results from the acetous fermentation of suitable wines made in the production area, produced and aged through the traditional practices described in Section 3.5, with the organoleptic and analytical characteristics described below.

The specific analytical characteristics of the protected vinegars are the following:

- its residual alcohol content must not exceed 3 % in volume, except in the case of Pedro Ximénez and Moscatel vinegars, in which it must not exceed 4 % in volume,
- total acetic acid content must be at least 70 grams/litre, except in the case of Pedro Ximénez and Moscatel vinegars, which may have 60 grams/litre, and in the case of the Gran Reserva vinegars, total acetic acid content must be at least 80 grams/litre,
- it must have a minimum of 1,3 grams/litre and degree of acidity in the dry matter, the minimum for the Vinagre de Jerez Gran Reserva being 2,3 grams/litre and degree of acidity,
- an ash content of between 2 and 7 grams/litre, except for Vinagre de Jerez Gran Reserva, which must have between 4 and 8 grams/litre,
- a maximum sulphate content of 3,5 grams/litre,
- the Pedro Ximénez and Moscatel categories must contain at least 60 grams/litre of reducing material from these types of wine.

The vinegars included in the Designation of Origin 'Vinagre de Jerez' present a colour between gold and mahogany and a dense and oily appearance. Its aroma is intense, lightly alcoholic, with notes of wine and wood predominating. Its taste is pleasant, despite the acidity, with a lingering aftertaste.

The following categories can be distinguished on the basis of the vinegars' different ageing periods:

- (a) Vinagre de Jerez: the vinegar covered by this designation, with a minimum ageing period of six months;
- (b) Vinagre de Jerez Reserva: the vinegar covered by this designation, with a minimum ageing period of two years;
- (c) Vinagre de Jerez Gran Reserva: the vinegar covered by this designation, with a minimum ageing period of 10 years.

In addition, depending on the variety of wine used, there are the following types of semi-sweet Vinagre de Jerez, which may belong to any of the categories described in the previous point:

- Vinagre de Jerez al Pedro Ximénez: the vinegar covered by this designation to which Pedro Ximénez wines are added during the production process,
- Vinagre de Jerez al Moscatel: the vinegar covered by this designation to which Pedro Moscatel wines are added during the production process.

### 3.3. Raw materials (for processed products only):

The vinegars covered by the Designation 'Vinagre de Jerez' are obtained exclusively from the acetous fermentation of 'suitable wines'.

The raw materials for the production of Vinagre de Jerez are therefore the 'suitable wines'. These wines come from producers located in the Vinegar Production Area, which coincides with the production area corresponding to the Designations of Origin 'Jerez-Xérès-Sherry' and 'Manzanilla — Sanlúcar de Barrameda' and may be:

- (a) the wines of the year sent at their natural volumetric alcoholic grading;
- (b) mature wines that have completed the average ageing periods set in their specifications.

These wines are produced in accordance with the product specifications for their designations, complying with the requirements concerning the provenance of the grape from the PDO area and the wine-growing practices specified in the implementing regulation.

### 3.4. Feed (for products of animal origin only):

Not applicable.

### 3.5. Specific steps in production that must take place in the identified geographical area:

#### (a) Denaturation

All consignments of suitable wine must undergo denaturation through partial acidification on entering the facilities of the registered producers, using for this purpose vinegar from their stocks in sufficient quantity such that the resulting mixture reaches a minimum grading of 1° of acetic acid content.

#### (b) Acidification

Acidification consists in transforming the alcoholic content of the wine into acetic acid through the action of acetic bacteria. There are two possible ways of producing Vinagre de Jerez.

1. The process used by establishments known as *Bodegas de Elaboración de Vinagre (Vinegar Production Cellars)*: industrial facilities that own acidifiers in which the raw material — the suitable wine — is transformed through a process of controlled acetic fermentation into vinegar.
2. The process used by establishments known as *Bodegas de Crianza y Expedición de Vinagres (Vinegar Maturing and Supply Cellars)* through a process of acidification inside the wooden container in which ageing takes place.

(c) Ageing or maturation

The special system of ageing or maturation necessary for obtaining protected vinegars may be by way of either the classic *criaderas y solera* system or the *añadas* system, to which the vinegars are subjected during the period of time necessary to achieve the organoleptic and analytical qualities of their respective categories.

