

Transmission of an established geographical indication of spirit drinks

PGI-ES-02058

I. TECHNICAL FILE

1. Name and type

a. Name(s) to be registered

AGUARDIENTE DE SIDRA DE ASTURIAS (es)

b. Category

10. Cider spirit and perry spirit

c. Applicant country(ies)

Spain

d. Application language:

Spanish

e. Type of geographical indication:

PGI - Protected Geographical Indication

2. Contact details

a. Applicant name and title

Applicant name and title	Asturian Ministry of Livestock Farming and Indigenous Resources
Legal status, size and composition (in the case of legal persons)	
Nationality	Spain
Address	2, C/ Coronel Aranda, Segunda planta, Sector izquierdo - 33005 OVIEDO, PRINCIPADO DE ASTURIAS
Country	Spain
Telephone	+34 985 105 612
E-mail(s)	calidad.diferenciada@asturias.org

b. Intermediary details

Intermediary name	Spanish Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Food and the Environment. Directorate-General for the Food Industry. Subdirectorates-General for Distinctive Quality and Organic Farming.
Address	1, Paseo de la Infanta Isabel - 28071 Madrid
Country	Spain
Telephone	+34 913 475 397
E-mail(s)	sgcdae@mapama.es

c. Interested parties' details

--

d. Competent control authorities' details

Competent control authority name	Directorate-General for Rural Development and Agri-Food
Address	2, C/ Coronel Aranda, Segunda planta, Sector izquierdo 33005 OVIEDO – PRINCIPADO DE ASTURIAS
Country	Spain
Telephone	+34 985 105 612
E-mail(s)	calidad.diferenciada@asturias.org

e. Control bodies' details

--

3. Description of the spirit drink

Title – Product name	Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias
Physical, chemical and/or organoleptic characteristics	Physical, chemical and organoleptic characteristics: ‘Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias’ is a spirit drink which is obtained exclusively by distilling natural cider made in Asturias and which has a maximum alcoholic strength of 72 % by volume when it leaves the distillation system. This means that the aroma and flavour of the product to be marketed is reminiscent of natural cider. The ethyl alcohol content of the product must be at least 37.5 % vol. Before it is placed on the market, the product must undergo a period of resting and/or ageing in wood. Water may be added in order to lower the alcoholic strength of the distillate, provided that the quality of the water complies with the relevant rules and adding it does not change the nature of the product. Two different types of ‘Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias’ exist, depending on whether the distillate is rested or aged and on the acquired characteristics: Fresco [young]: this type is marketed after a minimum rest

	period of one year in stainless steel or glass containers. Envejecido [aged]: this type is marketed after undergoing an ageing process lasting at least three years in contact with wood. Physical and chemical characteristics: Minimum alcoholic strength: 37.5 % abv Minimum volatile substance content: 250 g/hl of alcohol at 100 % vol. Minimum higher alcohol content: 200 g/hl of alcohol at 100 % vol. Maximum methanol content: 250 g/hl of alcohol at 100 % vol. Maximum aldehyde content (acetaldehyde+0.372*acetal): 150 g/hl of alcohol at 100 % vol. Maximum ethyl acetate content: 350 g/hl of alcohol at 100 % vol. The distillation yield, in terms of pure alcohol, must not be greater than 85 %. Higher alcohols=2-butanol+1-butanol+1-propanol+isobutanol+D-amyl+isoamyl Main organoleptic characteristics: The main organoleptic characteristics of young ‘Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias’ are as follows: Transparent, clear, crystalline and colourless appearance. Balanced and intense aroma, with notes of apple and/or fruit and natural cider. Dry flavour, with hints of apple and natural cider, fruit and dried grass, and no foreign aromas. The main organoleptic characteristics of aged ‘Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias’ are as follows: Translucent and clear in appearance, with a bright amber colour. Balanced and intense aroma, with toasted hints and notes of spices, dried fruit and vanilla. Intense yet subtle flavour, with an undertone of apple and hardwood, and no foreign aromas.
Specific characteristics (compared to spirit drinks of the same category)	Produced exclusively by distilling natural cider made in Asturias, the distillate has a maximum alcoholic strength of 72 % vol. Minimum volatile substance content: 250 g/hl of alcohol at 100 % vol. Minimum higher alcohol content: 200 g/hl of alcohol at 100 % vol. Maximum methanol content: 250 g/hl of alcohol at 100 % vol. Maximum aldehyde content (acetaldehyde+0.372*acetal): 150 g/hl of alcohol at 100 % vol. Maximum ethyl acetate content: 350 g/hl of alcohol at

