

VQA News and Tips — JUNE 2018

NEW STAFF MEMBER – WELCOME KAITLIN WILSON

Please welcome Kaitlin to your staff at the VQA Ontario office. Kaitlin started with VQAO on June 4 and will be working primarily on the processing of wine approval applications. Kaitlin comes to us from LCBO Quality Services and is looking forward to helping you with your VQA applications.

SAVE THE DATE – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Please plan to join us at Niagara College for our Annual General Meeting on Thursday, July 19, 2018 at 11:00 AM. Coffee will be available at 10:30 AM. The formal portion of the meeting will be followed by lunch and a social event. To RSVP, please contact Barbara at Barbara.dodds@vqaontario.ca no later than July 16th. Winery members will receive the notice of meeting and election materials in a separate email.

BY-LAW AMENDMENTS FOR RATIFICATION AT THE ANNUAL MEETING

The Board of Directors of VQA Ontario has approved a bylaw amendment for the purpose of ensuring regional representation among elected representatives on the Board of Directors. This amendment does not change the current makeup of the Board but strengthens the language in the Bylaw to prevent a conflict between business size and regional requirements.

The amended bylaw:

- Retains the requirement for at least one Director drawn from each primary region (Niagara Peninsula, Lake Erie North Shore, Prince Edward County)
- Retains the overall balance of 3 Directors from each winery size classification (small, medium, large)
- Establishes an order of selection to allow the regional seats to be filled first

The full text of the amended section will be circulated with the AGM materials in early June. This can also be obtained upon request from the VQA Ontario office.

The amended bylaw requires ratification by a vote of at least two-thirds of the eligible voting members present at the Annual General Meeting to be held on July 19, 2018. The amendment must also be approved by the Minister of Government and Consumer Services before it can take effect, therefore elections held at the 2018 Annual general Meeting will be governed by the bylaws currently in force.

VQA RESEARCH PROJECT

Riesling! Chardonnay! Pinot Noir! Cabernet Franc! Do you make these as 100% single-varietal, 100% single-appellation wines?

VQA Ontario will embark on the third year of a multi-year study, this summer and we need winemakers who can volunteer their time and one case of wine for the project to be a success. If you can take the time to answer a few short questions (online!) about how you make your appellation wines, we would love to hear from you!

The deadline to submit wine for this important project is Friday July 13th. Wine samples can be sent to Vineland Estates, noting *VQA Research Project* on the box.

If you have questions about this research or want to help in another way, don't hesitate to contact katherina.radcliffe@vqaontario.ca

TIPS FOR THE MONTH

Navigating the wine approvals system

How to minimize your processing times

The typical time to process a wine approval application is 3 weeks. The LCBO processes thousands of samples and there is a queue. Here's how you can make the best of it by understanding how the process is organized.

- Get your samples to the LCBO by Wednesday morning and save yourself up to a week. The actual lab processes take about 1 week, and the line-up is set on Wednesday afternoon. If your sample arrives Wednesday at 3 pm, it will not be in the line-up for the next week. You will not see results until two Fridays later.
- It is possible to request a special "rush" from the LBCO lab (extra \$) but they can only squeeze in a handful of these and often turn down these requests. **DO NOT RELY ON THIS!**
- Make sure the submission is complete. Samples and shipping form to LCBO, labels uploaded and paperwork and payment to VQAO.
- If you are waiting on lab results to add the alcohol declaration to your label, start checking for results Friday morning, and call or email us as soon as you upload your label to get it reviewed.
- Keep in mind you won't get a result unless the fee is paid.
- The most important tip of all is to call us if you are experiencing unexplained delays or need help.

Where is my stuff?

Information and documents about any specific wine can be found by going to your Wine Approvals System (WAS) grid and clicking on the Wine ID (far left column). Once on the general information page for a specific wine, you can access many things:

"Forms & Reports" link - Certificate of Analysis, Summary Report (Certificate of Origin), Shipping Form, Export Certificate for Asia Pacific countries

"History" link – a chronological listing of your application status and activity. Check history to determine the current stage of your application.

"Label Review" – any comments VQA made about your labels, including why it failed, or if it passed, notes about spelling errors, non-compliance with federal rules etc.

"Lab Tests" – intermediate analytical results including alcohol content

Invoices are now accessed from the "Invoices" menu on the home page. We are in the process of rebuilding our online invoicing system to support the option of online payments in future. Please note that invoice information is no longer on the wine shipping form.

You will notice some other changes to the online platform as we upgrade the system to tie the content of approved wines together with wine transfers, previously approved wines and Icewine registration. To make the adjustment as easy as possible, make sure you collect all the information you need about the wine components before you start, including wine transfer and icewine registration numbers. More IT upgrades are coming in 2018 and we thank you for your patience in advance!