

oriGIn Report



Highlight of the Month

1000th Quality Food Name Registered

On 15 February, the 'Piacentinu Ennese', a sheep's cheese from Sicily in Italy, was registered as a PDO and became the one thousandth name to be registered under the Commission's agricultural product and foodstuff quality labels. The scheme protects a high number of European products, but there is a growing interest from non-EU producers as well, notably India, China, Thailand and Vietnam.

There are currently 505 PDO, 465 PGI and 30 TSG for agricultural products and foodstuffs protected in the EU. Furthermore, a total of 1923 GI wines are protected in the EU: 1336 wines with PDO and 587 wines with PGI. (See: <http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/markets/wine/e-bacchus/index.cfm?event=pwelcome&language=EN>).

Concerning spirits, 329 European spirits are registered in the E-SPIRITS database (see: <http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/spirits/index.cfm?event=searchIndication>).

For further information, please consult: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=P/11/154&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

International Affairs

WTO: Slow Progress in the Negotiations

On 17 February, David Walker, Chair of the WTO Agriculture Committee, asked the WTO Members for stronger commitment to progress in the negotiations if they want to reach their target of revising the 2008 draft 'modalities' text before 21st April. Up to now, the discussions seem to have brought very few new commitments.

As for GIs, a small group representing the different sides of the discussion has been working on a draft text concerning the multilateral registry (see: <http://www.ip-watch.org/weblog/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/WTO-Multilateral-system-11-Feb-2011.pdf>). The text is still full of brackets, however, and no concrete progress has been made regarding participation, scope, or legal effects of the Registry. The next round of negotiations will take place in March. For further information, please consult: http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news11_e/agng_17feb11_e.htm

Meanwhile, the informal discussion on GI extension is ongoing, with Pascal Lamy as Chair. He has asked the most representative countries of the "majority proposal coalition" (pro-GI extension), as well as the "Joint Proposal coalition", to prepare a document on their national GI legislation in order to better understand the impact of extension.

Colombia:

'Café de Nariño' Recognised as the First 'Denominación de Origen de Café Regional'

On 18 February, the Superintendencia de Industria y Comercio (SIC) recognised 'Café de Nariño' as the first 'Denominación de Origen de café Regional' in Colombia.

In April 2009, the Colombian Coffee Growers Federation, within the framework of its strategy of differentiation, submitted an application for the registration of 'Café de Nariño' and, in October of the same year, another application for 'Café de Cauca'.

Over the last few years, the Colombian Coffee Growers Federation has achieved important results. In 2005, the 'Café de Colombia' was

recognized by the SIC as a 'Denominación de Origen'. In 2007, 'Café de Colombia' was the first non-European product recognized as Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) in the European Union. The name is also protected as a certification mark in the USA and Canada.

EU – South Korea: Approval of the European Parliament

On 17 February, the MEPs voted in favour of the ratification of the EU-South Korea Free Trade Agreement (FTA) by 465 in favour, 128 against and 19 abstentions. This first FTA with an Asian country includes, at the insistence of MEPs, strong safeguard measures to protect European industry from an eventual surge in South Korean imports. The safeguards will allow the EU to suspend further reductions in customs duties or increase them to previous levels, if lower rates lead to an excessive increase in imports from South Korea, causing or threatening to cause "serious injury" to EU producers. The FTA will eliminate about 98% of import duties and other trade barriers in manufactured goods, agricultural products and services over the next 5 years. The FTA could enter into force in July 2011. For further information on the agreement: <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/creating-opportunities/bilateral-relations/countries/korea/>

A limited list of GIs will be protected under this agreement. See: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2009/october/tradoc_145181.pdf for agricultural products http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2009/october/tradoc_145182.pdf and for wines.

