



INSTITUT NATIONAL  
DE L'ORIGINE ET DE  
LA QUALITÉ



# AOC/AOP (Controlled designation of origin/ PDO-Protected designation of origin)

*Origin and know-how, two quality levers for identifying products linked to a specific terroir*

The **AOP (Protected designation of origin)** indicates a product with all its production steps carried out in accordance with a **known savoir-faire** within the same geographical area that gives the product its unique characteristics. This is a European sign that protects the name of the product throughout the European Union.

The **AOC (Controlled designation of origin)** indicates a product that meets the criteria of the **AOP** and protects the name on French territory. It is a step towards AOP registration (now a European sign). It may also relate to products not covered by European legislation such as forest products.

The **concept of terroir** underlies designation of origin concept. A terroir is a specific geographical zone where a product's uniqueness stems directly from the unique conditions

of the terroir in which it is produced. The area is a demarcated area, a place where a **human community** has built a collective know-how related to production. The terroir is based on a system of **interactions between the physical and biological environment and a set of human factors**. The originality and typicity of the products arises from these factors.

The rules and regulations governing an **AOP** are outlined in the product specifications and are subject to control procedures, implemented by an independent body approved by INAO (the French national institute for origin and quality products).

## IN THE BEGINNING...

Historically speaking, the concept of Designation of origin gradually came about in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Law of 1905) to combat fraud. A decree-law **passed in 1935** relating to the protection of the wine market sector created the *Controlled designation of origin* to be applied to wine and brandy and the body responsible for defining, protecting and controlling them. In 1990, the scope was extended to include all agricultural and foodstuff products. Later, the French policy of agricultural product valorisation inspired the drafting of a European regulation. This led to the establishment of the AOP concept in 1992 (the European equivalent of the AOC) for products other than wine and brandy. It was extended to include wine in 2009. Since then, the AOP can be applied to all European wine agricultural and foodstuff products produced, processed and prepared within a designated geographical area, using recognised savoir-faire, and in line with established specifications. Since the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012, and in a bid to clarify the offer to the consumer, once products have been registered at European level, they can only carry the AOP. Only wines are authorised to carry the French AOC.

## KEY FIGURES (2015)

**366 AOC/AOP** wines, ciders and brandies.

**50 AOP** milk products.

**44 AOP** agricultural and foodstuff products.

**+ over 20 billion** Euro turnover.

## LEGISLATION

• Rural and Maritime Fisheries Code, articles R.641-1 to R.641-10

### AOP for agricultural and foodstuff products:

• EU regulation N° 1151/2012 dated 21<sup>st</sup> November 2012 by the European Parliament and Council relating to quality systems applied to agricultural products and foodstuffs

### AOP for wine products:

• EU regulation N° 1308/2013 dated 17<sup>th</sup> December 2013 relating to a common organisation of the market in the agricultural sector (wine products)