

Publication of an application for registration pursuant to Article 6(2) of Council Regulation (EEC) No 2081/92 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin

(2002/C 46/03)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 7 of the abovementioned Regulation. Any objection to this application must be submitted via the competent authority in the Member State concerned within a time limit of six months from the date of this publication. The arguments for publication are set out below, in particular under 4.6, and are considered to justify the application within the meaning of Regulation (EEC) No 2081/92.

COUNCIL REGULATION (EEC) No 2081/92

APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION: ARTICLE 5

PDO () PGI (x)

National application No: IG/02/96

1. Responsible department in the Member State

Name: Ministère de l'Agriculture et de la Pêche — Direction des politiques économique et internationale — Bureau des signes de qualité et de l'agriculture biologique

Address: 3, rue Barbet-de-Jouy, F-75349 Paris 07 SP

Tel. (33-1) 49 55 81 01

Fax (33-1) 49 55 57 85.

2. Applicant group

2.1. Name: Syndicat du Pruneau d'Agen

2.2. Address: 18, avenue de Bias BP 162, F-47304 Villeneuve sur Lot Cedex

2.3. Composition: producer/processor (x) other ().

3. Type of product: Fruit — Dried fruit — 08.13.20.00

4. Specification

(summary of requirements under Article 4(2))

4.1. **Name:** Pruneaux d'Agen — Pruneaux d'Agen mi-cuits.

4.2. **Description:** The 'Pruneau d'Agen' is from the 'Prune d'Ente' family. It is a dried fruit shaped like an egg, and is a dark-brown/black colour, shiny, not sticky, soft-textured, with an uncaramelised middle somewhere between brown-yellow and golden-yellow in colour, and no mould or other fungus.

After undergoing several industrial processes, the most common being rehydration and stoning, Agen prunes are sold in packs of uniform size with a moisture content up to a maximum of 35 % indicated on the packaging.

Agen prunes should be whole and fleshy with a wrinkled, unbroken skin, and should have the organoleptic features unique to this particular variety of prunes.

Agen prunes are sold either loose (in packs of 5 or 12,5 kg wrapped in polythene film or presented in any other way permitted by current regulations), or prepacked (in plastic bags or on plastic trays, in wooden containers, metallic boxes, wicker baskets or trays, covered with plastic film or presented in any other way permitted by current regulations).

Agen prunes must be of a minimum size of 77 or fewer fruits per 500 g.

'Pruneau d'Agen mi-cuit' is the name given to the traditional product obtained when drying is stopped when the fruit's moisture content falls to between 30 and 35 %.

- 4.3. **Geographical area:** The orchards, like the drying units, processing units and packing units, should be located within the geographical area.

This includes the whole of the 'Lot-et-Garonne' department with the exception of the canton of Houeilles, and parts of its neighbouring departments, namely the cantons of Auros, Branne, Carbon-Blanc, Castillon La Bataille, Cenon, Créon, La Réole, Lussac, Monségur, Pellegrue, Pujols, Sauveterre de Guyenne, Sainte-Foy-La-Grande in the department of 'la Gironde', the cantons of Beaumont, Belves, Bergerac, Domme, Eymet, Issigeac, La Force, Le Bugue, Le Buisson de Cadouin, Monpazier, Montpon Menesterol, Sigoules, Velines, Villefranche de Lonchapt, Villefranche du Périgord in the department of 'la Dordogne', the cantons of Bretenoux, Castelnau Montratier, Catus, Cazals, Figeac, Gourdon, Iacapelle Marival, Lalbenque, Livernon, Luzech, Montcuq, Puy L'Evêque, Saint-Cere, Saint Germain du Bel Air, Salviac in the department of 'du Lot', the cantons of Condom, Eauze, Fleurance, Jegun, Lectoure, Mauvezin, Miradoux, Montréal, Saint-Clar, Valence sur Baise, Vic Fezensac in the department of Gers, and the whole of the 'Tarn-et-Garonne' department with the exception of the cantons of Caylus, Saint Antonin Noble Val and Villebrumier.

