

OTHER ACTS

COMMISSION

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

(2008/C 87/07)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 ⁽¹⁾. Statements of objection must reach the Commission within six months from the date of this publication.

SUMMARY

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006**'AIL BLANC DE LOMAGNE'****EC No: FR/PGI/005/0470/15.06.2005****PDO () PGI (X)**

This summary sets out the main elements of the product specification for information purposes.

1. Responsible department in the Member State:

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2. Group:

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Composition: Producers/processors (X) Other (X)

⁽¹⁾ OJL 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12.

3. Type of product:

Class 1.6: Fruit, vegetables, cereals, whether or not processed

4. Specification:

(Summary of requirements under Article 4(2) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

4.1. Name: 'Ail blanc de Lomagne'

- 4.2. *Description:* White to off-white bulbs, sometimes tinged with violet, made up of several cloves (8 to 12 depending on the size). 'Ail blanc de Lomagne' is distinguished by the size and evenness of its cloves, which are beige to cream in colour, sometimes streaked with violet. Each clove is wrapped in a husk consisting of a single layer of skin. The individual cloves together form a bulb, which is itself covered by several layers of thin skin.

These bulbs are sold as 'extra' or 'class I' garlic and are subject to the corresponding restrictions, such as having a minimum diameter of 45 mm.

'Ail blanc de Lomagne' is sold dried and presented in the traditional way, i.e. plaited into strings, packed in baskets, bags or pallets, or sold to the consumer packaged in nets.

- 4.3. *Geographical area:* The garlic is grown, dried, peeled, packaged in the traditional way and approved within the geographical area in question. The geographical area covered by the PGI takes into account:

the history of production in the area,

the distribution of production, based on a census of producers carried out by producers' organisations,

the soil and weather conditions on land that has been used for decades to cultivate garlic.

The geographical area covers 200 communes in two departments as follows:

154 communes in the department of Gers

Ansan	Isle-Arne	Preignan
Ardizas	Isle-Bouzon	Pujaudran
Aubiet	Isle-Jourdain	Puycasquier
Augnax	Jégun	Puysegur
Aurade	Juilles	Razengues
Avensac	Labrihe	Rejaumont
Avezan	Lagarde	Romieu
Ayguetinte	Lagardère	Roquefort
Bajonnette	Lalanne	Roquelaure
Beaucaire	Lamothe-Goas	Roquelaure-Saint-Aubin
Beaumont	Larressingle	Roquepine
Beaupuy	Larroque-Engalin	Rozès
Béraud	Larroque-Saint-Sernin	Sainte-Anne
Berrac	Lavardens	Saint-Antoine

Bezolles	Lectoure	Saint-Antonin
Bivès	Lias	Saint-Avit-Frandat
Blanquefort	Ligardes	Saint-Brès
Blaziert	Lussan	Sainte-Christie
Bonas	Magnas	Saint-Clar
Brugnens	Maignaut-Tauzia	Saint-Créac
Cadeilhan	Mansempuy	Saint-Cricq
Cassaigne	Mansencome	Sainte-Gemme
Castelnaud-d'Arbieu	Maravat	Saint-Georges
Castelnaud-sur-l'Auvignon	Marestaing	Saint-Germier
Castera-lectourois	Marsan	Saint-Leonard
Castera-Verduzan	Marsolan	Sainte-Marie
Casteron	Mas-d'Auvignon	Saint-Martin-de-Goyne
Castet-Arrouy	Maurens	Sainte-Mère
Castillon-Saves	Mauroux	Saint-Mézard
Catonvielle	Mauvezin	Saint-Orens
Caussens	Mérens	Saint-Orens-Pouy-Petit
Céran	Miradoux	Saint-Paul-de-Baise
Cézan	Miramont-Latour	Saint-Puy
Clermont-Saves	Mirepoix	Sainte-Radegonde
Cologne	Monbrun	Saint-Sauvy
Condom	Monferran-Saves	Sarrant
Crastes	Monfort	Sauvetat
Encausse	Montaut-les-Crèneaux	Ségoufielle
Endoufielle	Montestruc-sur-Gers	Sempesserre
Escorneboeuf	Montiron	Séremputy
Estramiac	Mouchan	Sirac
Flamarens	Nougaroulet	Solomiac
Fleurance	Pauilhac	Taybosc
Frégouville	Pergain-Taillac	Terraube

Gaudonville	Pessoulens	Thoux
Gavarret-sur-Aulouste	Peyrecave	Touget
Gazaupouy	Peyrusse-Massas	Tournecoupe
Gimbrède	Pis	Tourrenquets
Gimont	Plieux	Urdens
Giscaro	Pouy-roquelaure	Valence-sur-baise
Goutz	Préchac	Saint-Caprais
Homps		

46 communes in the department of Tarn-et-Garonne

Auterive	Faudoas	Marsac
Balignac	Gariès	Maubec
Beaumont-de-Lomagne	Gensac	Maumusson
Beaupuy	Gimat	Montain
Belbèse	Glatens	Montgaillard
Bouillac	Goas	Poupas
Bourret	Gramont	Puygaillard-de-Lomagne
Cause	Labourgade	Saint-Arroumex
Comberouger	Lachapelle	Saint-Cirice
Cordes-Tolosannes	Lafitte	Saint-Jean-du-Bouzet
Coutures	Lamothe-Cumont	Saint Loup
Cumont	Larrazet	Saint-Sardos
Dunes	Lavit	Sérignac
Escazeaux	Mansonville	Sistels
Esparsac	Marignac	Vigueron
Fajolles		

- 4.4. *Proof of origin:* To obtain an identification number for a plot of land, the producer must enter the following information in the cultivation register: the name of the commune, the surface area, the cadastral number, the crop variety and the previous crop grown.