	100 % vol. The distillation yield, in terms of pure alcohol, must not be greater than 85 %. (Higher alcohols=2-butanol+1-butanol+1-propanol+isobutanol+D-amyl+isoamyl) The specific organoleptic characteristics are all as described in the ‘Main organoleptic characteristics’ section. The product owes its appearance, aroma and flavour to the natural Asturian cider from which it is distilled. This cider, which is produced according to traditional practices, has a number of specific characteristics that are the result of two fundamental processes: alcoholic fermentation and malolactic conversion. During these stages, significant changes occur which result in a dry drink with aromas of fermentation, reduced acidity owing to the conversion of the malic acid (which comes mainly from the apples), and increased alcoholic strength. In terms of chemical composition, natural Asturian cider is characterised by its volatile acidity, the high concentration of higher alcohols, and the presence of residual malic acid. These characteristics create a clean and balanced aroma, with varietal/fruity and acidic notes. The flavour is strong, with a good balance between sharpness and bitterness, a slight astringency and a mild natural piquancy (Recent Res. Devel. Agricultural and Food Chem, 2001,1,1). As a result, young ‘Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias’ is characterised by aromas of natural cider (apple, fruit, dried grass) and a dry flavour reminiscent of the raw material. By contrast, in aged ‘Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias’, aromas of the wood (toasted hints and notes of spices, dried fruit and vanilla) and an intense toasted flavour, with an undertone of natural cider and apple, predominate.
--	--

4. Defined geographical area

a. Description of the defined geographical area

The area where the natural cider is produced and ‘Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias’ is distilled, rested, aged and bottled is limited to the territory of the Autonomous Community of Asturias. The annex shows the location of Asturias within Europe.

b. NUTS area

ES120	Asturias
ES12	Principado de Asturias
ES1	NOROESTE
ES	ESPAÑA

5. Method for obtaining the spirit drink

Title – Type of method	
Method	RAW MATERIAL The raw material used to produce ‘Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias’ must be natural cider made in Asturias that complies with the conditions laid down in the current legislation on this product, as well as the following analytical characteristics: Minimum alcoholic strength: 5 % abv Maximum total sulphur dioxide content: 50 mg/l DISTILLATION The natural cider is distilled in stills heated over a direct fire or using steam. The type of still used is either an alquitar still or an alembic still with a swan neck or a fractionating column. The stills must always be made of copper. - The alquitar still is a simpler and more old-fashioned distillation system. The bottom part is a pot into which the cider is poured, and the top part is a pear-shaped lid where the distillate comes out. The top of the lid is inside the condenser, which is filled with cold water so that the alcohol vapours condense. - The alembic still from the Charente region is better than the alquitar type. The vapours travel through a tube called the swan neck to a coil submerged in cold water inside the condenser, at which point they condense and then exit the still. In both cases, the technique of double distillation is used: the cider is concentrated in order to obtain an intermediate product, which is then re-distilled in order to obtain the spirit drink. - The alembic still with a fractionating column consists of a copper pot, a column with plates submerged in a bath of water (where the alcohol is rectified), a cooling coil and a condenser. When this type of still is used, double distillation is not necessary. It is expressly prohibited to add alcohol from other sources. RESTING The distillate may be rested for a minimum period of one year in static containers, which may be stainless steel or glass. AGEING The distillate may undergo an ageing period lasting at least three years in contact with wood. This takes place in ageing tanks, which are wooden barrels or stainless steel tanks in which wooden staves are submerged and secured in place. The staves can also be attached to the walls of the tank. Ageing is carried out in a static manner, without blending or combining distillates during the ageing period (traditional system of yearly cycles). This gives rise to the specific

	organoleptic characteristics of aged ‘Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias’. The woods that may be used are oak and chestnut. Ageing the product either in stainless steel tanks with staves or in barrels enables the discharge of lignin derivatives and tannins. These give aged spirit drinks their characteristic amber colour. During the ageing process, aromatic compounds which are present in the staves or formed during toasting are discharged. These give rise to the toasted hints and notes of vanilla, spices and dried fruit that are characteristic of the final product. Also discharged from the wood during this stage are sugars and various macromolecules, which make for a smoother feel on the palate and increase the dry extract. Both ageing methods cause acetalisation reactions, which remove the sharpness of the freshly distilled spirits, and esterification reactions, which reinforce the fruity aroma that is typical of ‘Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias’ (LW-Food Science and Technology, 2013, 54, 513). When the ageing period is complete, different aged spirits may be blended once they have been approved by the producer. The use of caramel is permitted in aged ‘Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias’ in order to adapt the final colour.
--	---

