

Mr. John Lom

Director, International Division,
The Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB)

Geneva, 26 November 2015

Re: Commercialization in the United States of a product denominated “Prosecco Doc”

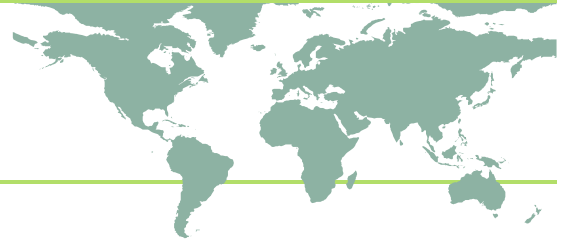
Dear Mr. Lom,

oriGIn is the global alliance of geographical indications, which counts among its members 400 associations of producers from 40 countries, including some United States (US) geographical indications. oriGIn advocates for a more effective legal protection of geographical indications at the national, regional and international level and promotes them as a sustainable development tool.

I contact you with respect to a wine product denominated “Prosecco Doc Cassara” commercialized in the US (see Annex I). As you can clearly see from the photos, such product uses the denomination “Prosecco” and indicates that it is produced in Italy.

The analysis in the shops where the above-mentioned product is commercialized - conducted by the “Consorzio di Tutela della Denominazione di Origine Controllata Prosecco” (the Consorzio) – the Italian body officially recognized by the Italian Ministry of Agriculture to protect and promote the denomination “Prosecco”, and a member of our Organisation - showed that such product does not bear the Italian seal compulsory for geographical indications wines. It means that such wine has not respected the production rules defined in the “Prosecco” specifications and, as a result, illegally uses the denomination “Prosecco” and misleads the US consumers.

Moreover, such wine is not produced in Italy. From the information contained in the label, the product at issue is made by “Cassara”, which seems to be owned by the Moldavian company “Bulgaria wine SRL” (see Annex II, page 33). For your information, please note that such company also produces and commercializes in Moldova a wine denominated “Prosecco Pronto”, for which a separate complaint has been made by the Consorzio at the European Union level for violation of the



Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Moldova on the protection of geographical indications of agricultural products and foodstuffs.

In light of the above, we would like to seek the intervention of the TTB to counter the illegal use in the US of the denomination "Prosecco" made by "Cassara", according to the Agreement between the European Community and the United States of America on trade in wine (2006).

I remain at your disposal for any further information and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Massimo Vittori". The signature is written in a cursive style and is centered on the page.

Massimo Vittori
Managing Director of oriGIn