Revision of wine labelling

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New EU rules for wine labelling

Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/1606 of 30 May 2023 amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/33 as regards certain provisions on protected denominations of origin and protected geographical indications for wine and on the presentation of compulsory particulars for grapevine products and specific rules for the indication and designation of ingredients for grapevine products, and Delegated Regulation (EU) 2018/273 as regards the certification of imported wine products

Update

This Regulation aims to improve consumers' understanding of wine labels. It clarifies certain terms that may be used on the list of ingredients on wine labels.

Impacted products

Wine

What is changing?

The European Commission has updated existing rules relating to wine labelling (Regulation 2019/33, Chapter IV). The most significant changes are as follows.

List of ingredients

In the list of ingredients, the following terms may be included.

- "Grapes", regardless of whether grapes or grape must are used as raw materials.
- "Concentrated grape must", regardless of whether the grape must used is "concentrated" and/or "rectified concentrated".
- Additives permitted in the production of wine and processing aids ("oenological compounds") that may cause allergies or intolerances (those included in Annex I, Part A, Table 2, column 1 of Regulation 2019/934).
- The expression "contains" "acidity regulators" and "stabilising agents", followed by an exhaustive list of additives falling under these categories where at least one of those

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additives is present in the finished product. This avoids constantly changing wine labelling for these types of additive which are used as needed.

- "Bottled in a protective atmosphere" or "bottling may have been in a protective atmosphere", rather than the category "packaging gases". This avoids consumer confusion as packaging gases do not form part of the final product.
- The terms "tirage liqueur" and "expedition liqueur", with the possibility to list their constituents in brackets. This avoids consumers thinking that these constituents are used for sweetening or enriching rather than as part of the production process.

Additional points

- Producers of sparkling wine (including quality and quality aromatic sparkling wines) larger than 0.2 litres can choose to sheath the bottle openings in foil (this was previously mandatory).
- The rules now clarify that the term "medium sweet" refers to a sugar content that does not exceed 45 g/l and exceeds 12 g/l or 18 g/l, provided the total acidity (grams per litre) is not more than 10 g below the residual sugar content (i.e. the definition of "medium dry"). The second criterion was not explicit in the existing rules.

Why?

The Regulation aims to clarify the terms that are used on wine labels. It ensures that consumers are not confused by the ingredient lists, in particular regarding additives used in the winemaking process that are not present in the final product. The Regulation also takes into account practicalities of winemaking, and potential burdens on winemakers (particularly micro-enterprises) due to rules that would require frequent changes to labelling.

Timeline

The Regulation applies since 28 August 2023.

The revised rules on the list of ingredients apply from 8 December 2023.

What are the major implications for exporting countries?

The new rules relating to the list of ingredients are not mandatory, but are considered by the European Union to be important.

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Recommended Actions

Suppliers of wine should evaluate how existing labels can be aligned with these rules to improve consumers' understanding of wine labelling.

Background

Wine has to comply with many EU rules relating to quality schemes and checks, labelling, and the presentation of certain wine sector products.

The main rules relating to geographical indications and the labelling and presentation of wine (and also agricultural products and spirit drinks) are set by Regulation 2024/1143. Details for implementation of geographical indications in the wine sector are provided by Regulations (EU) 2025/26 and 2025/27. Regulation 2025/28 aligns the supplementing Regulation (2019/33) with the structure of Regulation 2024/1143.

For more information about Regulations 2025/26, 2025/27, and 2025/28, see Revision of the EU geographical indications scheme.

Regulation 1308/2013 lists the information that must be included on labels or in the presentation of "grapevine products" (wine, liqueur, sparkling wine), including provenance, alcohol strength, and terms related to geographical indication (Art. 119).

Resources

Online resources from the European Commission:

- Regulations on geographical indications and quality schemes
- Registration of the name of a GI product
- Applications to register new GI products

Sources

Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/1606 as regards certain provisions on protected denominations of origin and protected geographical indications for wine and on the presentation of compulsory particulars for grapevine products and specific rules for the indication and designation of ingredients for grapevine products, and [...] as regards the certification of imported wine products

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