

VQA NEWS & TIPS – SEPTEMBER 2017

VALUE OF MEMBERSHIP

There's value in your membership with VQA Ontario, for your winery and for the long-term success of our appellation system.

Here are some ways you can get more value out of your membership:

- Leverage our appellations and sub-appellations to explain to your consumers why your wine truly “tastes of place” and why it is worth getting to know. Research shows that more specific appellation supports a better appreciation of value among our consumers. This is true around the world and here at home where Ontario-designated wine sells for \$15, while the average price for a wine bearing an appellation (e.g. Niagara Peninsula) sells for \$20, and a wine labelled with a sub-appellation (e.g. Beamsville Bench) sells for \$26.
- Be proud of your appellation and our grape growing community – use vineyard designations and appellation messaging to tell the story of the grapes and people behind your wine.

We know that 84% of Ontario wine consumers associate VQA with *origin*, *quality*, or both *origin* and *quality* (Wine Intelligence Research for VQA Ontario © 2017). These are very general but important foundational qualities to support your brand and build confidence in all Ontario wines. It is up to all of us to fill in the details and continue to add value.

Want to learn more about our vision for the appellation system, or discuss how it fits with your business? Contact Katherina at katherina.radcliffe@vqaontario.ca

HARVEST: BRIX MINIMUMS AND GRAPE DOCUMENTATION

Don't get caught with a blend that does not meet VQA minimums. A quick reference chart VQA brix requirements is attached. Make sure you have it handy for harvest and for your cellar staff!

All grapes used in VQA wines must be registered through the GGO e-Grape system, including those grown by the winery. These records will be verified during your audit so please keep your records up to date. Any grapes that are not registered and tested by GGO by November 15 of the harvest year, including those that are harvested after November 15, are not eligible for use in VQA wines. Wineries that purchase grapes, must or wine from a third party (someone other than the original grower of the grapes) should ensure they are provided with complete and accurate e-Grape records. Purchases from third parties who are not VQA wineries must be completed and physically on-site at the VQA winery no later than August 31 following the harvest date. The entire content and origin of purchased juice, must or wine must be supported by e-Grape records from the original grower(s). In the case of transfers of wine between VQA wineries, the VQA transfer process must be followed. Wine transferred from a grower, agent or manufacturer that does not hold an AGCO Manufacturers Licence and is not subject to regular VQA audits is not eligible for use in a VQA wine.

USING THE “BRANDING” FEATURE IN THE VQA WINE DATABASE

Changes were made to the wine application forms last year to support a new public “wine search” feature on the VQA website where all VQA approved wines can be searched by winery or by brand. This function is going to go live at the end of September. We encourage you to look at a sneak preview (internal only please!) and update the description line item if needed. <http://www.vqaontario.ca/WineSearch.aspx>

All of the information is generated from information that you input during the application process or update in your wine files. In particular, we encourage you to look at the description field if you want to highlight certain information such as a vineyard designation, reserve level or wine name. This information will only appear if you enter it! As noted above, this is one more tool to get the message out about VQA wines.

Here are some illustrations of what will be displayed on the public search function:

Brand*	Description*	Winery	Category	Vintage	Appellation	Var1	Var2	Var3
North 42 Degrees		North 42 Degrees	Table Wine	2016	Lake Erie North Shore	Cabernet Franc		
Trail Estate	Skin Contact	Trail Estate	Table Wine	2016	Prince Edward County	Gewurztraminer		
Cave Spring Cellars	Dry	Cave Spring Cellars	Table Wine	2015	Niagara Peninsula	Riesling		
Cave Spring Cellars	Estate	Cave Spring Cellars	Table Wine	2015	Niagara Escarpment	Riesling		
Cave Spring Cellars	Cave Spring Vineyard “CSV”	Cave Spring Cellars	Table Wine	2015	Beamsville Bench	Riesling		
Arterra Wines		Arterra Wines	Table Wine	2016	Niagara Peninsula	Pinot Noir		
Jackson Triggs	Grand Reserve Meritage	Arterra Wines	Table Wine	2014	Niagara Peninsula			
Trius	Red	Andrew Peller	Table Wine	2015	Niagara Peninsula			
Tawse Winery	Spark	Tawse Winery	Sparkling Wine	NV	Niagara Peninsula	Pinot Gris	Pinot Noir	Chardonnay

Brand – only necessary if you operate under any other name(s) in addition to your winery name, otherwise defaults to the winery name. **You must set up these brands in the online system first before assigning them to individual wines.**

Description – use this to differentiate different attributes or levels of wine or private labels, for example, Reserve, Smith Vineyard, Joe’s Meritage, Big Surf Restaurant Private Label. No need to include vintage and varietal in this field.

Winery - the name on the VQA membership of the winery that holds the approval.
Category - Table wine, Sparkling wine, Icewine, etc.

Vintage and Appellation.

Grape Variety or varieties – only displayed if the wine was approved as a varietal wine (up to 3 varieties).

Please call if you have questions about how to enter data for already approved wines.

CALLING ALL WINEMAKERS - FIZZ CLUB

Do you make sparkling wine? Are you considering a sparkling wine program? CCOVI invites you to join FIZZ Club.

FIZZ Club is a closed workshop for sparkling winemakers or those beginning a sparkling wine program. This is an opportunity to openly discuss the regions sparkling wine production, issues and latest research. Endorsed by the VQA, “FIZZ Club” is the only opportunity for sparkling winemakers to taste alongside their peers, share ideas, experiences and advice on all stages of production.

Belinda Kemp, CCOVI’s Oenologist, is the founder of FIZZ Club and presents the latest advances in technology and research in sparkling wine. Over the past four years she has also invited special guest speakers to present to the group.

Registration is limited to sparkling winemakers only, as well as to wineries who are considering a sparkling wine program. In order to maintain the integrity of these closed sessions we do not video tape or web-stream the talks.

If you are producing sparkling wine or considering a sparkling wine program please contact [Barb Tatarnic](#) or [Belinda Kemp](#) to ensure that you are on the list to receive updates regarding the 5th annual Fizz Club meeting.

ONTARIO WINE AND GRAPE INDUSTRY PERFORMANCE STUDY

VQA Ontario and Deloitte will be conducting the third annual Ontario Wine and Grape Performance Study beginning in late October. Watch your inbox for more information and an invitation to participate. This study is part of the Ontario Government’s Wine and Grape Strategy and is aimed at assisting wineries in identifying opportunities to maximize business performance as well as enhance government’s understanding of the impact of its programs.

The 2017 edition of the report is available at <http://www.vqaontario.ca/AboutVQA/News#News> .