For each batch delivered to the packing station, the identification number corresponding to the plot of land appears on the delivery note. After checks have been carried out to verify that the batches conform to the characteristics of 'ail blanc de Lomagne', the 'PGI' batches are specifically identified and packed separately from the other batches. Each packing unit (pallet or sales unit) bears a unique identification number which guarantees its traceability.

- 4.5. *Method of production:*

At the production stage:

All activities relating to the production, drying and peeling process take place within the designated area.

Producers select their seed stock on the basis of the list of varieties issued annually by the *Association de défense de l'ail blanc de Lomagne* (the Association for the Defence of 'Ail Blanc de Lomagne') and sow only certified seeds.

The varieties authorised for planting are selected with reference to two control varieties descended from the original 'blanc de Lomagne' population. Acceptability thresholds for new varieties are set in order to compare their characteristics with those of the control varieties.

In Lomagne, the land suitable for garlic cultivation has a clay content of over 20 %. Acidic soils with a pH lower than 7,5 are unsuitable. A physico-chemical analysis of the plot of land is carried out in order to verify that the soil is suitable for the crop.

To plant their crop, producers must select a plot of land that lies within the geographical area and has not been used for garlic cultivation for the last three growing seasons. Nor may garlic be planted after sorghum, maize, alfalfa or other alliums, or after the plot has been used as meadowland.

Sowing takes place between 15 October and 15 December.

All phytosanitary measures must be justified by observations made with regard to the plot and/or by observations made by technicians with regard to reference plots and/or by a technical report. So as to alternate the active substances used, the producer must refer to the information recorded in the cultivation register about previous phytosanitary measures and to the list of products approved for use on the crop. Diagnostic checks are performed on the spraying equipment once every two years.

Producers must base their fertilisation strategy on a soil analysis of the plot carried out less than three years previously. Fertilisers must be applied little by little and sparingly, taking into account the growth stage of the crop.

To determine when to start harvesting the crop, producers must take account of the visual indicators of maturity (yellowing leaves, softening of the stem near ground level) as well as the ratio of the weight of the bulbs to the weight of the foliage.

The garlic is dried by hanging it from sticks in the traditional way or by forced ventilation. The weight loss of the garlic is monitored to determine how far the drying process has progressed. During the drying process, the bulbs lose between 20 % and 30 % of their original weight when harvested.

After drying, the garlic must be peeled by hand to ensure that the bulbs are sufficiently white. This involves removing the faded, discoloured or torn outer layers of skin while keeping the last layer intact. During peeling, the roots are cut off, by hand, right up to the root disc, taking care not to damage the root disc in the process.

Now as in the past, the garlic can then be sorted and approved within the designated area, either at the packing station or on the farm. Localising these operations also makes it possible to guarantee the traceability of the product.

After it has been approved, the garlic harvested with its foliage can then be presented in the traditional way for 'ail blanc de Lomagne', for example in bunches, in baskets or plaited into strings.

4.6. *Link:*

Past and present reputation:

As regards the history of production, a compendium of agricultural statistics for the Castelsarrasin area, dating from 1868, mentions the importance of garlic cultivation for the economy of Tarn et Garonne. From 1902, in the commune of Beaumont-de-Lomagne, 80 hectares were being used for garlic. As the annual agricultural statistics show, garlic growing continued to spread in Lomagne throughout the 20th century, with the area under cultivation reaching 500 hectares in 1929 and 2 810 hectares in 1980.

From 1936, the creation of the 'établissements DURAN' and the emergence of traditional markets at which farmers could sell their surplus production provide confirmation that garlic has long been traded in Lomagne.

Starting in the early 1960s, numerous events have been held with garlic as their central theme. The first competition for the best string of garlic was held at Beaumont-de-Lomagne in 1961.

The garlic festival in Beaumont-the-Lomagne has been held on the same day every year since 1994.

From 1960, various studies were also conducted with the aim of improving production techniques. The results of these studies were presented at the national garlic days held in Beaumont-de-Lomagne between 1966 and 1974.

The various events centred around 'ail blanc de Lomagne', including the competitions held for traditional presentation techniques, all give garlic growing a festive and convivial character and enhance the product's reputation.

Other characteristic: preserving traditional skills

'Ail blanc de Lomagne' is produced in a way that preserves skills that have been passed down from generation to generation, such as hanging the garlic from sticks to dry, peeling the garlic by hand and presenting it in the traditional way (in strings, baskets or bunches).

The traditional way of drying garlic involves harvesting it with its foliage and hanging it from sticks in a covered shelter with open sides. The 'Autan', a warm, dry wind that blows in off the Mediterranean, plays a very important role in the natural drying process. It is very strong in Lomagne and so helps to preserve the traditional open-air drying technique.

The mandatory process of peeling by hand ensures that the product has the impeccable appearance so characteristic of 'ail blanc de Lomagne', i.e. a homogeneous bulb that is white in colour and free from tears, with uniformly trimmed roots.

The fact that there is no rigid flowering stem allows 'ail blanc de Lomagne' to be presented in the characteristic way, for example in strings and bunches. These traditional presentation techniques are very prominent in the events organised around 'ail blanc de Lomagne'.

4.7. *Inspection body:*

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Qualisud is an EN 45011 approved and accredited certification body.

4.8. *Labelling:* Without prejudice to the specific rules laid down by other French, EU or international legislation, the labels must give the following specific PGI information:

- the product name: 'Ail blanc de Lomagne',
 - the Community 'PGI' logo,
 - the batch identification number.
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