



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Directorate B. Quality, Research & Innovation, Outreach  
**Director**

Brussels,  
PP/nb(2018)6347970

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your e-mail of 12 October (Ares(2018)5356285) where you asked whether sulphites are natural or artificially added to wine and whether wine containing added sulphites may be labelled as organic.

Sulphites are naturally present during the fermentation of wine but they may also be added for their antioxidant and antimicrobial actions, resulting in a better quality of the products. They are "food additives" which are authorised for use in foodstuffs in compliance with provisions laid down under horizontal legislation Regulation (EU) No 1333/2008<sup>1</sup> and in wine under Regulation (EC) No 606/2009<sup>2</sup>.

In organic production, only authorised substances may be used in the production of organic processed food in accordance with Article 19(2)(b) of Regulation (EC) No 834/2007. In the specific case of wine production, only those substances listed in Annex VIIIa of Regulation (EC) No 889/2008 may be used. Sulphites, in particular potassium bisulphite and potassium metabisulphite, are listed in Annex VIIIa of Regulation (EC) No 889/2008<sup>3</sup> and thus may be used in the production of organic wine in accordance with the restricted conditions laid down in that Annex.

The present opinion is provided on the basis of the facts as set out in your e-mail of 12 October 2018 and expresses the view of the Commission services and does not commit the European Commission. In the event of a dispute involving Union law it is, under the

<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on food additives (OJ L 354, 31.12.2008, p. 16–33)

<sup>2</sup> Commission Regulation (EC) No 606/2009 of 10 July 2009 laying down certain detailed rules for implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 479/2008 as regards the categories of grapevine products, oenological practices and the applicable restrictions (O.J. L 193, 24.7.2009, p.1)

<sup>3</sup> Commission Regulation (EC) n° 889/2008 of 5 September 2008 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products with regard to organic production, labelling and control (OJ L 250, 18.9.2008, p. 1–84)

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Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, ultimately for the European Court of Justice to provide a definitive interpretation of the applicable Union law.

Yours sincerely,



Nathalie SAUZE-VANDEVYVER