

QUALITY CIDER: 1st INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON REGULATION

Gijón Aquarium
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CONCLUSIONS

I. REGULATION

1. The Administration of the Principality of Asturias and the cider industry, have proved to be pioneers in promoting an open forum for discussion on revising the regulations concerning "cider", as they are aware that a comprehensive legislative basis adapted to current needs will serve to protect the product and marketing of the same, inside and outside our borders, in addition to conveying to the consumer the concern of the sectors involved as regards ensuring product quality.

2. It became clear that although there is a need for amendments to the legislation, many existing concepts are perfectly valid, and in this regard the importance of some of these can be stressed such as the adjective "natural" that favours the prestige of the product.

3. The Public Administration recognizes the need for new regulations, bearing in mind in any case that the elimination of trade barriers, boosting competitiveness and attention to the demands of consumers must be taken into consideration. In addition, it was stressed that the cider sector itself must make a commitment which involves and present a joint proposal subject to consensus.

4. Regarding the debate on rulings for differentiated quality, considered as whatever adds some particular feature to a product compared with others in its class and directly affects the cider covered by quality marks, special relevance was given to EC Regulation No. 510/2006 (on the protection of geographical descriptions and protected designations of origin for agricultural and food products) as it introduces major changes that must be taken into account. Most notably:

I Increased responsibility of the Member States for recognition of the different geographical descriptions.

II Opening up the protection provided by the above Regulation to geographical descriptions in third countries.

As regards differentiated quality marks it was concluded that:

I The information given to consumers in relation to all these marks must be very clear to avoid confusion.

II The Law on Trademarks must not be used with the sole aim of avoiding fulfilment of other more demanding norms.

5. With a view to forthcoming new EU quality policies the following issues were raised:

I. Review of policies affecting commercial and differentiated quality.

II. The use and mention of protected designations of origin (PDO) and protected geographical indications (PGI) as ingredients of other products.

III. Review of certification standards.

IV. Comments on the proliferation of private brands

6 It should always be for the producer and/or processing groups to raise proposals for recognition of the differentiated quality of their products and formalize the request.

7 Different types of protection may be compatible for the same product, provided that the requirements established by law for each of these types are fulfilled.

II. TECHNOLOGY AND NEW APPLICATIONS

1. New technologies do not necessarily lead to standardization of the product but rather reflect the link between the characteristics of raw materials and the finished product. In this context the importance of the production sector lies in obtaining good raw materials as the basis for obtaining a quality product.

2. One important objective for producers is to achieve stabilization of the product in order to improve market opportunities over time.

III. COMMERCIALIZATION

1. It is necessary to draw a distinction between procedures in the local and the global market due to the particular qualities of each of these.

2. Proposals were made for the incorporation of new technologies in the field of product marketing. The use of new formats for presentation on the market, customizing packaging or use of Internet are some of the examples cited.

3. The possibility was suggested of opening up new markets targeted at future generations and with new products, taking into account the demand of the potential consumers.