

VQA ONTARIO
Ontario's Wine Appellation Authority
NEWS & TIPS JUNE 2020

COVID-19 OPERATIONS UPDATE

Subject to the availability of qualified panelists, the Ad-Hoc Tasting Panel will continue to be convened on Wednesdays. Please note that wines must be delivered to the LCBO at 43 Freeland Street in Toronto, no later than 12 noon on the Monday before the Wednesday tasting.

As usual, we greatly appreciate wineries taking these additional steps:

- Please limit your submissions to no more than 6 samples per week
- Please send your wines bottled under screw caps (where possible), and please do not use corks in threaded bottle necks as they tend to break
- Please send your wines clean skin with just the wine ID and without commercial labels (where possible)

Please note that during the week of July 1 the panel will be convened on Tuesday June 30th. The cut-off for delivery to LCBO will be 3 PM Thursday June 25th.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – POSTPONED UNTIL AUGUST 13, 2020.

The VQA Ontario Annual General Meeting has been rescheduled to August 13, 2020 to be held by electronic means. A formal notice and call for nominations for the Board of Directors will be sent out in late June. If you are interested in running for a position on the Board for a small, medium or large class winery, please feel free to contact [Laurie Macdonald](#) for more information.

SKIN FERMENTED WHITE Wine (SFW) – REFRESHER

In July 2017, VQA Ontario became the first appellation authority to regulate Skin Fermented White wines. Here is a refresher on the rules and regulations around the production of these wines in Ontario.

WINERIES MUST REGISTER THEIR INTENT TO MAKE THESE WINES. At harvest, wineries must register their grapes for Skin Fermented White wines using our online VQA Services system, under Skin Fermented White Tracking. Registrations are due by Nov. 15th of the harvest year.

Please note that we cannot register grapes for this category retroactively If you don't register your grapes, you may still submit the wine as a table wine, but it will not be assessed as a SFW and you will not be able to put "Skin Fermented" or synonyms on the label.

TO QUALIFY, AS A SFW THE WINE MUST ALSO MEET THESE CRITERIA:

- Be 100% fermented on the skins for at least 10 days
- Be produced from fresh white or pink grapes from the approved grapes list
- All other table wine rules apply

TURBIDITY

Many SFW wines are produced and bottled Unfiltered or Bottled with Lees. If either of these applies to your wine, please ensure that you declare it on your wine application and make sure the appropriate term is declared on your label. Declaring a wine as “Unfiltered” expands the limit for turbidity significantly (up to 20.0 NTU for whites), while declaring a wine “Bottled with Lees” removes any limit on turbidity. These are important attributes to note for both the tasting panel and the lab analysis.

- Turbidity limit, white wine = 5.0 NTU
- Turbidity limit, white wine, Unfiltered = 20.0 NTU
- Turbidity limit, white wine, Bottled with Lees = unlimited

LABELS

To ensure consumers can easily identify these wines there are some labelling rules as well.

- SKIN FERMENTED WHITE must appear on the front label, in a font size at least as large as the grape variety.
- If no grape variety appears, the term Skin Fermented White must be at least 3.2 mm.
- Other terms (amber wine, orange wine) can be used, but only in addition to the regulated term Skin Fermented White, and in font type size no larger than Skin Fermented White.
- If the wine is UNFILTERED or BOTTLED WITH LEES these terms must also appear somewhere on the label.

For additional information or if you have questions, please contact [Katherina Radcliffe](#) or view Regulation 406 in its entirety here: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/000406>

UPLOAD YOUR MONTHLY SALES REPORTS

The grace period to upload your monthly sales reports has ended. Please make sure you login to the VQA Services site to upload your sales reports each month. Do not send us a cheque without first uploading the report and generating the associated invoice. All cheques received that are not associated with an invoice are now being returned and wineries will receive a notice of membership suspension if non-compliance continues. We appreciate your cooperation in modernizing our systems – no more printing of sales reports, and if you pay online, no more stamps and trips to the mailbox. Thank you to everyone who has made this transition.

If you need assistance, we are happy to guide you through the process – it is very simple to use and we believe the digital process will save you considerable time, especially if you are sending in small amounts. If you are not responsible for uploading sales reports at your winery, please forward this important message to the appropriate person and make sure they have a login ID. Step by step instructions are available on the VQA Services website via the "Document Library" link on the main menu.