Ref: Extension of the validity of planting and replanting authorisations expiring in the year 2021

Dear Mr. [Art. 4.1(b)],

Thank you for your letter of 9 February in which you advocate an extension of the validity of planting and replanting authorisations for vines expiring in the year 2021.

As you know, the validity of these authorisations is laid down in Article 62 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013. When the pandemic of COVID-19 took hold in Europe in spring 2020, wine growers encountered exceptional difficulties, in particular logistical problems linked to movement restrictions and shortage of workforce, and this during the main vine planting season. This is why the Commission was able address this specific problem by adopting Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/601 as a justifiable emergency measure for a limited amount of time, based on Article 221 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013.

As a result of the legislative discussions during the preparation of Regulation (EU) No 2020/2220, the co-legislators have decided to extend the validity of the vine planting authorisations which were due to expire in 2020 even further. However, they did not see


the need to decide on a similar extension of the validity of authorisations expiring in 2021.

While the pandemic of Covid-19 took everybody by surprise in spring 2020, growers have adapted to the new situation and have indeed managed to carry out the necessary operations in their vineyards, including harvesting a rather abundant crop in 2020. Even though planting new vineyards in 2021 might take more preparation and planning than similar operations before the pandemic did, it is by no means impossible, so that Article 221 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 cannot be evoked as a legal basis to derogate from the provisions in Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 as regards the validity of planting authorisations expiring in 2021.

Yours sincerely,

Wolfgang BURTSCHER