



NEWS & TIPS DECEMBER 2021

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Best wishes for a safe and happy holiday season from everyone here at the Ontario Wine Appellation Authority!

BRIX MINIMUMS

It was a challenging harvest. Please make sure your components and blend meet the brix minimum for the appellation before finalizing your labels. For reference, please see the brix tables at [VQA Ontario · Regulations · Standards](#) under the “Brix” tab.

LCBO SAMPLE DELIVERIES – Please continue to deliver your wine samples to “VQA Samples” 43 Freeland Street, 3rd Floor, Toronto ON, until further notice. Please note that the last date for lab in-take for 2021 was Wednesday December 1. The LCBO will continue to receive samples for tasting and lab, but samples received after December 1 will be scheduled for lab in the New Year. Please contact tricia.ramnath@vqaontario.ca with any questions.

DECEMBER SCHEDULE

The Ontario Wine Appellation Authority will close at noon on December 24, 2021 and resume normal operations Tuesday January 4, 2022, with the first tasting panel scheduled for Friday January 7, 2022. Make sure your wines are at the LCBO by noon January 5 to be included in the first tasting of the new year.

APPASSIMENTO REGULATION CHANGE POSTED FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Proposed amendments to VQA rules for wines made from dried grapes and regulating the use of the term “appassimento” on wine labels have been approved by the Board of Directors and have been posted by the Government on the Regulatory Registry. If you wish to comment before the Minister considers the change for approval, you must comment through the regulatory registry no later than January 15, 2022. Access the registry at

[Proposed changes to the Vintners Quality Alliance Act, 1999 - O. Reg. 406/00](#)

NEW CHAIR FOR STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

After serving as Committee Chair for 12 years, Ron Giesbrecht has stepped down from the position of Chair of the VQA Standards Development Committee, the Appellation Authority's technical advisory group.

Ron joined the Committee as a founding member in 2000 and was appointed to Chair in 2009. During his tenure as Chair, Ron oversaw the review and refinement of many regulatory updates and played an important role in ensuring our appellation rules remain current and relevant. We thank Ron for his steady hand and wise guidance over the years!

Gabe Demarco, Winemaker and Viticulturist at Cave Spring Vineyard, was appointed as the new Chair effective November 26, 2021.



Gabe Demarco (L) and Ron Giesbrecht (R)

LABEL REVIEW

Use our handy checklist to make sure your labels are compliant.

[VQAQuickReferenceLabellingGuide.pdf \(vqaontario.ca\)](https://vqaontario.ca/VQAQuickReferenceLabellingGuide.pdf)

During the wine approval application process, we evaluate the details of the application against what appears on the label to ensure accuracy and compliance with VQA rules.

Here is a quick guide to the things we review:

Grape origin (appellation) – does the label match what is declared on the application? Is the appellation identified on the front label, between the VQA letters, on a single line? This is essential!

Brix at harvest – do your grapes meet the minimum brix requirements for the appellation declared?

Composition – which varieties are in your wine, and in what percentages? We check this to ensure that a varietally-labelled wine qualifies for Single, Dual, Triple or Multi-varietal labelling. If a wine is to be labelled with a Proprietary Name (no grapes

anywhere on the label), we confirm the content is 100% Vitis-vinifera as required for this category.

Wine category – we check that the wine meets the requirements for the category declared (table, sparkling, late harvest, etc.). For Skin Fermented White and Icewine, we confirm the grapes were registered at harvest and that the volumes indicated on the application match the volumes and brix registered at harvest.

Lab results - we confirm the actual tested alcohol by volume is declared on the label within 1%, and all analytical limits are met.

Federal information - we review federally mandated information including Product of Canada, common name, sulphite warning, dealers address, and net contents. These declarations are regulated by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency so our comments on these are advisory only.

It is important every label accurately reflects what's in the bottle to support consumer confidence and maintain the integrity of your wines and wine appellations. For more information, please visit [VOA Ontario · Regulations · Packaging](#)

WINE TESTING COORDINATOR – AT YOUR SERVICE!

Have questions about labelling rules? Need help with the application process? Please email Tricia Ramnath, Wine Testing Coordinator, with your label and approval inquiries. She can be reached at tricia.ramnath@vqaontario.ca or at 416-367-2002.

Everything explained: See your Members Manual at [Ontario Wine Appellation Authority WINERY SERVICES GUIDE \(vqaontario.ca\)](#)