

Innovating with aromatised wines, distilled spirits and liqueurs in wine cooperatives: a great opportunity to open up and reinforce new market niches

Summary

The aim was to diversify the market for Catalan wine products by recovering historical and traditional recipes, producing a new range of unique aromatised wines, distilled spirits and liqueurs from base wines made with the main grape varieties found in the Penedès and Priorat regions and aromatic herbs from both areas, in order to obtain a high-quality product that is 100% unique and maximises the authenticity of the wine-producing areas represented by the member cooperatives of the Operational Group.

Objectives

1. Recover historical recipes for distilled spirits, aromatised wines, vermouths, ratafias and liqueurs from the Penedès and El Priorat regions.
2. Carry out pilot tests for the recipes that are viable (availability and access to the ingredients) and which have profiles with the most authenticity and/or territorial distinctiveness.
3. Optimise the system to prepare the best recipes and those most representative of the territory and the history of the two wine-producing regions.
4. Highlight the new products developed in coordination with the trade and the tourism sector in the two regions.
5. Valorisation of low value-added products (table wine) and wine by-products (mothers and pressing remains).
6. Promote new business lines through high value-added products for participating wineries.
7. Promote local products (wine, aromatic herbs, fruits and flowers from the region) and the circular economy (valorisation of co-products).

Description of the actions carried out in the project

1. Define the optimal type of base wine for the production of distilled spirits, liqueurs and aromatised wines.
2. Select the best aromatic herbs for soaking with the base wines and distilled spirits.
3. Study of the various soaking tanks, times and temperatures.
4. Study of the chemical and microbiological stability of liqueurs and aromatised wines over time.
5. For each participating winery, prepare three recipes for making high-quality regionally authentic distilled spirits, liqueurs and aromatised wines.

Final results and practical recommendations

The cooperation of the members of the group enabled the study the process and the variables involved in the production of liqueurs and flavoured beverages, providing knowledge that was subsequently applied to the industrial production of new wine products.

The study was based on historical techniques and recipes which used traditional herbs and botanical products from Catalonia (from the Penedès and Priorat regions in particular) to make liqueurs and aromatised wines.

The project studied the suitability of the **varieties of vine** found in each region for use as the base for the various types of product, and the most suitable combinations of those varieties were selected to make distilled spirits and aromatised wines. The non-aromatic white varieties native to each region were suitable for the base for aromatised wines, while some of the red varieties were suitable for obtaining wine alcohol.

A list was produced of characteristic **herbs and botanical products** from Catalonia suitable for the preparation of the products studied which were used for the production of new aromatised wines.

A **maceration** protocol adapted for each preparation was obtained, combining the results observed for the variables of *time, form of deposit, concentration of botanical products, proportion of alcohol and degree of shaking*.

Various **filtering** conditions were studied in order to relate the wine's microbiological stability to its sensory characteristics, and to use this information in the cost-benefit assessment of the oenological itinerary to be followed. No significant sensory or microbiological differences were detected between the products obtained from the various filtration processes studied.

Thanks to the results obtained, the wineries were able to choose the most appropriate point in time in their own production process to **stabilise** the product, as satisfactory results were obtained for both the stabilisations of the base wine and the stabilisations of the finished product.

The information collected was used to establish a specific preparation **itinerary** for each product and producer.

Conclusions

Catalonia is a country with a long tradition of producing distilled spirits, aromatised wines, vermouths, ratafias and liqueurs, and thanks to the resources allocated to this operational group it was possible to use this historical background as the starting point for modernising some ancestral recipes, thereby obtaining products that are attractive for today's markets.

Based on criteria for the revaluation and use of by-products, the empowerment of the circular economy, the connection between the agricultural and food products to the region and the promotion of new high added value business lines, the variables involved in the production of these traditional products were studied in order to obtain knowledge that could be transferred and applied to contemporary processes and quality standards.

The conclusion was that a reinterpretation of historical recipes for Catalonia's distilled spirits, aromatised wines, vermouths, ratafias and liqueurs can give rise to new and interesting products. As observed in the study of the production process, this is easily adaptable to the production systems and equipment of most modern wineries.

As a result, the members of the operational group were all able to develop and market new and unique products of commercial interest with strong links to the region using low value-added products, and did so by acquiring knowledge applied to the various techniques used to obtain them.

Leader of the Operational Group

ORGANISATION: CEVIPE, SCCL

Coordinator of the Operational Group

ORGANISATION: CATALAN FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES (FCAC)

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Other members of the Operational Group (grant recipients)

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Other members of the Operational Group (not recipients of the grant)

ORGANISATION: VITEC

Subject area(s) of application

- Agricultural production system
- Agricultural practice
- Agricultural equipment and machinery
- Livestock farming and animal welfare
- Vegetable production and horticulture
- Landscape / Territorial management
- Pest and disease control
- Fertilisation and nutrient management
- Soil management
- Genetic resources
- Forestry
- Water management
- Climate and Climate Change
- Energy management
- Waste and by-product management
- Biodiversity and environmental management
- Food quality/processing and nutrition
- Supply chain, marketing and consumption
- Competitiveness and agricultural and forestry diversification
- General

Geographical area(s) of application

PROVINCE(S):

BARCELONA, TARRAGONA

REGION(S):

L'ALT PENEDEÈS, EL BAIX PENEDEÈS, EL PRIORAT

Dissemination of the project: publications, seminars, multimedia, etc. (State links)

Presentation of results at the FCAC Innovation Seminar on 6 July 2021 (PATT). Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eTfmb8XWJW4> (minute 1:01:00)

Presentation: https://ruralcat.gencat.cat/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=3df57386-7224-4a8e-b96d-773f0da17d53&groupId=20181

Operational group member websites:

<https://www.cevipe.cat/projecte-pilot-innovant-amb-vins-aromatitzats-destillats-i-licors-a-les-cooperatives-vitivinicoles/>

<https://www.etim.cat/ca/noticia/vins-aromatitzats>

<https://vitec.wine/projecte-pilot-innovant-amb-vins-aromatitzats-destil%C2%B7lats-i-licors-a-les-cooperatives-vitivinicoles/?lang=ca>

<https://www.cooperativesagraries.cat/ca/innovacio/l/10488-go-aromatitzats-destillats-i-licors.html>

More information on the project

PROJECT DATES	TOTAL BUDGET
Starting date: July 2019	Total budget: €189,216.89
End date: September 2021	DARP funding: €77,329.02
Current status: Executed	EU funding: €58,335.93
	Own funding: €53,551.94

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Order ARP/133/2017 of 21 June, approving the regulatory bases for grants for cooperation for innovation by promoting the creation of European Association for Innovation operational groups in the areas of agricultural productivity and sustainability and the execution of innovative pilot projects by those groups, and Resolution ARP/1282/2018, of 8 June, announcing the call for the grant.

