

Esther HERRANZ GARCÍA

European Parliament
Wiertzstraat 60
B-1047 Brussels

Geneva, 20 January 2014

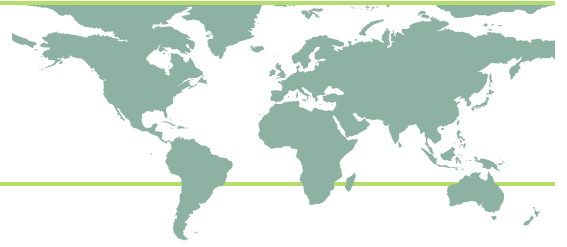
Object: oriGIn comments on the Commission Communication on promotion measures and information provision for agricultural products

Dear Ms García,

The Organization for an International Geographical Indications Network (oriGIn) is the global alliance of geographical indications – including some of the most internationally renowned European Protected Designations of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indications (PGI) – representing today some 350 groups and over two-million producers. oriGIn advocates for the effective legal protection and enforcement of geographical indications at the national, regional and international level.

In November 2013, oriGIn welcomed the publication of the European Commission Communication on promotion measures and information provision and for agricultural products.

We believe that the proposal made by the European Commission goes in the right direction, as it recognises the importance of the PDO/PGI sector and support its development. We welcome in particular the fact that the proposal keeps PDO/PGI among the themes eligible for support. Likewise, the proposals' selection process can be supported from our perspective, as it has the potential to streamline the overall process. The limits proposed to the use of trademarks in the context of promotional programmes are also encouraging, as we believe limits are necessary to avoid confusion with PDO and PGI. The Commission Communication proposed wording in this respect (current article 4) suits us as it strikes a right balance. In addition, we agree that it can be useful to allow the origin of the product to be mentioned in the context of promotional programmes,



as far as it refers to the national origin rather than the regional one, as the latter would create confusion with PDO and PGI.

On the other hand, in the context of the proposed “Measures on the initiative of the Commission” (current article 10 of the Commission Communication) we believe that a specific reference to actions aimed at improving the protection and enforcement of PDO and PGI in the third countries should be included (please see our proposal in this respect in the Annex below). This is crucial in particular for small PDO/PGI groups which do not have financial resources for protection and enforcement activities. Without effective protection and enforcement, illegitimate parties would benefit from the investments aimed at promoting PDO/PGI, thereby undermining any European promotional effort.

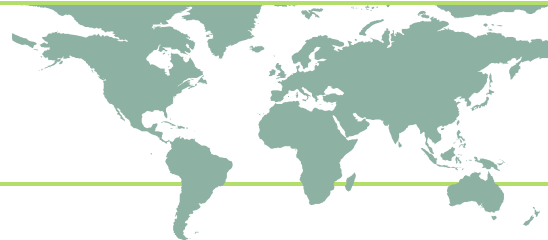
Finally, we believe that the Commission Communication raises a number of crucial issues for PDO and PGI. On the one hand, the Commission points out that the PDO and PGI logos are only recognised by 14% of EU citizens and that the new EU promotion policy should seek to improve consumer awareness of these logos. We believe that informing the consumer on the meaning of these logos is crucial for the sector. On the other hand, in the period 2001-2011, only 30% of the budget for promotional campaigns targeted third countries, in spite of the tremendous commercial potential of such markets. In this respect, we believe that oriGIn, thanks to its European and worldwide network of PDO/PGI groups from a variety of sectors, is in a privileged position to facilitate the match-making of proposals from PDO/PGI groups aimed at third countries markets.

We thank you in advance for the consideration you will give to the points raised in this letter and remain at your complete disposal for any further information you might require.

Sincerely Yours,

Dominique Chambon,
President, Conseil National des
Appellations d’Origine Laitières (CNAOL)
and Vice-president of oriGIn

José Enrique Garrigós,
President, CRIGP Jijona
y Turrón de Alicante
and Vice-president of oriGIn



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amblard'.

Christian Amblard,
Director,
Syndicat du Pruneau d'Agen and
Member of oriGIn Executive Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fanti'.

Stefano Fanti,
Director,
Consorzio del Prosciutto di Parma and
Member of oriGIn Executive Committee

Annex:
Proposal of amendment to the text of the European Commission

Article 10
Measures on the initiative of the Commission

1. The Commission may carry out information and promotion measures as described in Articles 2 and 3. These measures may in particular take the form of participation in trade fairs and exhibitions of international importance by means of stands or operations aimed at enhancing the image of Union products.
2. The Commission shall develop technical support services, in particular with a view to encouraging awareness of different markets, **helping producers to fight against counterfeited products and other infringements of PDO/PGI**, maintaining a dynamic professional network around information and promotion policy and improving knowledge of legislative provisions concerning programme development and implementation.