

# Transmission of an established geographical indication for a spirit drink

## I. TECHNICAL FILE

### 1. Name and type

#### a. Name(s) to be registered

'Balegemse jenever' (nl)

#### b. Category

19. Juniper-flavoured spirit drinks

#### c. Applicant country(ies)

Belgium

#### d. Applicant language:

Dutch

#### e. Type of geographical indication:

PGI - protected geographical indication

### 2. Contact details

#### a. Name and title of applicant

<b>Name and title of applicant</b>	Flemish Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
<b>Legal form, size and composition (if a legal person):</b>	
<b>Nationality</b>	Belgium
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**b. Intermediary details**

<b>Name of intermediary body</b>	Vinum Et Spiritus Association Belgium
<b>Address</b>	Livornostraat/Rue de Livourne 13 b5 1060 Brussel/Bruxelles
<b>Country</b>	Belgium
<b>Telephone</b>	+ 32 2 537 00 51
<b>E-mail address(es)</b>	info@vinumetspiritus.be

**c. Interested party details****d. Competent control authority details**

<b>Name of competent control authority</b>	Federale Overheidsdienst Economie, KMO, Middenstand & Energie (Federal Public Service for the Economy, SMEs, Self-Employed and Energy)
<b>Address</b>	Koning Albert II-laan/Boulevard du Roi Albert II 16 1030 Brussel/Bruxelles
<b>Country</b>	Belgium
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**e. Control body details****3. Description of the spirit drink**

<b>Title — Product name</b>	
<b>Physical, chemical and/or organoleptic characteristics</b>	<p>1. Concise description</p> <p>‘Balegemse jenever’ is a geographical indication pursuant to point 19 of Annex III to Regulation (EC) No 110/2008 for a spirit drink produced by flavouring with juniper berries (<i>juniperus communis</i> L. and/or <i>juniperus oxcedrus</i> L.) a grain distillate obtained by distilling a fermented mash of cereals (rye, wheat, maize and malt) and their derivatives, by distillation in a copper still to less than 75 % vol. such that the smell and taste of the product thus obtained comes exclusively from the raw materials used.</p> <p>2. Physical, chemical and/or organoleptic characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minimum alcohol by volume in the final product: 30 % vol.</li> <li>- Clarity: clear</li> <li>- Colour: transparent and determined by the ingredients used and/or the containers used for</li> </ul>

	<p>storage or ageing and can vary from very transparent to light yellow.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The flavour components vary depending on the point in time at which they were formed; Compounds originating from the raw material itself and transfer unaltered in to the distillate (oxidation products of lipids, Maillard reaction products, aliphatic sulphur components and phenols); Compounds formed during fermentation by the metabolism of the yeast and other enzymatic processes (alcohols, esters, fatty acids, carbonyl compounds including aldehydes and ketones, and sulphurous components); Compounds arising during distillation and storage (furfural, ester, acetals)</li> <li>- Adding of additives: flavouring compliant with point 9 of Annex I to Regulation 110/2008 extracted from juniper berries.</li> </ul>
<b>Specific characteristics (compared with spirit drinks of the same category)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The consumer experiences the mild taste and aromas of cereal and bread, with a slight hint of juniper berry.</li> <li>- These characteristics are largely the result of the ingredients used (and of the distillation process described later in this fiche).</li> <li>- The grain distillate comes exclusively from rye, wheat, maize and malt.</li> <li>- The quantity of pure alcohol in the finished product consists of 100 % malt spirit (whereas the quantity of malt spirit in other grain genevers is much lower).</li> <li>- Unlike other grain genevers, neither sweeteners nor colourings are added, and only juniper berries are used for flavouring.</li> </ul>

#### 4. Define the geographical area

##### a. Description of the defined geographical area

‘Balegemse jenever’ is distilled exclusively in Balegem, a district of the municipality of Oosterzele, which is located in the province of East Flanders in the Kingdom of Belgium. Every phase of the production process (with the exception of bottling) must take place in Balegem. \_\_\_\_\_

##### b. NUTS area

#### 5. Method used to obtain the spirit drink

Title - Type of method	
Method	‘Balegemse jenever’ is produced in accordance with the original, traditional method dating from 1862.

### 5.1 The grains and their derivatives

'Balegemse jenever' is produced using rye, wheat, wheat and maize starch, and malt. If necessary, these grains are dried in a grain dryer.

### 5.2 Milling of the grains and the malt

The grains and the malt are ground in a grain mill driven by a steam engine.