6. Link with the geographical environment of origin

Title – Product name	Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias
Details of the geographical area or origin relevant to the link	The defined geographical area for the entire production of ‘Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias’ – Asturias – is an Autonomous Community consisting of a single province located in the north-west of the Iberian Peninsula, bounded by the Cantabrian Sea to the north and the Cantabrian Mountains to the south. These two geographical features and the rugged terrain have been crucial in that they have acted as a communications barrier affecting the production or processing of many agri-food products, including ‘Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias’. The local climate – a climate of oceanic influences with mild temperatures, many clouds, and frequent rainfall in all seasons – has been another contributing factor. This set of climatic and orographic characteristics has always been a crucial to the abundant production of apples in the numerous orchards that dot the Asturian landscape. In the words of the Asturian writer Elviro Martínez: ‘in the 8th to the 10th centuries, apple trees were an intrinsic part of our landscape, sheltering our farmhouses and providing an irreplaceable source of food (...). In the 12th and 13th centuries, apple farming was the main arboricultural resource in the region’. For centuries, Asturian farmers have selected varieties from trees raised from seeds without grafting, choosing those that were most productive, were best suited to the environment, and yielded cider apples of the highest quality. This has given rise to a great wealth of varieties, and Asturias can be

	considered a region where the plant material has unique characteristics. This plant material mainly comprises acidic and semi-acidic apples, followed by bittersweet varieties with mild bitterness and also sweet varieties. The glut of apples produced has resulted in a proliferation of cider presses through the ages: at one time, according to tradition, the townspeople turned down the surplus cider that was routinely given away because they already had too much. Producers realised that the cider could be put to another use, allocating the surplus for the processing of a cider spirit with properties defined by its raw ingredient – cider produced by Asturian cidermakers – who had their own, distinctive system of production. This unique production system gives rise to a natural cider with its own unmistakable qualities. Among the techniques used to produce the natural cider – which is the raw material distilled to obtain the spirit drink ‘Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias’ – the following stand out: the total fermentation of the sugars in its must and the spontaneous malolactic conversion, which, in chemical terms, leads to the biological deacidification of the cider and greater microbiological stability. The article ‘CHEMICAL CHARACTERIZATION OF ASTURIAN CIDER’ (Journal of Agricultural Food Chemistry, 2000, 49,7,3997) correlates the composition of the cider and the origin of the raw material. In a study where statistical methods (PLR-1) were applied to correlate the type of natural cider (Asturian versus foreign) and 22 chemical variables (global parameters, phenolic compounds, organic acids, sugars and major volatile compounds), the natural cider samples analysed could be grouped into two categories: one with ciders made from Asturian apples and one with ciders made from foreign apples. The greatest differences between the two categories were in regard to the variables of succinic acid, polyphenols, methanol, 2-phenylethanol and malic acid. Several authors refer to the abundance of apple trees and the production of cider and cider spirit in Asturias throughout the ages. According to the book ‘Las Bebidas Atlánticas’ [Drinks of the Atlantic], published by the Asturias-based ‘Fundación HC Energía’, the first references to the distillation of spirits date back to 1052, when monks from the monastery of Collera in the municipality of Ribadesella developed a formula that was passed down from generation to generation among the inhabitants of the municipality. Confirmation of this can be found in the archives of the cathedral in Oviedo, the Asturian capital. More specifically, the same book talks about the existence of a distillery that took a more industrial approach: the ‘Sociedad el Sella’, which was set up by the Blanco brothers, who already had a cidery which contained a room used as a distillery. The brothers joined forces with a great-great-grandson of somebody who, in 1600, was an expert in the craft of the alembic still, having absorbed the
--	--

