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

(2015/C 59/09)

This publication confers the right to oppose the application pursuant to Article 51 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council [1].

SINGLE DOCUMENT

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs [2]

'EKSTRA DJEVIČANSKO MASLINOVO ULJE CRES'

EC No: HR-PDO-0005-01206-3.3.2014

PGI ( ) PDO (X)

1. **Name**

'Ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje Cres'

2. **Member State or Third Country**

Republic of Croatia

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

3.1. *Product type*

Class 1.5 Oils and fats (butter, margarine, oils, etc.)

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

'Ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje Cres' is extra virgin olive oil obtained directly from the fruit of the olive tree (*Olea europaea,* L.) solely by mechanical means. At least 90 % of the olives must come from trees of the slivnjača and/or plominka varieties, while the remaining 10 % may come from trees of other varieties.

When the oil is placed on the market, it must have the following physico-chemical and organoleptic characteristics:

— free fatty acids: max. 0,5 %

— peroxide value: max. 8 mmol O_2/kg

— K 232: max. 2,2

— K 270: max. 0,2

— colour: green to yellow

— scent: fruity scent of olives, plus a scent of grass in some cases

— flavour: of healthy and fresh olives plus some bitterness and sharpness, with the following values:

— median of fruity aromas: ≥ 2

— median of bitterness: ≥ 2

— median of sharpness: ≥ 2

[1] OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.
[2] OJ L 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12. Replaced by Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

3.3. *Raw materials (for processed products only)*

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3.4. *Feed (for products of animal origin only)*

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3.5. *Specific steps in production that must take place in the defined geographical area*

All phases of the production of 'Ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje Cres' must take place in the geographical area described in point 4.

The olive trees must be cultivated in the traditional manner in the production area, which means that their crowns must be kept thin and airy so as to receive sufficient sunlight on all sides. The olives must be picked directly from the trees, and the harvest must be completed by 31 January at the latest.

The olives must be processed within 48 hours of harvesting.

The oil must be stored in hermetically sealed containers at a temperature of between 12 °C and 20 °C.

Before the oil is bottled, all necessary analyses must be carried out in order to establish whether it has all the characteristics specified in point 3.2.

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

'Ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje Cres' must be placed in its sales packaging in the geographical area of production defined in point 4. This ensures the preservation of the oil's specific characteristics and quality, which could be impaired if the oil were transferred from one container to another several times or were transported over a great distance.

The packaging of the oil in its area of production also guarantees the product's traceability and means that this can be checked far more easily.

The product may be bottled in containers of a volume of up to 1 litre.

3.7. *Specific rules concerning labelling*

It is permissible to use names, business names and private stamps, unless they are likely to mislead consumers.

The product name ('Ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje Cres') must be clearly distinguishable by the size, type and colour of the letters (typography) from any other inscription, including the producer's trade mark, images and inscriptions. The size of the producer's inscription may not exceed 70 % of the size of the designation of origin in point 1.

The label may not include terms other than those set out in the specification. Adjectives such as 'top-quality', 'genuine', 'traditional', 'typical', 'indigenous', 'home-made', etc., and terms that refer to toponyms on the island of Cres, may not be used.

It is permissible to use the names of agricultural holdings or of family farms ('stancija'), etc. and their specific locations or to refer to bottling on the holding or at an association of holdings located in the area of production only if the product is produced exclusively from olives harvested in olive groves on the agricultural holding in question.

The packaging must also be labelled with the year (season) of the harvest.

Each package that is placed on the market must bear the special adhesive stamp used to label 'Ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje Cres', in addition to the markings mentioned above. The stamp must contain the common symbol 'Ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje Cres' and the serial number of the packaging, thereby guaranteeing the product's traceability and origin for consumers. The design of the common symbol is shown below.

All users of the designation of origin who place the product on the market in accordance with its specification have the right to use the stamp, under the same conditions.

