C/2024/7000

21.11.2024

Publication of an application for registration of a name pursuant to Article 97(4), first subparagraph of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council in the wine sector

(C/2024/7000)

Within 3 months from the date of this publication, the authorities of a Member State or of a third country, or a natural or legal person having a legitimate interest and established or resident in a third country, may lodge, in accordance with Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council [1], an opposition with the Commission.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'Río Negro'

PDO-ES-03003

Date of application: 3.10.2023

1. Name to be registered

Río Negro

2. Geographical indication type

PDO – Protected Designation of Origin

3. Categories of grapevine products

1. Wine

4. Description of the wine(s)

White wines

Straw yellow, acquiring gold tints over time. Clear and bright. Intensely aromatic, primary aromas dominate with citrus, floral and fruity terpenes and notable presence of tropical and apple aromas. Balanced in the mouth with slight acidity and characteristic bitter finish.

* The maximum total alcoholic strength by volume must be within the legal limits laid down in the relevant EU legislation.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	12,00
Minimum total acidity	4,50 in grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	14,00
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	180

[1] Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 on geographical indications for wine, spirit drinks and agricultural products, as well as traditional specialities guaranteed and optional quality terms for agricultural products, amending Regulations (EU) No 1308/2013, (EU) 2019/787 and (EU) 2019/1753 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 (OJ L, 2024/1143, 23.4.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1143/oj).

Red wines

Characteristic cherry red colour. Clear, colour of medium to high intensity. Intensely aromatic, primary aromas dominate with fresh red fruit (strawberry, raspberry, currant etc.) together with floral, spiced, balsamic, smoky and mineral notes. Balanced in the mouth with slight acidity and characteristic bitter finish.

* The maximum total alcoholic strength by volume must be within the legal limits laid down in the relevant EU legislation.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	13,00
Minimum total acidity	4,00 in grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	20,00
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	150

5. **Wine making practices**

a. *Essential oenological practices*

Cultivation practice

Minimum planting density is 2 500 plants per hectare. The number of plants per hectare must not exceed 4 000.

The training system uses trellising to allow 'three-dimensional cordon' pruning. A type of pruning specific to the area, it involves positioning the spurs on the cordon at an angle to the main arm.

Specific oenological practice

The maximum yield is 70 litres of red wine per 100 kilograms of grapes.

For white wines, the grapes are destemmed and all or part, at least 50 %, undergo a period of prefermentation skin contact. They are then pressed and clarified by cold settling. Subsequently vinification takes place at very low temperatures, around 15 °C.

For red wines, all grapes, destemmed and whole, are placed in tanks and undergo a prefermentation cold maceration for a period of between 3 and 21 days.

All the wines covered by the 'Río Negro' PDO must be aged and bottled before they are placed on the market. The minimum requirements are as follows.

Red wine: minimum ageing of 11 months, of which at least 5 months must be in oak vessels (casks or barrels of varying sizes) followed by bottle ageing for at least a further 6 months.

White wine from Gewürztraminer grapes: lees ageing, in stainless steel or oak vessels, for a minimum of 3 months, and at least a further 1 month in the bottle.

b. *Maximum yields*

White grape varieties

9 000 kilograms of grapes per hectare

63,00 hectolitres per hectare

Red varieties

7 000 kilograms of grapes per hectare

49,00 hectolitres per hectare

6. **Demarcated geographical area**

The demarcated geographical area belongs to the municipalities of Cogolludo, San Andrés and Membrillera in the province of Guadalajara. It includes the following parcels from the Spanish Land Parcel Geographical Information System (SIGPAC), published on the date of the competent authority's favourable decision. It has a total surface area of 472,80 contiguous hectares.

MUNICIPALITY	POLIGON	PARCEL	SURFACE AREA (ha)
COGOLLUDO	1	5138	22,45
COGOLLUDO	1	5140	3,56
COGOLLUDO	1	5141	156,15
COGOLLUDO	1	5143	9,84
COGOLLUDO	1	5144	3,35
COGOLLUDO	1	5145	27,6
COGOLLUDO	1	5160	7,09
COGOLLUDO	1	5165	0,35
COGOLLUDO	1	9002	3,47
COGOLLUDO	1	9007	0,79
COGOLLUDO	1	9008	5,59
COGOLLUDO	2	5108	10,02
COGOLLUDO	2	5109	39,27
COGOLLUDO	2	5110	2,41
COGOLLUDO	2	5135	8,28
COGOLLUDO	2	5136	28,02
COGOLLUDO	2	5137	2,03
COGOLLUDO	2	5138	41,49
COGOLLUDO	502	5789	2,43
MEMBRILLERA	520	10001	50,67
MEMBRILLERA	520	20001	29,1
MEMBRILLERA	520	1	12,24
MEMBRILLERA	519	1	3,06
SAN ANDRES	504	2	0,71
SAN ANDRES	504	3	1,04
SAN ANDRES	504	4	0,46
SAN ANDRES	504	5	0,29
SAN ANDRES	504	6	0,23
SAN ANDRES	504	7	0,15
SAN ANDRES	504	8	0,23
SAN ANDRES	504	9	0,29
SAN ANDRES	504	10	0,14
TOTAL (ha)			472,8

