

POLICY FOR ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF NEW GRAPE VARIETIES

Permitted grape varieties for VQA wines are listed in VQA Regulation 406 and changes to the list require a formal amendment to the regulation.

Requests to add new grape varieties may be submitted to the OWAA Board of Directors by a member winery or other stakeholder.

The following information should be included in an application for addition to the list of approved varieties:

- a written request including documents confirming the species of the proposed variety(ies) and a registered name that does not include numerical references
- for varieties bred from inter-specific crossings between vitis vinifera and other grape species, additional information to confirm that the variety(ies):
 - are not prohibited for use in the commercial production of any wines in accordance with the Liquor Licence and Control Act or other applicable legislation in effect in the Province of Ontario or federally within Canada; and
 - have not been previously removed from the list of approved varieties under Regulation 406; and
 - do not typically produce wines with sensory characteristics associated with wines made from labrusca grapes; and
 - do not have breeding lineage with labrusca parentage exceeding 20%.

The evaluation process may include a technical evaluation of the grape variety and its suitability for producing quality wines, and will be subject to public consultation with wineries and other stakeholders. The approval of new grape varieties for use in VQA wines requires formal approval both by the OWAA Board of Directors and by the responsible Minister of the Ontario government. The process to amend Regulation 406 typically takes 8-12 months.

Adopted November 30, 2023