Ref. Ares(2016)96163 - 08/01/2016

Technical file

Date of receipt (DD/MM/YYYY) ...

[to be completed by the Commission]

Number of pages (including this page) 3

Language used for submission of application German

File number: ...

[to be completed by the Commission]

Geographical indication to be registered 'Steinfelder Magenbitter'

Category of the spirit drink

Product category 32 'Liqueur', Annex III to Regulation (EC) No 110/2008

Description of the spirit drink

- *Physical and chemical characteristics*

  Alcoholic strength: min. 25 % vol.
  Sugar content (expressed as invert sugar): min. 100 g/l

- *Organoleptic characteristics:*

  'Steinfelder Magenbitter' is naturally slightly cloudy or clear and as a rule has a typical reddish, dark brownish colour that comes primarily from the macerate and a small amount of caramel colouring.

  It has a spicy, sharp smell and a balanced harmonious taste with a pronouncedly bitter note as a result of the herbs and spices used.

- *Specific characteristics:*

  Whilst ordinary herbal liqueurs are usually based on a single-stage maceration process, 'Steinfelder Magenbitter' is also made using plant extracts obtained by means of maceration and distillation.

  It is packaged in bottles with a capacity of up to 0.5 l.

Geographical area concerned

The defined geographical area covers the region within a 60 km radius of the Steinfeld, an area of once barren land which now lies within the city of Graz, in the districts of Gries and Eggenberg.

Method for obtaining the spirit drink

Extracts of plants combined in specific proportions, in a base of ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin, are obtained by single-stage maceration and also by means of a two-stage process in which plants or parts of plants are first macerated and then distilled ('maceration and distillation'). A specific mixture of herbs and spices, always including chamomile, angelica, cloves, ginger, juniper berries, creeping thistle and hops, is used.

The minimum proportion of the herbs and spices used for maceration and/or ‘maceration and distillation’ ensures that the characteristic smell and taste of the raw materials are clearly discernible at an appropriate strength in the finished product, resulting in a harmonious olfactory and gustatory experience, with a characteristic pronouncedly bitter note.

Depending on the manufacturer's traditional recipe, the product is rounded off with small amounts of an apple-and-pear distillate, local fruit wines, and/or other flavouring ingredients (dried pear, bonificateurs).

In order to meet the stringent requirements regarding the quality of the raw materials, and having regard in particular to their availability at any given time, the herbs and spices mainly comprise produce from anywhere in Austria or elsewhere in the world that is available on the market, although the creeping thistle, hops and dried pear always come from the geographical area of the Steinfeld.

Sugars as referred to in point 3(a) of Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 110/2008, as amended, and/or honey, are used for sweetening.

Link with the geographical area

- *Details of the geographical area or origin relevant to the link*

When Austria joined the EU on 29 August 1994, ‘Steinfelder Magenbitter’ was listed as a geographical designation under Article 5(3) of Regulation (EEC) No 1576/89 in Annex II to that Regulation. Its listing was preceded by a long tradition of producing ‘Steinfelder Magenbitter’ in the region within a 60 km radius of the city of Graz, as a result of which its reputation is inextricably linked with that region.

In keeping with the rhythm of life imposed by the bare, stony landscape and the arduous work that went with it, local people, generally farming folk in what was historically known as the Steinfeld, developed recipes for digestive bitters to accompany the mainly high-calorie, heavy meals of days gone by.

Over the years, ‘Steinfelder Magenbitter’ has evolved from those old recipes to become a traditional regional speciality of the highest repute.

Had it not been for its good reputation, ‘Steinfelder Magenbitter’ would never have overcome the hurdles faced during the very tough negotiations on the creation of a European economic area in the 1990s, in the course of Austria's accession negotiations; see, for instance, Wolfgang Burtscher's *Das Abkommen über den Europäischen Wirtschaftsraum (EWR): Entstehung, Kurzdarstellung, Textauswahl*; Verlag Facultas WUV / Maudrich, 1992.

Even in more recent international specialist literature, namely *The Oxford Handbook of Food Fermentations*, Charles W. Bamforth, Robert E. Ward, Oxford University Press, 1.8.2014, ‘Steinfelder Magenbitter’ is cited as an example of the ‘herb liqueurs’ that stand out from the broad mass of liqueurs, it being noted that the importance of these liqueurs is based on traditional recipes and an intense relationship with the culture of a geographical region.

A sure sign of the good reputation which ‘Steinfelder Magenbitter’ deservedly enjoys is its inclusion in Section 7.5 ‘Geographical indications of nationwide significance’ of Chapter B 23 ‘Spirits’ of the Austrian Food Code (4th edition).

European Union or national/regional provisions

'Steinfelder Magenbitter' is an established geographical indication within the meaning of Article 20 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 and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 1576/89, and is listed in Annex III to that Regulation.

At national level, the specification for 'Steinfelder Magenbitter' has been published in Chapter B 23 'Spirits' of the current edition of the Austrian Food Code [*Österreichisches Lebensmittelbuch*] and may be downloaded from the website https://www.verbrauchergesundheit.gv.at/lebensmittel/buch/codex/kapitel.html .

Applicant

Member State: Austria

Bundesministerium für Gesundheit [Federal Ministry of Health]

Radetzkystraße 2

1030 Vienna

Tel.: 0043 (0)1 71100-0

E-mail: IIB13@bmg.gv.at

Supplement to the geographical indication

none

Specific labelling rules

none