7. **Main wine grapes variety(ies)**

Cabernet sauvignon

Gewürztraminer

Merlot

Syrah

Tempranillo

Tinto fragoso

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

8.1. *Details of the geographical area (natural and human factors)*

Natural factors

Soils

The 'Río Negro' area is formed of a steeply rising plateau situated at between 940 and 1 000 metres elevation. The soils are acidic, low in calcium and magnesium, low in organic material and with a relatively high clay content. The trace element content gives the soils a particular character: low in strontium and high in rubidium and barium.

A traditional understanding of the soil allows it to be seen as the consequence of the climate and living beings interacting as active agents, with the type of rock and landscape as passive agents. This means that the uniqueness of 'Río Negro' is best described by its own forests, characterised by woodlands of pine, juniper and species of oak, with scrublands in which varieties of aromatic plants grow in abundance.

'Río Negro' can be said to be an agri-ecosystem specially configured for vine-growing and characterised by a number of abiotic and biotic factors. The abiotic factors include elevation, orientation and inclination. The area is defined by a system of deep ravines, separating it physically from the rest of the territory. These abiotic factors also have a direct influence on the microclimate with fundamental consequences such as the absence of frost, rainfall, wind, run-off and erosion. The biotic factors include the vines themselves and the forestry species which exist in close proximity to them.

Climate

The climate has continental and Mediterranean features. There is a significant diurnal range owing to the lower air density and the reduced greenhouse effect due to elevation. During the ripening period, the temperature differences between day and night often exceed 20 °C.

The 'Río Negro' plateau is also distinguished by the conditions which provide the vineyards with natural protection from the heavy frosts that afflict the surrounding areas. The heavier cold air tends to slip down the ravines forming the plateau to the lower neighbouring areas. In addition, as they rise rapidly to the plateau, the layers of air condense, creating a strong wind. This acts like a natural windmill, preventing radiation frosts and, therefore, damage to the grapes and their quality.

Human factors

This agri-ecosystem has undergone a series of ancient growing practices, which have gradually changed and adapted the natural conditions of this area. It is an area dedicated to the cultivation of vineyards, unlike the neighbouring areas which were traditionally dedicated to cereal-growing. Notable factors include: the liming materials that have gradually altered the chemical composition of the soil in this specific area; the low organic matter content compared with neighbouring areas; and the retention of the stones because they benefit the vines, although they have been removed from arable land dedicated to cereal growing.

The vine variety Tinto Fragoso is indigenous to Cogolludo. It is a traditional variety that has not been found anywhere else in the world, and 'Río Negro' is currently the only wine made from this grape which is available to buy. The existence of a local variety is incontrovertible proof of the importance of viticulture for the people of this area since time immemorial. It also explains the need to adapt the growing practices and grape varieties in use to the particular climate and soil conditions, which are very different from other vineyards of the surrounding area.

8.2. *Information on quality or characteristics of the wine which are fundamentally or exclusively due to the geographical environment*

Specific characteristics of the wine related to the geographical environment:

— Wines with high natural acidity.

— Unusually high concentration of calcium ions.

— High level of total anthocyanins.

— Wines that, on tasting, have a slight acidity and characteristic bitter finish.

— Red wines with a cherry-red colour, even when aged, and medium to high colour intensity.

— Wines naturally suited to ageing, greater methoxyphenol content. These compounds give the wines spiced and smoky notes, and result from the practice of a longer ageing period.

— The high level of terpenes brings great aromatic intensity and typicity with special floral and tropical notes.

8.3. *Link between the characteristics of the geographical area and the quality of the wine*

The wines made in the 'Río Negro' area owe their characteristics to the exceptional natural conditions of this mountainous enclave, as well as to human interaction. For centuries, humans have had to select varieties, adapting growing practices and wine-making styles to these conditions, which are unique in relation to both soil and climate.

The low pH and high acidity of the soils in this area help to increase the natural acidity of the wines. They confer a note of bitterness, creating typicity and giving the wines greater length.