(a) Ageing containers

All the vinegar stocks that undergo the maturing process must be stored in wooden containers that have previously been used for ageing wine and whose capacity does not exceed 1 000 litres. The Regulatory Board may also grant ad hoc approval for the use of wooden containers whose capacity is more than 1 000 litres for the maturing of wines, provided that they are historic in nature and that their use has been registered as such in the Regulatory Board prior to the publication of the Product Specification.

(b) Minimum average age

The vinegars must all have an average age of at least six months in order to be released for consumption. In the case of 'Vinagre de Jerez Reserva', the minimum average age is two years and in the case of 'Vinagre de Jerez Gran Reserva', it is 10 years.

Vinegars that are entirely from a single year and therefore mature without ever being mixed with previous vinegars from different harvests may add the word *Añada* provided that their age is at least two years. This labelling shall be compatible with the other labels mentioned in Section 3.2, provided that the wine complies with the characteristics required in each case.

3.6. *Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc.:*

The bottles that contain Vinagre de Jerez for direct consumption shall be made of glass or other materials that do not compromise the specific properties of the product and shall have the nominal capacities that are authorised for this product from time to time.

Vinagre de Jerez shall be bottled:

1. in bottling facilities owned by the firms entered in the register of *Vinegar Maturing and Supply Cellars*, or,
2. in bottling facilities authorised by the Regulatory Board and owned by economic operators located inside or outside the production area, which purchase Vinagre de Jerez in bulk from registered firms and are involved only at the bottling stage.

In both cases, to be authorised, these bottling facilities must demonstrate to the Regulatory Board compliance with the legal requirements that are in force in each region for the activity of bottling vinegar, and must have in place a quality control system that ensures the total traceability of the appropriate handling of the product that they purchase from registered producers for bottling.

3.7. *Specific rules on labelling:*

The words Designation of Origin 'Vinagre de Jerez' must figure prominently on the labels and back labels as well as the type of vinegar and, in general, all the information stipulated by the relevant legislation. Furthermore, they shall be provided with quality seals by the Regulatory Board or with back labels bearing the distinctive symbol of the Designation of Origin as well as an identifying alphanumeric code, in accordance with the standards set by the Regulatory Board.

The Regulatory Board shall verify that the labels that bear the protected name 'Vinagre de Jerez' comply with the requirements of the Product Specification and the labelling regulation specific to the Designation of Origin.

#### 4. Concise definition of the geographical area:

The production area for Vinagre de Jerez comprises the land located in the municipalities of Jerez de la Frontera, El Puerto de Santa María, Sanlúcar de Barrameda, Trebujena, Chipiona, Rota, Puerto Real and Chiclana de la Frontera, and in the provinces of Cádiz, Lebrija and Seville, located to the east of 5° 49' West and to the south of 36° 58' North.

The production area described above coincides with the production area for the Designations of Origin 'Jerez-Xérès-Sherry' and 'Manzanilla — Sanlúcar de Barrameda'.

#### 5. Link with the geographical area:

##### 5.1. Specificity of the geographical area:

The specificity of the production area of Vinagre de Jerez is based on historical, natural and human reasons.

##### (a) Historical factors

Wine growing and wine and vinegar production have been part of the backbone of the Jerez district for thousands of years, dating back to Phoenician times. The geographical location of the Jerez area, near to important commercial ports such as Cadiz and Seville, with great historical significance, ensured that the local wines and vinegars were frequently included in the cargo of ships sailing for the Americas or for markets in the north of Europe, and further ensured that for the ageing of wines and vinegars the containers that were used were made overseas, from oak from the New World. Likewise, the system of *Criaderas y Soleras*, a traditional aspect of Jerez wine growing, has a clear historical origin that dates back to the 17th century and to the need to satisfy the demand of the markets for wines and vinegars of consistent quality, that do not depend on the vicissitudes of every harvest.

##### (b) Natural factors

The production area is characterised by flat or gently undulating land, with slopes of between 10 % and 15 %, where the prevalent soil type is known as *albariza*, a soft, white, loam soil with a large capacity for retaining moisture. Its main components are calcium carbonate, clay and silica. The climate is warm, with minimum temperatures in winter around 5 °C and maximum temperatures in summer around 35 °C. The production area enjoys more than 300 days of sunshine per year and an average annual rainfall of approximately 600 litres per square metre, with the bulk of precipitation occurring in November, December and March. In any case, this factor must be considered in combination with the area's characteristic *albariza* soil, with its capacity to retain moisture and prevent evapo-transpiration. Lastly, it is worth noting the important climactic influence of the region's prevailing winds: the *Levanter*, which comes from the interior of the country and is hot and dry, and the *Poniente*, which comes from the Ocean bringing a high degree of humidity and acts as an important moderating factor, especially in summer.