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

The production and processing of olives and the storage and bottling of 'Ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje Cres' are confined to the island of Cres. The coastline of the island of Cres marks the limit of the geographical area of production.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

5.1. *Specificity of the geographical area*

The island of Cres is composed of Cretaceous limestone and dolomite with very limited zones of Palaeogene limestone and traces of flysch. The most common soils to have developed on that geological substrate are of the Terra Rossa type, namely the brown soil typical of the littoral region and sandy dolomitic soil.

Dolomitic soil is the most frequent in the centre of the island, where the largest areas used for olive groves are located. As a result of the lack of flat arable land in the karstic valleys, in the past farmers used the shallow soil on the calcareous and dolomitic slopes where they prepared arable land by removing stones and piling them up in long heaps down the slopes. With the spread of olive growing, many horizontal dry stone walls were built over time, terracing the slopes, in order to create and protect the light arable soils, and to prevent soil from being washed away from the more or less steep slopes. The soil of the terraces is largely anthropomorphic and usually shallow with fairly prominent bedrock, and is therefore prone to drying out.

The climate of the island of Cres is primarily determined by the island's location in the region of Kvarner, the direction in which it stretches and its topography. This results in frequent influxes of cold air masses in the winter and convectional rainfall in the summer, which means that the island does not have a markedly dry period of weather typical of the Mediterranean climate. The average annual temperature varies between 13,0 °C and 15,2 °C, and average annual precipitation is approximately 1 100 mm, which is spread evenly across the year. The island of Cres is located on the 45th parallel north, so in geographical and climatic terms the production area of 'Ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje Cres' is at the very northern limit of olive-growing.

Olives have been grown on the island of Cres since time immemorial — the first documentary proof dates back to 1441 (N. Lemessi, 1979, Note storiche, geografiche, artistiche sull'isola di Cherso, vol. I, p. 46).

The importance of olive-growing is shown by the fact that there were seven oil mills on the island of Cres in 1698 (fra J. Vlahović, 1995, Odlomci iz povijesti grada Cresa, Zagreb, p. 104), 11 in 1795 (fra J. Vlahović, 1995, Odlomci iz povijesti grada Cresa, Zagreb, p. 107) and 24 in 1853 (N. Lemessi, 1979, Note storiche, geografiche, artistiche sull'isola di Cherso, Roma, vol. IV, p. 358). The first oil mill with a centrifugal extractor on the eastern Adriatic coast was installed precisely in Cres in 1975.

The increase in the number of oil mills led to an increase in the quantity and quality of oil produced. In 1771 Alberto Fortis mentioned that oil was the main product produced on the island of Cres and that it was the best that was produced in the Republic of Venice in that period (Alberto Fortis, 1771, Saggio d'osservazioni sopra l'isola di Cherso ed Osero, Venezia, pp. 59 and 60). Many written sources state that surplus oil from Cres was sold in the Kvarner area in the middle and at the end of the 19th century (Eco del Litorale Ungarico, 1843, Fiume, No 1, p. 4; No 7, p. 4; Giambattista Cubich, 1874, Notizie naturali e storiche sull'isola di Veglia, Trieste, p. 149; Dragutin Hirc, 1891, Hrvatsko primorje, Zagreb, pp. 155 and 301; Pučki Prijatelj, 1912, Pazin, XIII, No 36, p. 291).

Today, the majority of families on the island cultivate olives, which makes olive-growing the only sector of agriculture with real economic importance for the island. Given the extremely difficult pedological and orographic conditions for agriculture, the way of cultivating olives has changed little over time and remains mostly extensive even today. The particular characteristic of olive-growing on the island of Cres is the grazing of sheep in olive groves. As it is impossible to implement appropriate agricultural techniques, it is the sheep that prevent the land from becoming overgrown and help the soil preserve its moisture.