**5.3 Mixing and saccharification of the mash** The mash kettle is one-third filled with de-ironized, softened groundwater and/or spring water from the region and/or mains water that is heated to around 40 °C. The ground rye and wheat, and the maize starch, is poured into the mash kettle. The mash is then brought to 100 °C by the injection of steam. The boiled mash is cooled to 68 °C, after which the malt flour is added. The saccharification of the grain starch takes about an hour. The saccharified mash is then cooled to around 24 °C, after which it is let out into the fermentation tank.

### 5.4 Fermentation

The yeast is stirred in to the saccharified, cooled mash. Fermentation takes around 72 hours, which brings the alcohol content up to 6-7 % vol.

### 5.5 Coarse distillation

In the distillation tower, alcohol and other liquid components (the phlegm or coarse spirit) are separated from the non-liquid components (slops).

### 5.6 Fine distillation

The phlegm is pumped into the distilling flask (still). Here, the head (the first runnings including methanol, aldehydes and esters) and the tail (the final run-off with fusel oils) is separated from the heart (fine spirit, grain eau de vie or malt spirit with maximum 75 % vol. alcohol).

### 5.7 Maturing the malt spirit and bottling the genever

The malt spirit is matured for at least six months in an oak cask. The matured malt spirit is then put into casks and taken to the filling area. The malt spirit is filtered and diluted in a stainless steel mixing tank with water to the desired strength (54, 41 or 31 % vol.).

## 6. *Link with the geographical environment or origin*

**Title — Product**  
**name**

<b>Details of the geographical area or origin relevant to the link</b>	/
<b>Specific characteristics of the spirit drink attributable to the geographical area</b>	<p>‘Balegemse jenever’ came into existence in 1864. On 24 December 1864, Henri De Backer, a farmer, received permission from the Province of East Flanders to establish a genever distillery on his farm. By inheritance, the distillery passed to the Van Damme family, whose name was from then on associated with ‘Balegemse jenever’.</p> <p>In 1864, there were 313 agricultural distilleries in Belgium. More than half of these distilleries were in East Flanders. Today, the Van Damme distillery in Balegem is the only remaining, working distillery in this country where the farmer-distiller produces genever from his own grain and feeds his livestock with the slops. His cereal fields are fertilised with the manure from the animals, and fertile land gives a rich grain harvest: a perfect ecological cycle.</p> <p>By decree dated 9 July 1997, the Flemish Community recognised ‘Balegemse jenever’ as a geographical designation of a spirit drink within the meaning of Article 5(3) of Council Regulation 1576/89 of 29 May 1989 laying down general rules on the definition, description and presentation of spirit drinks.</p> <p>The local raw materials give the product its typical characteristics. The main ingredients are grown and harvested on Balegem's clay soil: The wheat, rye and groundwater used come exclusively from Balegem. The natural spring water is also from Balegem and from the amalgamated municipality of Oosterzele (of which Balegem forms part).</p> <p>In addition, the typical characteristics are determined by the specialist knowledge of the distiller following the recipe for fine distillation.</p> <p>‘Balegemse jenever’ is part of Flanders' cultural heritage.</p> <p>Following the Flemish Government protection decision of 8 February 2010, the buildings and the original distilling equipment of the farm distillery are designated as part of Flanders' industrial heritage. Genever is still distilled there in accordance with the original, traditional method dating from 1862. The Van Damme distillery is the only remaining firm that still has technology from the first industrial revolution on display and is the last witness of a production method</p>

that was typical in East Flanders in the 19th century.

‘Balegemse jenever’ is one of the 11 founder members of the Order of East Flemish master distillers, who seek to keep the rich East Flemish genever tradition alive via a number of activities.

Each year, a genever parade is organised in Balegem on the occasion of the Distillery Festival.

The distillery is part of Bruisend (Sparkling) Balegem, a biennial musical, cultural, artistic and folk event. The genever from the Van Damme distillery (located on the Issegem) is mentioned in the refrain of the song that was written for Bruisend Balegem.

The refrain goes: ‘What sparkles  
in Balegem between the corn of Walzegem, Vetten  
bring on the herring  
let the Van Damme flow  
What sparkles in Balegem, in the bushes of Issegem’  
The distillery has been listed by the Flemish tourist authority as a hub in the Waterroute, a 57 km long cycle route through the Flemish Ardennes. The advertising for the route mentions ‘Balegemse jenever’.

In 1995, Ludo Lampaert from the Van Damme distillery received the Joachim Beuckelaer award, which has been given annually since 1966 in Flanders to one person in the area of ‘gastronomy and local history’; mainly because the firm is the only agricultural distillery in Flanders that not only produces a valuable grain product from its own land, but also maintains a piece of 19th century agricultural history for future generations.

