



INSTITUT NATIONAL
DE L'ORIGINE ET DE
LA QUALITÉ



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Control of official quality and origin products

The control of quality and origin products ensures that these products are made in compliance with the specifications that have been established for their production. This guarantee is key for both the consumer and professionals involved in the production process, as it protects the products from unfair competition and counterfeiting initiatives. This control system adds legitimacy to the whole process.

Who runs the control process?

INAO (the French national institute for origin and quality products) is the public body entrusted by the State to supervise the control system. As such, this public institution periodically evaluates and approves independent control bodies to carry out official control initiatives. In order to guarantee competence, impartiality and autonomy from operators, these bodies must be accredited by the French accreditation committee (COFRAC) as well.

There are two types of control bodies:

- **Certification bodies (OC)**, accredited under NF EN ISO/CEI 17065, to certify compliance with the **specifications** and, where appropriate, to sanction non-compliance;

- **Inspection bodies (OI)**, accredited under NF EN ISO/CEI 17020 to examine product conformity with the provisions outlined in the specifications and forward the results to INAO for a follow-up recommendations. Inspection bodies only control wine products.

How is the control implemented?

Each ODG (Defence and management organisation), representing all the operators involved with specifications, decides on the appropriate control body. The latter submits a draft control-plan (OC) or inspection plan (OI) that must pass approval prior to implementation of the specifications by operators.

The **control plan** specifically includes the **recommended procedures** for

operators to pass the approval process (recognition of an operator's capacity to meet the requirements outlined in a specification); a **whole list of items to be checked; the frequency and methods of the control** as well as the sanctions to be applied in the event of non-compliance. All these factors are exclusive to the type of product being made and its specificities.

The plan also includes:

- **Own-checks**, carried out by the operator on his or her own activity in compliance with a 'traditional' quality approach to the matters in hand;
- **Internal controls**, carried out by the ODG to assist operators with a pedagogical approach to their production process.



For Organic Farming products, where there is no ODG, each operator selects his/her own control body. **A list of measures to be implemented in the event of non-compliance** with the terms of reference drawn up at national level ensures fair treatment amongst operators.

As marketing SIQO products is a voluntary approach, control costs are borne by individual operators subject to the control.



What types of controls are implemented?

Controls aim at ensuring that:

- The conditions of production of the product are in compliance with those outlined in the product specifications. These checks therefore take place in situ/ on the ground and cover **every stage of the product's lifespan, apply to all operators** and take place in accordance with the frequencies set out in the plan;
- The product must correspond appropriately to the organoleptic characteristics outlined in the specifications. The provisions relating to this control are compulsory if products are AOC/

PDO or Red Label but are optional for PGI (Protected geographical indication) and TSG (Traditional speciality guaranteed) products.

AOC/PDO (Controlled/Protected designation of origin) products are subject to an organoleptic inspection at a rate of recurrence defined in the control provisions. This is carried out by an **Organoleptic examination committee** composed of skilled professionals and experts **reporting to the control body**, in conformance with rules and regulations guaranteeing an independent and impartial review of the products concerned. The purpose of this control is to make sure that the products in question meet the expected requirements defined by the ODG, in line with the specifications outlined beforehand.

Control of Red Label products is intended, in turn, to ensure that products concerned are of superior quality. To do this, the following measures are implemented in line with the rate of recurrence outlined in the control plan:

- **A hedonic test** to check whether consumers like or dislike the product compared to a similar standard product;

LEGISLATION

- EC regulation N° 882/2004 dated 29th April 2004 relating to official control systems
- EU regulation N° 1151/2012 dated 21st November 2012 relating to agricultural products and foodstuffs
- EC regulation N°1308/2013 dated 17th December 2013 relating to wine CMO
- EC regulation N°834/2007 dated 28th June 2007 relating to Organic Farming
- EC regulation N°110/2008 dated 15th January 2008 relating to spirit drinks
- Titre IV of Book VI of the French Rural and Maritime Fisheries Code

All the directives and circulars supplementing the above legislation can be viewed by clicking on: www.inao.gouv.fr

- **A sensory profile** to double-check the sensory characteristics of the product.

Analysis can also feature in control or inspection plans. Said analysis must be carried out by laboratories selected by the control body from an INAO authorised list and remain under their responsibility.