The centuries-old tradition of olive-growing has enabled the olive growers of Cres over time to select an indigenous variety known as slivnjača, which has fully adapted to the difficult growing conditions by withstanding the cold and the shallow soil, which barely retains water. The local variety plominka is traditionally planted on deeper soils. The assortment of olives has not changed over the past two centuries, since olive growers have mostly planted the indigenous variety slivnjača, which today accounts for some 80 % of trees on the island.

With continuous efforts by Cres's olive growers to produce top-quality oils, the past few decades have seen improvements in techniques and expertise in the harvesting and processing of olives. Harvesting occurs during the very early stages of the ripening of the olives, which are processed within 48 hours of harvesting, using state-of-the-art oil-production techniques.

5.2. *Specificity of the product*

The organoleptic characteristics of 'Ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje Cres' are a slightly or moderately pronounced sharpness and bitterness, and occasionally a scent of grass. As a rule, the median of sharpness and bitterness is greater than 2. The note of bitterness is sometimes even more pronounced, so the oil is not always balanced in organoleptic terms. Sharpness and bitterness are positive characteristics for olive oil and result from the high content of polyphenols, which also have antioxidant properties, protecting the oil from deteriorating through oxidation.

The predominant use of one indigenous variety (slivnjača) and one local variety (plominka) of olive tree gives the oil its specific lipid fraction, particularly its lower proportion of campesterol and stigmasterol. One of the specific characteristics of 'Ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje Cres' is its low proportion of free fatty acids and its low peroxide value (O. Boschelle, A. Rogić, D. Kocijančić, L. S. Conte, 1995, Određivanje sastava lipidne frakcije dviju sorti maslina s otoka Cresa, u odnosu na proces sazrijevanja, Pomologia Croatica, Vol. 1, Nos 3-4, p. 16).

As a rule, 'Ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje Cres' has an oleic acid content higher than 72 %.

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)*

The specificity of 'Ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje Cres' is determined by the specific pedoclimatic conditions of the island of Cres, as well as direct and indirect human intervention.

The conditions for olive-growing on the island of Cres are difficult, primarily due to its very shallow soils with fairly prominent bedrock and its border climate. As a result, it took local olive growers considerable time and experience before identifying the varieties suited to olive-growing under such difficult conditions. Eventually, they selected the indigenous variety slivnjača, which proved most suited to olive-growing on shallow soils and today accounts for 80 % of the total number of trees on the island. By opting for varieties whose characteristics contribute to the chemical composition of the oil, in particular the proportion of certain sterols, throughout history and to this day, olive growers have had an indirect effect on the oil's characteristics.

Olive growers indirectly affect the characteristics of 'Ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje Cres' primarily by paying attention to the harvesting periods and the speed and method of processing. Harvesting during the early stages of the ripening of the olives and processing them using state-of-the-art techniques have an indirect effect on the quantity of polyphenols and on the bitterness and sharpness of the oil, whose medians are greater than or equal to 2, as well as the prevalent scent of grass. Earlier harvesting periods and the speed of processing also account for the low proportion of free fatty acids and the low peroxide value.

The quantity of polyphenols is also affected by climate conditions and the period for the growing and ripening of the fruit. The specific climate conditions of the island of Cres, which are determined by its geographical location, also affect the proportion of oleic acids out of the total content of fatty acids, which as a rule is higher than 72 %. This high proportion of oleic acids is affected by the cooler conditions for olive-growing.

To conclude, the chemical composition and typical organoleptic characteristics of 'Ekstra djevičansko maslinovo ulje Cres' are primarily affected by the pedoclimatic conditions of the island of Cres, the genetic characteristics of the varieties used and local expertise in harvesting and processing the olives, as well as the interaction between these various factors.

Reference to publication of the specification

(Article 5(7) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 ([3]))

http://www.mps.hr/UserDocsImages/HRANA/CRESKO%20MASLINOVO%20ULJE/Specifikacija_ulje_Cres_FINAL7_cover.pdf

([3]) See footnote 2.