‘Balegemse jenever’ in literature:

In *The Sorrow of Belgium*, Hugo Claus' masterpiece, ‘Balegemse jenever’ is specifically mentioned on account of the product being so typical of the region.

*Een Jeneverroute van Frans Vlaanderen tot Limburg als toeristisch bindmiddel*, Yannick Scheelen, 1983, Hoger Rijksinstituut voor Toerisme, Hotelwezen en Voedingsbedrijven, p. 97

“Jenever, Een Belgische Belevenis”, Ronald Ferket en Hugo Elsemans, 1987, Project Antwerpen, p. 153

*In en om de alambiek*, 1981, Catalogue for the exhibition by the museum of industrial archaeology and textiles (Gent), p. 66 - 70

*Jenever in de Lage Landen*, Eric Van Schoonenberghe, 1996, Stichting Kunstboek, p. 209

	<p>‘Balegemse jenever’ in culinary recipes:</p> <p><i>Jenever, Een Culinaire Belevenis</i>, Ronald Ferket and Joris Creve, 1996, p. 39, (Carpaccio of beef with herb vinaigrette based on ‘Balegemse jenever’)</p> <p>“Jenever, Van Korrel Tot Borrel”, Stefaan van Laere, 2005, Davidsfonds, p. 36 (Balegem cucumber salad with jenever) and p. 156 (recipe from the De cluysenaer restaurant, ‘Lamb fillet cooked in bacon with <i>Balegemsche</i>’)</p> <p>‘Balegemse jenever’ on the web: 4 400 hits from a Google search with recent publications relating to the product, the production method, and the tourist, cultural and culinary treasures of the Van Damme distillery and of ‘Balegemse Jenever’.</p>
<b>Causal link between the geographical area and the product</b>	

## 7. Requirements under EU, national or regional legislation

<b>Title</b>	
<b>Legal reference:</b>	9 July 1997 Ministerial decree recognising the geographical designation of spirit drinks
<b>Description of the requirement(s)</b>	<p>Genever distilled exclusively in Balegem (East Flanders) from various types of grain and their derivatives.</p> <p>Obtained by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. distillation in a copper distillation tower of a fermented mash of grains and derivatives thereof;</li> <li>2. distillation in a copper still;</li> <li>3. distilled to less than 75 % vol. such that the final distillate has a smell and taste derived from the raw materials used.</li> </ol> <p>The grain eau de vie is matured in oak casks with a view to softening its organoleptic characteristics.</p>

<b>Title</b>	
<b>Legal reference:</b>	Flemish Government protection decision of 8 February 2010
<b>Description of the requirement(s)</b>	Following the Flemish Government protection decision of 8 February 2010, the buildings and the original distilling equipment of the farm distillery are designated as part of Flanders' industrial heritage.

## 8. Supplement to the geographical indication 9.

### Specific labelling rules:

Title	Reference to 'quality terms'
Description of the rule	<p>It is permitted to replace the geographical designation 'Balegemse jenever' with its old Flemish spelling, namely 'Balegemsche genever' or 'Balegemsche graangenever'.</p> <p>It is permitted to mention 'quality terms' provided that the producer can show that the characteristics of the relevant product differ sufficiently from the characteristics of a standard 'Balegemse jenever'.</p> <p>'Balegemse jenever' obtained through distillation in one distillery of one mash of one type of malted grain may bear the description 'single malt', with the possibility of adding or using other grains, in which case it may bear the description 'single grain'. If mention is made of one or more specific raw materials, the distillate must have been obtained exclusively by using those specific raw materials.</p>

Title	Ageing — Indication of length of maturation
Description of the rule	<p>'Balegemse jenever' that has been aged for at least a year in a wooden cask may show a reference to that ageing or maturing (as stipulated in point 8 of Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 110/2008).</p> <p>'Balegemse jenever' that has been aged for at least a year in a wooden cask and is sold in the kingdoms of Belgium and the Netherlands must specify the length of ageing or maturing. The precise information relating to this ageing (such as the start and end of the ageing process, the traceability from bottle to cask, etc.) is recorded in an official register (an excise register, for example).</p> <p>'Balegemse jenever' that is stored in receptacles other than wooden casks (such as stainless steel tanks) may show a reference to the duration of storage. The statements used must not be of such a nature as to mislead the consumer.</p>



## II. Other information

### *1 Supporting*

#### *material*

File name	Answer_Balegemse Jenever_VValidity examination form for an existing PDO PG.xml
Description:	Reply to non-conformity
Document Type	Other

### *2. Link to the product specification*

Link: