

**Mr. Dacian Cioloş**  
**European Commissioner**  
**for Agriculture and Rural Development**

European Commission  
200, rue de la Loi  
BE-1049 Brussels  
Belgium

Geneva, 24 April 2014

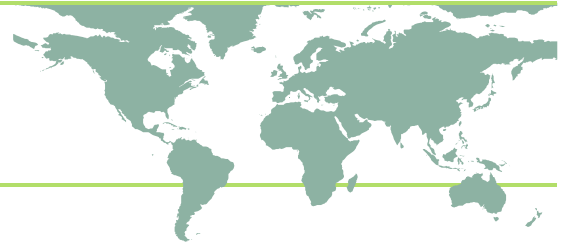
**Re: GI “Grappa” technical file**

Dear Commissioner,

oriGIn, the global alliance of geographical indications producers’ groups, would like to raise with you an issue which concerns specifically the Geographical Indication (GI) “Grappa”, as well as – from a more general perspective – the principle itself of packaging/bottling GIs in their respective areas of production as an essential element for the product’s authenticity and quality.

Two years ago, according to Regulation (EC) No 110/2008, the Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry (Mipaaf) notified the European Commission the technical file for the GI “Grappa”. According to our sources, the European Commission seems to be oriented not to approve such technical file, challenging the requirement of product’s bottling in its area of production.

We are of the opinion that the GI “Grappa” technical file was supported by clear legal and technical arguments. Bottling the GI “Grappa” in its area of production is a crucial factor to ensure the authenticity of such well known spirit. The complex operations related to the product’s bottling – such as filtration, refrigeration, sugar addition, etc. – must be necessarily carried out with the specific experience and in-depth knowledge of the authorised Italian operators. Likewise, the requirement for bottling the GI “Grappa” in its area of production will prevent the risk that the product, sold in bulk, is mixed with lower quality spirits, and commercialised at a lower price as a genuine product. This would seriously damage the image and reputation of the GI “Grappa”.



We believe that this issue is of extreme importance for the Italian distillers, as well as for all those who believe that, under certain circumstances, packaging/bottling GIs in their respective areas of production is a key element for their authenticity and quality, as confirmed by the European Court of Justice in several judgments.

Given your understanding and competence on GI related issues, which you have shown during your entire mandate as Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development and have contributed significantly to the recent improvements in the European legislative framework concerning GIs, we trust a satisfactory solution to this issue can be found, in the respect of the EU relevant legislation and case law.

We thank you in advance for the attention you will give to this matter. Meanwhile, we are available, together with our members representing the GI “Grappa”, for further information and clarification you might require in this respect.

Sincerely Yours,

Ramón González Figueroa  
President of oriGIn

Massimo Vittori  
Managing Director of oriGIn

CC: Mr. Michael Erhart, Head of Unit, Agricultural product and quality policy, European Commission's Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development