##### (c) Human factors

The *criaderas y solera* system, that is prevalent in the ageing of Vinagre de Jerez, is a traditional maturing system in the production area, as is the use of the *bota*, a traditional barrel made of oak from the Americas and intensely impregnated with the flavour of the wine. Architecture also plays an important role in the special nature of the vinegars of the Designation of Origin 'Vinagre de Jerez'. The cellars used for ageing vinegar tend to have gabled roofs and high ceilings, which help to ensure a large volume of air inside, which lessens the effects of temperature variations outside. The walls tend to be thick enough to provide insulation and the windows are high in order to allow air to circulate to take advantage of the fresh night breezes of the *Poniente*, while avoiding light falling directly on the barrels.

##### 5.2. Specificity of the product:

The specificity of Vinagre de Jerez must primarily be attributed to the raw material from which it is made: the suitable wines. The production area is also the origin of certain wines that have an extraordinarily authentic character and some of their characteristics are clearly discernible in the Vinagre de Jerez: the range of colours between gold and mahogany and the lightly alcoholic aromas, with dominant notes of wine and wood.

Furthermore, the climatic conditions of the area and the architectural characteristics of the cellars, which help to create a specific microclimate inside the cellars, ensure a level of concentration of the components of the vinegar through the maturing process, resulting in a lingering aftertaste.

5.3. *Causal link between the geographical area and the quality or characteristics of the product (for PDO) or a specific quality, the reputation or other characteristic of the product (for PGI):*

All the orographical, soil and climate characteristics mentioned above give the grapes of the production area distinctive characteristics that define many of the specificities of the suitable wines and, in turn, of Vinagre de Jerez. The influence of natural factors on the suitable wines obtained from the varieties of grape used (palomino, muscatel, and pedro ximénez) is decisive. In hot regions like the production area of Vinagre de Jerez, grapes ripen very quickly and their juice, which is very sweet, tends to have relatively low acidity values. The total incidence of light in the production area during the active period for wine growing is particularly high, which allows the fruit to develop and ripen well. Furthermore, the production area is characterised by the dryness of its summers, coinciding with the period between ripening and the harvest, and the prevalence of the Levante, which is extremely hot and dry. In this context, the Poniente, arriving from the Atlantic Ocean, with its distinctive thermal character, brings frequent night breezes in summer, which produce intense showers, compensating the water deficit that may be exacerbated by the area's strong sun. The *albariza* soil also plays a decisive role in this regard, since its capacity to retain moisture ensures that water reserves are available in the subsoil.

Furthermore, the characteristics due to the cultures of yeast that have been selected since time immemorial and linked to the environmental conditions of the area are of great importance. The metabolisation of the alcohols and poly-alcohols of the wine by the alcohol-producing yeast which occur in the area known as the 'Marco de Jerez' results in a conjunction of secondary elements and an alteration of the primary components of the wine: a reduction in the glycerine content and an increase in the acetaldehyde content and in the products of esterification. In turn, the resulting acetaldehydes give rise to acetoin, which in the presence of higher alcohols gives Vinagre de Jerez its characteristic aroma. The presence of a considerable quantity of alcohol is also of enormous importance for the quality and personality of Vinagre de Jerez, because it gives rise to esterified compounds (essentially ethyl acetate) that structure the vinegar, giving it greater complexity and balancing the first aromas of the acidification.

Maturing in oak barrels and the particular microclimatic conditions of the cellars moreover ensure that the vinegar acquires some very particular characteristics during the maturing process. The type of barrel used has a capacity for micro-oxygenation which is ideal for the slow development of the vinegars and allows the gradual release of components during ageing, which help to stabilise the colouring substances, form polymer groups and give the characteristic tones between amber and mahogany, the notes of vanilla and the aromas of white coffee and high roast coffee. Furthermore, the hemicellulose of the wood allows the water content to be gradually lost through evaporation, which increases the dry matter, mineral salt and vinegar ash content.

The *criaderas y soleras* system, being the commonest maturing system in the area, favours a significant homogenisation of the vinegars by moderating the effects of the various *añadas*. Lastly, the architectural structure of the cellars of the Jerez area, by maintaining the microclimate conditions, not only facilitates the slow oxygenation of the vinegars, but also keeps the barrels in perfect condition, which enables the maturing of 'Vinagre de Jerez'.

**Reference to publication of the specification:**

(Article 5(7) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

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