

D.O. CAVA

Luis Planas appreciates the progress made by the P.D.O. Cava in its commitment to differentiation and value creation

Spain's Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Minister believes that the future of the Protected Denomination of Origin lies in increasing its added value, and focusing on quality, sustainability, and innovation

Regarding limitation of supply, following the modification of regulations in 2019, the Minister stresses that the entire production and processing sector, through its Regulatory Council, must decide its future and how to enhance the value of its product

Vilafranca del Penedès, 19 November 2020

The Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Luis Planas, held a meeting with the Regulatory Council of the Protected Designation of Origin Cava today in Vilafranca del Penedès. Planas reiterated the Ministry's support for this supra-autonomous quality reference, whose respected status affords it a strong position from which to confront present and future challenges.

The Minister highlighted this appellation's continued commitment to focusing on quality and differentiation, to improving competitiveness, and to producing new Cavas for an increasingly demanding market. "One of the great challenges is not quantity, but rather the creation of value," said the Minister, who is committed to "enhancing the value of our Designations of Origin and quality products" in the agri-food sector.

In this sense, Planas appreciated the raising of quality standards undertaken by the Cava sector through the introduction of two new product segments, Cavas de Guarda and Guarda Superior, the latter including Cava Reserva, Gran Reserva and Paraje Calificado. This constitutes "segmenting to increase value" and, above all, safeguarding the value of Cavas of superior quality.

In addition, Planas highlighted the zoning carried out by the P.D.O. in order to spotlight the production of certain winemaking areas, which, due to their characteristics, offer unique Cavas, as well as providing consumers with a greater depth of information.

The promotion of Designations of Origin in international markets will also enable these quality references to meet future challenges with increased confidence. Thanks to the Ministry's support,

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Cava P.D.O. to be included in the list of 12 Spanish P.G.I.s (Protected Geographical Indications) and P.D.O.s, out of a total of 100 European ones, within the recent agreement between the EU and China on geographical indications, which grants protection to these quality references. Javier Pagés, Chairman of the P.D.O. Cava, asserts that belonging to the denomination offers “many advantages” since it is “a powerful brand”.

CHALLENGES FACING THE SECTOR

Likewise, Cava producers enjoy the Ministry’s support in seeking solutions to the current imbalance between supply and demand. To this end, in September 2019 the regulations on wine-growing potential were amended, in order to simplify, and afford greater legal certainty to, the procedure regarding limitations and restrictions to be applied to supra-autonomous designations.

Within the framework of these regulations, in December of the same year the limitation of new vineyard areas was established. This followed the recommendations of the Cava Regulatory Council for the territory of the P.D.O. in the years 2020, 2021 and 2022. As Planas pointed out, “it is up to the entire production and processing sector to decide on its future and how to enhance the value of its product”.

With regard to the system of authorisations for vineyard planting, the Council of Agriculture Ministers of the European Union has proposed extending this until 2040. The Minister believes that, with the total area of vineyards confirmed, the future of this reference lies in increasing added value, as well as commitment to quality, sustainability, and innovation.

Cava is a supra-autonomous P.D.O., so the competent authority is the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. This Spanish sparkling wine is produced in seven autonomous communities: Catalonia, where 80% of the 38,000-odd hectares of vineyards are registered under the denomination; Aragon, the Basque Country Extremadura, La Rioja, Navarra, and Valencia.

Some 6,600 winegrowers and a total of 357 wineries (214 Cava producers and 143 base wine producers) come under the P.D.O., which sells almost 70% of its production to foreign markets, although in value terms the percentage drops to 50%.

With 9% of Spain’s wine production, Catalonia ranks as the second-largest producer nationally (behind Castilla-La Mancha) and accounts for more than a fifth of the value of wine exports (20.5% of the national total by value and 8.8% by volume). To a large extent, this strong position is due to Cava production, in which Catalonia is the leader and a world reference.

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With more than 60% of international sales, Cava is the Spanish P.D.O. with the highest exports: its 357 associated wineries are present in over 100 countries. The P.D.O. encompasses more than 38,000 hectares of vineyards and more than 6,800 winegrowers. Cava, which harmonises so perfectly with every type of gastronomy, is made using the traditional method with a strict commitment to origin, land, and sustainability.

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