The high level of calcium in the wines results from the complex interaction between elements in the soil. The most important of these interactions is the possibility of substitution between strontium and calcium, together with the particular composition of the 'Río Negro' soils. These are characterised by unusually low levels of calcium, therefore requiring the regular application of liming materials which partially offset the soils' acidic character. The soils have even lower levels of strontium, enabling the plants to absorb calcium more easily due to lack of competition.

The climate produced by the marked elevation has a notable effect on the characteristics of 'Río Negro' wines. A milder daytime temperature means slower and more balanced ripening. This helps to preserve the acidity, by slowing down the accumulation of sugar, allowing the skins to ripen fully and, consequently, a greater quantity of useful compounds are able to form. Such compounds include a notably high level of anthocyanins, especially the sort which do not lose their colour and which give the wine a redder colour due to their slow degradation; and also a tannin which polymerises easily and is naturally sweet, due to its long ripening, providing volume and structure. The higher rainfall, especially the storms that occur from mid-August, also play a part in making daytime temperatures significantly fresher and milder during the ripening period. In addition, the rainfall moderates evapotranspiration from the vine which allows it to retain greater acidity, conferring balance and longevity on the wine.

The solar radiation is much more intense than in neighbouring areas. This causes the grapes to develop a thicker skin, as a protection measure, which produces greater aromatic intensity and contributes to the high concentration of polyphenols and anthocyanins.

'Río Negro' wines are naturally suited to ageing, a fact which, from the outset, has influenced the particular production method. This is characterised by long periods of ageing, conferring a higher methoxyphenol content on the wines. These compounds give the wines spiced and smoky notes, and result from the practice of a longer ageing period.

The abundant forests that surround the 'Río Negro' vineyards also help to raise the level of terpenes in the wines, and therefore their aromatic intensity and typicity. This is because the monoterpenes are metabolites of the essential oils of countless species of aromatic and forest plants. These compounds enter the soil through decomposition of dead leaves, or they are exuded from roots or emanate as volatiles from the aerial parts of the plants.

8.4. *Justification of single applicant conditions*

The demarcated geographical area has characteristics that differ considerably from those in neighbouring areas, as demonstrated by a study by the Higher Technical School of Agricultural Engineers of the University of Castile-La Mancha on the territorial unit that would form a potential designation of origin: 'Río Negro'.

This study shows that the soils of the plateau on which Río Negro is located differ from the soils in neighbouring areas on account of their acidity, low calcium content, relatively high clay content and the nature of their particular trace element content: low in strontium and high in rubidium and barium. These are highly developed soils, often with a surface covering of gravel and clay accumulation in the subsurface soil horizons, and well as saturation and iron and manganese segregations. The segregation of iron oxides in the subsurface horizons give the soils a characteristic medley of colours. Indeed, the development of these soils is sometimes shaped and affected by processes of pseudo-gleysation due to temporary saturation. This can be seen in the colour of the soil materials, the presence of clay minerals and accumulation of oxides.

Although the demarcated geographical area is included within the boundaries of the 'Castilla' PGI, its wines have substantially different characteristics.

PARAMETER:

PGI CASTILLA / PDO RÍO NEGRO

Minimum actual alcoholic strength:

Whites 9 % / 12 %

Reds 10 % / 13 %

Minimum total acidity, white wines:

4 g/l / 4,5 g/l

Maximum pH:

------- / 4

Minimum calcium content:

------- / 25 mg/l.

Minimum total anthocyanins in red wines:

------ / 250 mg/l.

Maximum yields per hectare:

≤ 16 000 kg/ha	≤ 9 000 kg/ha (white wines)
	≤ 7 000 kg/ha (red wines)
≤ 112 hl/ha	≤ 63 hl/ha (white wines)
	≤ 49 hl/ha (red wines)

The application for the 'Río Negro' PDO is being made by a sole applicant as the conditions for the derogation established in Article 95 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 are met.

The person in question is the only producer in the demarcated geographical area. There is only one wine-grower (who is also the winemaker) within the demarcated area described in section 4. There are no other growers or winemakers so there is no possibility of any other participants joining the project for the time being. In future, however, other producers may use the registered name if they set up in the defined geographical area, provided they meet the conditions set out in the product specification.

9. **Essential further conditions**

Legal framework:

In national legislation

Type of further condition:

Packaging within the demarcated geographical area

Description of the condition:

The wines will be bottled in the wineries located in the production area because the wines undergo a second stage of ageing in bottles. There is a reduction process in this period, which enhances the quality of the wines, rounding out their flavour. They are ready for consumption when they attain the organoleptic characteristics set out in the specifications for each type of wine.

Link to the product specification

http://pagina.jccm.es/agricul/paginas/comercial-industrial/consejos_new/pliegos/PLIEGO_DOP_RIO_NEGRO_20230530_mp.pdf