
INFORMATION BULLETIN

Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

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QUALITY STANDARDS FOR B.C. WINE STRENGTHENED

VICTORIA – The Province has amended the Wines of Marked Quality Regulation to ensure British Columbia wines continue to be of the highest quality for consumers in British Columbia and abroad. This amendment more closely aligns the B.C. VQA standard with the BCWI 2005 VQA standard and corrects technical errors in the original regulation.

Following an unsuccessful 2006 plebiscite on proposed amendments to the Wines of Marked Quality Regulation, government has proceeded with an amendment that allows the British Columbia Wine Authority to fully implement the wines of marked quality program and ensure the quality and marketability of B.C. wines is protected.

The amendment also temporarily permits wine tasters engaged by the British Columbia Wine Authority to be affiliated with a wine business until December 31, 2008. This change is needed to give the British Columbia Wine Authority additional time to establish a pool of qualified independent tasters. After that date, there will be a full separation between the administration of the wines of marked quality program and the wine industry that will give wineries an enhanced degree of confidence in the taste testing of wines.

The Wines of Marked Quality Regulation was enacted in March 2005 following extensive consultation with the wine industry. Start up was delayed until now because of logistical challenges related to achieving a level of standard that met the needs of the industry.

There are over 130 wineries in British Columbia, almost double the number of just six years ago, and over 410 grape growers. The B.C. wine industry employs more than 3,000 full- and part-time workers, and by sales, is Canada's number one producer of premium wine grapes.

The amendment is available at: http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/reg/A/79_2005.htm

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