	ancient skills passed down by the monks. The ‘El Sella’ company supplied the domestic market and also exported its cider spirit. The book states: ‘By 1870, the precious liquid was being carried in the hold of the brig Habana, which plied its trade from the port of Ribadesella, carrying passengers and cargo to the island of Cuba. European markets were now also aware of the product’s excellence: ships laden with the precious commodity even sailed to the port of Liverpool.’ The ‘Sociedad el Sella’ distillery has operated continuously at a number of distilleries in Asturias, one of which is still in operation today. Moreover, various Asturian newspapers have published articles about the Blanco distillery, calling it a pioneer. They have also written about another distillery in Colloto, near the capital of Asturias, which was established in 1942 by a Frenchman and is also referred to by the writer and renowned gastronome José Antonio Fidalgo in his book ‘Asturias cocina de mar y monte’ [Asturian sea and mountain cuisine]. The same author, in his work ‘Sidra y manzana de Asturias’ [Asturian cider and apples], described the popularity of the cider spirit ‘Colloto’, which was produced in 1942 in the Asturian locality of the same name and was much sought after by collectors. In 1983, the history of Asturian apple brandy was recounted in the special ‘Distillates and Liqueurs’ issue of the specialist magazine ‘BOUQUET’. According to the ‘Inventario Español de Productos Tradicionales’ [Spanish inventory of traditional products], published by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food within the framework of ‘Euroterroirs’, an EU-funded project aimed at promoting Europe’s agri-food heritage, ‘Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias’ was first produced by the townspeople of San Juan de Amandi, Villaviciosa, in 1760: ‘the parish priest of San Juan de Amandi (Villaviciosa) taught his parishioners how to care for fruit trees and to produce cider and brandy’. The reputation of this product is reflected in modern references appearing in regional and national newspapers (La Nueva España, 9.12.2010 - ‘Manzana: fruta, sidra vinagre y aguardiente’ [Apples: fruit, cider vinegar and spirit drink] - and 14.3.2013 - ‘Los Serranos, destiladores de oficio’ [The Serrano family, distillers by trade]; ABC, 11.12.2013 - ‘Aguardiente de manzana Salvador del Obispo’ [Salvador del Obispo apple spirit drink]). The newspapers make reference to cider spirit in Asturias, as well as to the two main producers currently in operation and the age-old production practices they maintain to this day. References in specialist magazines and awards received by producers of ‘Aguardiente de sidra en Asturias’ also attest to the reputation of the product: • The magazine ‘SICERA’ of the Association of Asturian Cidermakers (Nov/Dec 2008) - ‘Emilio Serrano - Alma de aguardiente’ [Emilio Serrano - Soul steeped in spirit] • Yantar No 191 (food supplement of El Comercio) - ‘El arte
--	---

	de destilar' [The art of distilling] • The magazine 'Sumilleres de España' (74 - Union of Spanish Sommelier Associations - No 7 - 2002) - 'La manzana hecha aguardiente' [The apple turned spirit] • At the 2011 Guía Peñín premium distillates show, the Casería del Obispo obtained the top score (94 points) in the 'Other spirit drinks and liqueurs' category with its apple spirit drink 'Alquitara del Obispo'. • At the sixth International Hall of Gala Ciders, held in 2015 (Gijón, Asturias), the award for best cider spirit went to 'Salvador del Obispo roble 9 años' [Salvador del Obispo aged for nine years in oak]
Specific characteristics of the spirit drink attributable to the geographical area	The specific characteristics of 'Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias' are determined by the skill of its producers, who, with slight variations to adapt to technological advances and other regulatory requirements, have been able to maintain the essence of a product that was already famous in a bygone age, as demonstrated by the fact that it was exported to countries in Europe and the Americas back in the 19th century. These same producers have upheld the basic aspects of a traditional process that enables the chemical and organoleptic characteristics of the product to be maintained as described. This process was probably inherited from monks at the monastery of Collera in the 11th century, as indicated in the bibliography. The monks introduced local people interested in learning the art of distillation to the traditional system specific to the area – a system which has been dictated by historical communication difficulties arising from the area's geographical location. Since it affects the characteristics of the final product, 'Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias', one should also consider the expertise and experience shown by the producers in carefully selecting a raw material that has always abounded in Asturias (natural cider). This raw material has its own special qualities due to the specific production method, which differs from that used in other geographical areas.
Causal link between the geographical area and the product	

7. Requirements under EU, national or regional legislation

Title	
Legal reference	Regulation (EC) No 110/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 January 2008 on the definition, description, presentation, labelling and the protection of geographical indications of spirit drinks and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 1576/89. Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 716/2013 of 25 July 2013 laying down rules for the application of Regulation (EC) No 110/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 January 2008 on the definition, description, presentation, labelling and the protection of geographical indications of spirit drinks. Royal Decree 164/2014 of 14 March 2014 laying down additional rules for the production, description, presentation and labelling of certain spirit drinks.
Description of the requirement(s)	The above-mentioned EU Regulations apply specifically to spirit drinks. Royal Decree 164/2014 of 14 March 2014 laying down additional rules for the production, description, presentation and labelling of certain spirit drinks.

