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Nizza DOCG forms a protection consortium to steer its next phase of growth

The new body gains formal powers to defend the denomination, coordinate promotion and support a long-term rise toward 5 million bottles

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Nizza Docg, a red wine denomination centered on Barbera in Italy's Monferrato area, has formed its own protection consortium as producers push for broader promotion, stronger legal protection and long-term growth that could lift output to as many as 5 million bottles.

The new body, called the Consorzio del Nizza Docg, was recognized by Italy's Agriculture Ministry on June 22 and formally presented on Tuesday. It marks the evolution of the Associazione Produttori del Nizza, a producers' group founded in 2002, into a consortium with formal powers tied to promotion, enhancement and protection of the denomination.

Stefano Chiarlo, head of the historic Michele Chiarlo winery, was named president. The vice presidents are Gianni Bertolino of Tenuta Olim Bauda and Daniele Chiappone of Erede di Chiappone Armando. The first board also includes representatives from Bava, Coppo, Cossetti Vini, Da Casto Duilio, Damerio, Durio Adriano, Cantina Sociale Tre Secoli, Tenute Garetto, La Gironda, Cantina Sociale Vinchio Vaglio, Cascina Garitina and Cantina Sociale di Nizza Monferrato.

In a statement reported at the presentation, the consortium said it had reached the representational thresholds required under Italian law. That allows it to operate with erga omnes effectiveness, meaning its activity can extend across the full denomination rather than only to member companies. For wine producers in the area, that gives the new organization a broader role in defending production rules and coordinating promotion in domestic and export markets.

Chiarlo said the move fulfills a goal pursued for nearly a quarter century by a tightly connected community of growers and wineries. He said the first objective will be to preserve the spirit that defined the earlier producers' association, not only as a body that protects the denomination but also as a place for discussion and growth among producers and as a tool to strengthen the wider territory.

Nizza Docg is produced in the heart of Monferrato, within the UNESCO-listed vineyard landscapes of Piedmont that include Langhe, Roero and Monferrato. The denomination is presented by its backers as one of the highest expressions of Barbera grown around Nizza Monferrato, where soil, climate and local winemaking tradition shape the style of

the wine.

The denomination’s modern path began in 2000, when the Nizza subzone was recognized within Barbera d’Asti Superiore. In 2002, producers created their association. In 2008, Barbera d’Asti obtained DOCG status under stricter production rules. A major turning point came in 2014 with the creation of Nizza Docg as its own denomination, along with the introduction of Riserva and Vigna designations.

Today the consortium represents 97 member companies producing Nizza from vineyards spread across 18 municipalities in the production zone, with Nizza Monferrato at its center. According to figures presented by the group, about 1 million bottles were sold in 2025 across more than 180 labels. The denomination generated an estimated total value of about €30 million.

Exports account for 55% of sales, with shipments concentrated in the hospitality and restaurant channel and distribution reaching more than 40 international markets. The main foreign destinations cited by the consortium include Switzerland, Northern Europe, the United Kingdom and North America.

That export profile matters beyond this single appellation because it shows how mid-sized European wine regions are trying to build scale without losing identity. For importers, distributors and restaurant buyers, a stronger consortium can mean more coordinated marketing, clearer messaging around quality standards and potentially greater supply over time if vineyard conversions continue.

The growth plan rests in part on land that could still be claimed under the denomination. The consortium said roughly 720 hectares remain potentially eligible to be designated as Nizza Docg. That could support a significant increase in production if more growers decide to bottle under the appellation.

Chiarlo said the long-term target is to reach production of 4 million to 5 million bottles while keeping the wine’s identity intact and bringing more companies into the project through investment in the territory. He described the consortium as inclusive and open to producers who share that vision.

The group also signaled from its launch that it is open to working with other wine consortia on promotion efforts. Among the possible partners mentioned was Alta Langa’s sparkling wine consortium, suggesting that producers see joint marketing as one way to raise visibility for Piedmont wines across categories and markets.