

**Question for written answer E-004178/2012
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: The market in wine: safeguarding and protecting protected designations of origin outside of the EU

The Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) of 'Prosecco' wines, recognised in Italy by the Ministerial Decree of 17 July 2009, is recorded in the EU's E-Bacchus register of geographical indication of wines.

Council Regulation (EC) No 479/2008 of 29 April 2008 sets out rules on how the system of designations of origin and geographical indications of the market in wine functions, including (in Title III, Chapter IV) measures for safeguarding and protecting these from imitation, evocation and misuse.

The use of the word 'Prosecco' in brands and labels for wine products is becoming ever more common in several important trade markets outside of the EU (notably Brazil, Australia and New Zealand), as are commercial and promotional ventures that are evocative of the famous Italian grape variety.

There are other cases of the imitation of EU-certified wine products in non-EU markets, including the Spanish PDO wine 'Rioja' in Latin America or the recurrent imitations of the French PDO 'Champagne', evidencing a phenomenon that is becoming ever more widespread and uncontained.

Such commercial practices risk misguiding the end consumers, who might buy products on the market that have no connection at all to the European PDO names. This is in addition to the adverse economic and social repercussions for operators in the PDO wine production chain.

Is the Commission aware of this problem and what initiatives does it intend to adopt – including through the World Trade Organization and bilateral relations with the relevant non-EU countries – to counter the spread of such cases and once and for all start firmly protecting PDO products on non-EU markets?