8. Supplement to the geographical indication

Supplement to the geographical indication	Monitoring and bottling
Definition, description or scope of the supplement	MONITORING Self-monitoring Operators must keep a system of records that can be used to prove the appropriateness of the production system, identify and track the product at all stages, and demonstrate the balance between the raw materials and the processed and sold product. The records must be kept for at least five years after the product has been sold. Operators must submit an annual statement of production, sales and stocks to the competent authority on the established date. They must carry out chemical testing on the raw material (natural cider) and the distillate, as well as chemical and organoleptic testing on the marketable product, in order to check that they comply with the requirements laid down in this technical file. Official monitoring Before starting trading, operators must notify the competent authority of the following information: the company owner and, if applicable, representative; the trading name; the

	registered address and, if applicable, other sites; the distillation system and its capacity; the number and type of tanks and their capacity, and a plan of the facilities. Any change in the information provided must be immediately notified to the competent authority. The competent authority must draw up a list of operators that produce ‘Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias’. Checks must be carried out on the appropriateness of and compliance with the operator’s self-monitoring system, the entire production process, and the characteristics of the product, including the raw material (natural cider), the distillate and the marketable product. These checks involve taking product samples at random and subjecting them to chemical and/or sensory testing. Parameters to be checked: - distillation is carried out using permitted distillation systems and natural cider produced in Asturias; - the distillation yield; - the distillation, resting and ageing process is carried out in accordance with the specifications of this technical file; - the product is properly traceable; - testing is carried out to check that the products meet the specifications set out in this technical file; - the analytical parameters, by taking samples of the natural cider, the distillate and the marketable product. BOTTLING ‘Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias’ must be bottled at source by its producers after conclusion of the resting or ageing processes and prior to sale. This restriction is aimed at guaranteeing and safeguarding the quality and characteristics of the product and, consequently, the reputation of the geographical indication. It prevents aromas that define the organoleptic characteristics of the product from being lost and inappropriate exogenous aromas from being transferred to the product, which is what would happen if it were transported in bulk to other locations or left to stand in inappropriate places. Furthermore, the producers have the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out the bottling, and it is in their interest to safeguard the product’s reputation, which is based not only on the quality of the product but also on the belief of consumers that the entire process is carried out by the producer in its own facilities. The spirit drink must be produced and bottled in the same production plant; bulk transportation is not provided for. The bottles in which both types of ‘Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias’ are sold must be made of glass and be within the range of values permitted under the current legislation on nominal quantities for packaged products, with a maximum capacity of one litre.
--	---

	CERTIFICATION OF STOCKS: Distillates produced prior to the publication of approval of this technical file which meet the conditions laid down therein may use the geographical indication ‘Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias’ upon request. This application must be submitted by the producer in the 12 months following the publication of approval and after compliance with the requirements laid down in the technical file has been demonstrated and verified.
--	--

9. Specific labelling rules

Title	SPECIFIC LABELLING RULES
Description of the rule	In addition to meeting the general labelling rules laid down by the applicable legislation, the labels must also include the wording ‘‘Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias’ Indicación Geográfica’ [‘Aguardiente de sidra de Asturias’ geographical indication] accompanied by ‘fresco’ [young] or ‘envejecido’ [aged], as appropriate. They must also include the logo chosen for this geographical indication, as well as a serial number. When the ageing time is longer than the established minimum, the label may indicate the number of years that the product remained in the ageing tanks. If distillates that were aged for different lengths of time – and for longer than the established minimum – are blended, and the ageing time is indicated on the label, this must refer to the distillate that was aged for the least time.

II. Other information

1. Supporting material

File name:	EXP TECN AGUARDIENTE DE SIDRA DE ASTURIAS modificado.pdf
Description:	Technical file, amended in light of the Commission’s observations
Document type	Product specification

File name:	INFORME RESPUESTA A LOS MOTIVOS DE NO CONFORMIDAD.pdf
Description:	Response to the Commission in light of its observations
Document type	Other

File name:	Localización del Principado de Asturias en el continente europeo.docx
Description:	Location of the geographical area
Document type	Map

2. Link to the product specification

Link:	
-------	--