- 4.4. **Proof of origin:** Growing of the Ente plum tree in the region dates back to the 12th century, when it was brought back from Damascus by the crusaders. From this time until the 16th century, the fruit would only have been sun-dried. However, the regional climate, prone to cycles of wet and dry years, made this practice very uncertain. From the latter half of the 16th century, bread ovens were used to complete the drying of the prunes.

The procedures and registration documents in place at the processing unit allow the product to be identified and traced at all three stages — production, drying and processing.

- 4.5. **Method of production:** The orchards are pruned each year. There are several pickings, and the plums are gathered at peak ripeness. They are dried 72 hours after gathering in special dehydration rooms, until the residual moisture content is below 23 %. The prunes should be clean and sound, i.e. not rotten or fermented and with no live acarids, live or dead insects, or insect excrement. However, as an exception to the rule, the 'pruneau d'Agen mi-cuit' is obtained by stopping the drying process as soon as the moisture content is between 30 and 35 %. After drying the prunes are stored, sorted and graded. Following treatment, including rehydration and stoning, they are sold in uniform sizes with the moisture content defined under point 4.2.

- 4.6. **Link:**

4.6.1. *A distinguishing feature linked to the product*

The production area for Ente prunes is one of varying climates, with both Mediterranean and oceanic influences. The climatic changes — hot spells in spring and summer, rain throughout the year, and summer nights cooled by thundery showers — give the fruits their distinguishing balance between sweet and sour, which bestow the original qualities of the Agen prune. This region provides the Ente plum tree with the winter chill needed for its annual vegetative rest, whilst suffering only a minimal amount of spring frost, to which the flowers and young fruits are extremely sensitive. The Ente prune tree grows extremely well in the clay-chalk soils of this geographical area. The type of soil influences the vegetative comfort which produces very sweet, large prunes with a delicate, supple skin. This is essential in order to obtain high grade prunes of good quality.

4.6.2. *An historic and current reputation*

Due to its nutritional qualities and the ease with which it can be preserved and transported, the 'pruneau d'Agen' has quickly become a widely sold product. It has enjoyed many periods of great international fame, at the end of the 18th century and especially in the latter half of the 19th century, when it was known worldwide by explicit reference to its geographical origin. In the early 1960s, it entered a new development phase.

4.7. Inspection bodies

Name: Qualisud

Address: Agropole, BP 102, F-47000 Agen

Name: Qualicert

Address: 191, av. A.-Briand, F-94237 Cachan Cedex.

These bodies are accredited by the Agricultural and Food Products section of Cofrac for the certification of agricultural and food products in accordance with the NF EN 45011 standard.

4.8. Labelling: The labels should bear one of the following descriptions: 'Pruneaux d'Agen' or 'Pruneaux d'Agen mi-cuits'. The labelling must also comply with the current regulation.

4.9. National requirements: —

EC No: G/FR/00149/2000.08.22.

Date of receipt of the full application: 13 September 2001.

Authorisation for State aid pursuant to Articles 87 and 88 of the EC Treaty**Cases where the Commission raises no objections**

(2002/C 46/04)

Date of adoption of the decision:	15.1.2002
Member State:	Germany (Sachsen)
Aid No:	NN 116/2000
Title:	Aid for the ecological development and expansion of forestry in the Free State of Saxony
Objective:	Increase of the area of Saxony under forest and also maintain and improve forests and upgrade their ecological status to make them more natural and environmentally friendly
Legal basis:	Richtlinie zur Förderung der ökologischen Waldentwicklung und Waldvermehrung im Freistaat Sachsen
Budget:	The aid was financed out of funds of the Free State of Saxony. The total aid amount granted is DEM 312 337,55 (EUR 159 695,65)
Aid intensity or amount:	The aid is in the form of direct grants. The intensity of the aid (expressed as a percentage of the eligible costs) varies from one measure to another, ranging up to a maximum of 100 %
Duration:	Until 31 December 1999

The authentic text(s) of the decision, from which all confidential information has been removed, can be found at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/secretariat_general/sgb/state_aids
