

Commission withdraws draft proposals on organic wine

EU Commissioner for Agriculture & Rural Development Dacian Cioloș has today withdrawn the draft proposal to introduce rules for the production of organic wine.

Organic wine was meant to be a new concept, as wine has so far been excluded from the EU organic regulation. Processed wine from organic grapes has been marketed as 'wine from grapes from organic cultivation'.

The draft has been under discussion for several months within the Standing Committee on Organic Foodstuffs – and in a number of bilateral meetings - but it has not been possible to find a credible compromise which respects organic standards.

Speaking this morning, Commissioner Cioloș stated: "It is clear that conditions for such new rules are not right in a majority of member states. I am not willing to compromise on organic standards because it sends the wrong signal to consumers on the importance we attach to quality policy. Our hope would be that the industry and research can make progress, and the Commission can come back to these proposals in future."

Based on an independent study (Orwine), the draft proposals sought a number of changes, including:

- A lower limit for sulphites than in conventional wine;
- A smaller list of permitted additives and processing aids than in conventional wine;
- Not permitting 5 oenological practices, and restricting the use of 3 others

N.B. The rules for "wine produced from organic grapes" continue to apply.