EU – Mercosur: Visit of the EU Trade Commissioner in Paraguay

On 7-9 February, EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht was in Paraguay and Uruguay to talk with his counterparts about the Association Agreement, which the EU and Mercosur are currently negotiating. The trade part of the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement aspires to:

- Go beyond the WTO obligations of both parties,
- Extend coverage of products and services to be liberalised,

- Cover goods, services, investment, government procurement and trade and sustainable development,
- Ensure adequate protection of intellectual property rights and GIs, effective competition policies and a special agreement on sanitary and phytosanitary standards,
- Establish an effective and binding dispute settlement mechanism to help resolve trade frictions in the EU-Mercosur relationship.

The next round of negotiations will take place in Brussels on 9-18 March, and will cover exchange of market access offers. This subject will be discussed between the European Commission and the EU Member States at an expert meeting at the end of February. Technical discussions could be organised in Paraguay at the beginning of May. For further information: <http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=679>

EU Issues

Policy Developments

GI Policy

Quality policy:

oriGIn in Brussels to meet the Commission and MEPs

On 8-9 February, the Technical Committee (TC) of OriGIn was in Brussels to meet representatives of the Commission and MEPs to present its amendments on the legislative proposals on agricultural product policy schemes of the Commission. Within the European Commission, the TC met:

- Alina Ujupan, member of the Cabinet of the Commissioner for agriculture in charge of the quality policy,
- Michael Erhart, Head of the Agricultural Product Quality Policy unit, which is in charge of the reform,
- Vincent Cordonnier of this unit, and
- Georges Vassilakis, Adviser on Quality Policy for this unit.

The TC also met key MEPs:

- Paolo De Castro, Chair of the Agriculture Committee, S&D - Italy,
- Iratxe Garcia Perez, rapporteur on the file – S&D - Spain,

- Herbert Dorfmann, shadow rapporteur for the EPP group, Italy,
- Britta Reimers, shadow rapporteur for the ALDE group, Germany,
- Giancarlo Scottà, shadow rapporteur for the EFD group, Italy,
- Astrid Lulling, Chair of the intergroup on wine, fruits and vegetables, tradition and quality.

The amendments were welcomed by the MEPs. OriGIn will keep in touch with them to ensure that they will be fully taken into account in the report of Mrs. Garcia Perez.

Publication of a Chinese application for registration as a PGI

On 5 February, the application for registration of **金乡大蒜** (Jinxiang Da Suan) as a PGI was published in the Official Journal of the European Union. 'Jinxiang Da Suan' is a kind of local white garlic planted in Jinxiang County (North East of China). It has bright white skin, regular oblate shape, and a mild hot flavor. It is 5-7 cm in diameter and weighs 40-80 grams. For further information on the product, please consult its specifications: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:037:0020:0023:EN:PDF>

First Application for the Registration of a Wool Product as a PDO

On 12 February, the application for registration of the 'Native Shetland Wool' as a PDO was published in the Official Journal of the European Union. It is the first application for registration of a wool product at the EU level.

'Native Shetland Wool' comes from the UK. It must come from pure-bred Shetland Sheep maintained on organic units on the Shetland Islands. The weight of the fleece varies from 1 to 2 kg. The colour varies from white to a range of natural colours from black through brown to grey. The sheep are maintained on hills within the defined geographical area and are sheared between July and August.

For further information on the product, please consult its specifications: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:045:0021:0024:EN:PDF>

Other EU Policies

Food labelling rules: Position of the Council

On 21 February, the Council adopted its first-reading-position on the draft regulation on food information to consumers. The European Parliament (EP) will now have to work on the text again in the framework of the second reading. Discussions within the Council mainly covered the labelling of the origin for meats and dairy products. The EP wants to finish its work on the file before the summer break. It is thus scheduled that the report of the EP will be adopted by the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee on 14 April and in plenary session on 5 July. For further information, please consult: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/agricult/119411.pdf

Adoption of the Inter-institutional Agreement Defining the New 'Comitology' Rules

When a piece of legislation is adopted by the Parliament and the Council, its implementation is mandatory. The 'comitology' procedure currently regulates the rules applying to the implementation of the European legislation. The decisions concerning the implementation of the legislation were, up to now, made by specialised committees composed of civil servants of the Commission and national experts, who gave their points of view on the proposed measures. After the Lisbon Treaty entered into force, the European institutions reformed the 'comitology' procedure. Beginning on the 1st March, the 'comitology' procedure will be replaced by a new system: the delegated acts.

