

# Ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin: Definition and requirements

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European Commission updates definition and requirements for ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin

Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/1303 of 25 April 2022 amending Regulation (EU) 2019/787 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the definition of and requirements for ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin

## Update

The European Commission has updated the requirements for ethyl alcohol, amending maximum levels of certain residues; updating reference methods for the measurement of ethyl acetate, higher alcohols and furfural; and aligning definitions.

## Impacted products

Ethyl alcohol

## What is changing?

The Commission has amended the requirements of ethyl alcohol which must now comply with the following requirements to be placed on the EU market (changes in bold):

- (a) it has been obtained **through alcoholic fermentation, followed by distillation** exclusively of agricultural products listed in Annex I to the Treaty
- (b) it has no detectable taste other than that of the raw materials used in its production
- (c) its minimum alcoholic strength by volume is 96.0%
- (d) its maximum levels of residues do not exceed the following:
  - (i) **ethyl acetate**: 1.3 g per hectolitre of 100% vol. alcohol; [previously “esters (expressed in ethyl acetate)”]
  - (ii) **acetaldehyde (sum of ethanal and 1,1-diethoxyethane)**: 0.5 g per hectolitre of 100% vol. alcohol; [previously “aldehydes (expressed in acetaldehyde)”]

(iii) **higher alcohols (sum of: propan-1-ol, butan-1-ol, butan-2-ol, 2-methylpropan-1-ol, 2-methylbutan-1-ol and 3-methylbutan-1-ol):** 0.5 g per hectolitre of 100% vol. alcohol; [previously “higher alcohols (expressed in 2-methyl-1-propanol)”]

(iv) methanol: 30 g per hectolitre of 100% vol. alcohol

(v) furfural: **0.5 g per hectolitre of 100% vol. alcohol** [previously “not detectable”].

The following requirements have been deleted in the proposal:

- total acidity (expressed in acetic acid): 1.5 g per hectolitre of 100% vol. alcohol
- dry extract: 1.5 g per hectolitre of 100% vol. alcohol
- volatile bases containing nitrogen (expressed in nitrogen): 0.1 g per hectolitre of 100% vol. alcohol.

## Why?

The previous requirements were considered outdated from a technical and scientific point of view, no longer corresponding to the technical parameters generally used by industry and laboratories.

## Timeline

The Regulation entered into force on 15 August 2022.

## Background

The requirements for ethyl alcohol are set out in the framework legislation Regulation [2019/787](#) which is amended by this Regulation.

## Sources

Delegated Regulation (EU) [2022/1303](#)

Regulation (EU) [2019/787](#)

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