

VQA News and Tips — March 2017

REMINDER – IT’S TIME TO RENEW YOUR VQA ONTARIO MEMBERSHIP

Please renew your winery’s VQA membership by March 31 by logging into VQA Services <https://office.vqaontario.ca/vqaservices> . Once logged in, you will see a notification indicating VQA Membership registration renewals are now being accepted for 2017/2018. Click on the specified link to navigate to the "Renewal" tab under the Organization Profile section for your winery and follow the renewal instructions. Please make sure you follow up with a copy of your current manufacturer’s licence and a cheque dated April 1, 2017 for the fee payment.

Special note for those that operate more than one manufacturer’s licence issued by AGCO:

Effective January 1, 2016, each manufacturer that uses VQA-regulated terms must have an individual membership in VQA Ontario. Please remember to renew all of your memberships if you are a winery operating with more than one AGCO manufacturer’s license.

SAVE THE DATE – VQA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING JULY 26 IN LAKE ERIE NORTH SHORE

VQA Ontario’s 2017 Annual General Meeting will be held on July 26 at Viewpointe Estates in Harrow, Ontario. We invite all winery members to attend, and encourage those from other regions to make this an opportunity to visit with your colleagues in Lake Erie North Shore.

SEMINAR SERIES – ALL ABOUT VQA, AGCO AND LCBO RULES

The 2017 seminar series wrapped up in February but if you missed it, you can see the presentations on our website under “Resources\Industry Corner” <http://www.vqaontario.ca/Resources/Industry>. These seminars will be repeated in 2019 or sooner if there is enough interest and we are open to suggestions for other topics that might be of interest. Please give us your feedback.

TIPS OF THE MONTH

LABEL CHECKLIST

Need help making sure your labels are compliant? Download the label checklist at <http://www.vqaontario.ca/Regulations/Packaging>. We encourage you to pass this along to your colleagues in design and marketing to keep the design process efficient.

PREPARING SAMPLES AND “UNFILTERED”

Reduce your chance of having to resubmit by carefully preparing your samples for VQA testing and approval. Samples that are “finished and ready to bottle” are acceptable but must be materially the same as the wine that is ultimately bottled.

The only things that may be adjusted between the VQA submission and the finished, bottled wine are sulphur and sorbic acid content. Once the wine has been submitted for testing, there can be no further fermentation, no sugar, acid or tannin adjustments, and no flavour altering processes such as

barrel aging or micro ox. If these things occur after receiving VQA approval, the new wine will have to be resubmitted for approval.

Make sure your samples are stable and not likely to re-ferment while in process. Summer is coming and warm temperatures in transit and while stored at LCBO are a factor. Not only are re-fermenting wines likely to fail the tasting based on spoilage, they may not match the wine you bottle. Keep in mind that we purchase and test approved wines on a random basis and compare the chemical profile to the original test results. If they are materially different, the approval may be revoked.

If your finished wine will be filtered, a bench filter for the VQA sample is recommended to ensure that it does not fail the laboratory analysis for turbidity. If the wine will be bottled unfiltered or bottled with lees, make sure this is checked off on the application and it appears on the label. Wines labelled unfiltered or bottled with lees are subject to less stringent limits for turbidity.

A failed wine can always be resubmitted for further testing, but passing the first time is always quicker and less expensive.

For more tips on rules and processes, browse our website under the regulations tab and give us a call if you have any questions.