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Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture

on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (Doc. 327/73) for a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No. 816/70 as regards the definition of liqueur wine and of certain grape musts

Rapporteur : Mr F. VALS

PE 35.850/fin.

By letter of 15 January 1974, the President of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament, pursuant to Article 43 of the EEC Treaty, to deliver an opinion on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No. 816/70 as regards the definition of liqueur wine and of certain grape musts.

The President of the European Parliament referred this proposal to the Committee on Agriculture.

Mr Vals was appointed rapporteur on 4 February 1974.

The Committee on Agriculture considered this proposal at its meeting of 8 February 1974 and unanimously adopted the motion for a resolution.

The following were present: Mr Laban, vice-chairman and acting chairman; Mr Vetrone, vice-chairman; Mr Vals, rapporteur; Mr Baas, Mr Cipolla, Mr Frehsee, Mr Früh, Mr Héger, Mr John Hill, Mr Kavanagh, Mr de Koning, Mr Ligios, Mr Liogier, Mr Martens, Mr Scott-Hopkins.

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The Committee on Agriculture hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution, together with explanatory statement:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

embodying the opinion of the European Parliament on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No. 816/70 as regards the definition of liqueur wine and of certain grape musts

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (COM(73) 1999 final),
 - having been consulted by the Council pursuant to Article 43 of the EEC Treaty (Doc. 327/73),
 - having regard to the report from the Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 363/73)
1. Approves the proposal for a regulation;
 2. Instructs its President to forward this resolution and the report of its committee to the Council and Commission of the European Communities.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. This proposal for a regulation is designed to amend regulation (EEC) No. 816/70 of the Council of 28 April 1970 laying down additional provisions for the common organization of the market in wine¹.

These amendments refer to the definition of liqueur wine and of certain grape musts. They refer in particular to Articles 1, 25, 27 and 28 and Annex II of Regulation No. 816/70.

I. AMENDMENT IN THE DEFINITION OF LIQUEUR WINE

2. The reason for this amendment is that the Federal German Republic prohibits the free circulation of certain quality liqueur wines, particularly 'Marsala', due to the fact that these wines contain concentrated grape musts obtained by the direct heat of a fire. This method causes partial caramelization of the sugar content.

3. As the Commission points out, the German ban is justified, since the definition of concentrated grape must set out in Item 4 of the Annex to Regulation No. 816/70 does not allow the addition of caramelized wine musts to liqueur wines.

4. In order to eliminate this obstacle to trade, the Commission proposes to amend the present definition of liqueur wine in item 11 of Annex II of Regulation No. 816/70 to permit the addition of caramelized grape musts for certain quality liqueur wines produced in specified regions.

II. DEFINITION OF CARAMELIZED GRAPE MUST

5. The above amendment implies the need for a Community definition of caramelized grape must. The definition of concentrated grape must given in Item 4 of Annex II of Regulation No. 816/70 does not refer to the dehydration of grape must by the direct heat of a fire. In some regions of the Community this is the method traditionally used in preparing certain quality liqueur wines.

6. The Commission therefore proposes to fill this gap by including a definition of caramelized grape must in Item 4 of Annex II of Regulation No. 816/70.

¹ See OJ No. L 99 of 5.5.1970

III. DEFINITION OF GRAPE MUST WITH FERMENTATION ARRESTED BY THE ADDITION OF ALCOHOL

7. While introducing the above amendment to the definition of liqueur wine, the Commission proposes to settle another problem. Regulation No. 816/70 includes in the same definition both liqueur wine and grape must with fermentation arrested by the addition of alcohol, which is used in preparing processed products based on wine. These products, however, differ considerably as regards characteristics and prices.

8. Due to the absence of a Community definition for grape must with fermentation arrested by the addition of alcohol, the latter has been treated as a liqueur wine, which has had certain repercussions on trade.

9. The proposal for a regulation therefore suggests inserting a separate definition for grape must with fermentation arrested by the addition of alcohol in Regulation No. 816/70. In order to prevent any distortions in competition with liqueur wines, the regulation stipulates that utilisation of this product will be permitted only in the case of products falling under heading 2206 of the Common Customs Tariff.

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10. The Committee on Agriculture raises no objections to this proposal for a regulation and accordingly recommends its adoption by the European Parliament.