The new rules on the functioning of the procedure of the delegated acts bring important changes in terms of balance of powers as the competencies of the European Parliament (EP) and of the European Commission increase greatly. Indeed, the EP can now express its point of view on these issues, whereas it was previously absent from the procedure. The Member States in the Council are no longer able to block the Commission's proposals with a simple majority. Blocking a proposal will now require a qualified majority (see Annex I).

For further information, and to see a larger version of the chart, please consult: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/119270.pdf

News on GI registrations

GI registration

- “Hofer Rindfleischwurst” (PGI) Germany – 04/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:030:0015:0016:EN:PDF>
- “Carciofo Spinoso di Sardegna” (PDO) Italy – 04/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:030:0021:0022:EN:PDF>
- “Arancia di Ribera” (PDO) Italy – 04/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:030:0023:0024:EN:PDF>
- “Limone di Siracusa” (PGI) Italy – 04/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:030:0025:0026:EN:PDF>
- “Cerezas de la Montaña de Alicante” (PGI) Spain – 08/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:032:0003:0004:EN:PDF>
- “Oie d’Anjou” (PGI) France – 12/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:038:0024:0025:EN:PDF>
- “Piacentinu Ennese” (PDO) Italy – 15/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:041:0002:0003:EN:PDF>
- “Chosco de Tineo” (PGI) Spain – 19/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:046:0021:0022:EN:PDF>
- “Špekáčky” / “Špekačky” (TSG) Czech Republic / Slovakia – 22/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:047:0003:0004:EN:PDF>

- “Spišské pátky” (TSG) Czech Republic & Slovakia – 22/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:047:0005:0006:EN:PDF>
- “Lovecký salám” / “Lovecká saláma” (TSG) Czech Republic / Slovakia – 22/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:047:0007:0008:EN:PDF>
- “Liptovská saláma” / “Liptovský salám” (TSG) Czech Republic / Slovakia – 22/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:047:0009:0010:EN:PDF>

Amendment registration

- “Salame Piacentino” (PDO) Italy – 04/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:030:0017:0018:EN:PDF>
- “Fontina” (PDO) Italy – 04/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:030:0019:0020:EN:PDF>
- “Welsh Beef” (PGI) UKs – 04/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:030:0027:0028:EN:PDF>

Registration request

- “Carciofo Brindisino” (PGI) Italy – 09/01
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:029:0027:0030:EN:PDF>
- “Mantecados de Estepa” (PGI) Spain – 01/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:032:0022:0025:EN:PDF>
- “Pélardon” (PDO) France – 04/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:035:0013:0018:EN:PDF>
- “Brovada” (PDO) Italy – 04/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:035:0019:0023:EN:PDF>

- “**金乡大蒜**” (Jinxiang Da Suan) (PGI) China – 05/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:037:0020:0023:EN:PDF>
- “Coppa Di Parma” (PGI) Italy – 05/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:037:0024:0028:EN:PDF>
- “Native Shetland Wool” (PDO) UK – 12/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:045:0021:0024:EN:PDF>
- “Šebreljski Želodec” (PGI) Slovenia – 12/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:045:0025:0027:EN:PDF>
- “Zgornjesavinjski Želodec” (PGI) Slovenia – 12/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:045:0028:0031:EN:PDF>
- “Lough Neagh Eel” (PGI) UK – 15/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:047:0012:0016:EN:PDF>

Amendment request

- “Azeites do Ribatejo” (AOP) Portugal – 22/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:056:0013:0017:EN:PDF>
- “Riso di Baraggia Biellese e Vercellese” (AOP) Italy – 22/02
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:056:0018:0022:EN:PDF>

Annex I

New comitology rules (art. 291 TFEU)

