



Wine labelling

5.8.2005 Nr 371/43/2005

These instructions concern the labelling of grape wines; the main focus is the mandatory information required when labelling table wines, table wines with geographical indication and quality wines psr. The requirements for the labelling of other wine products (liqueur wines, semi-sparkling wines, sparkling wines, aerated semi-sparkling wines, grape must, grape must in fermentation, concentrated grape must, new wines still in fermentation and wines from over-ripened grapes) can be found in the regulations mentioned below. These instructions are applied to the labelling of both wines produced in the Community and those imported from third countries.

These instructions overrule the previous instructions on labelling (Nr 58/43/03 and 22/43/05) given by the National Product Control Agency for Welfare and Health (National Product Control Agency, STTV).

The following regulations and their changes concern the wine labelling:

- Council Regulation No 1493/1999 on the common organisation of the market in wine (the basic Regulation)
- Commission Regulation No 753/2002 laying down certain rules for applying Regulation No 1493/1999 as regards the description, designation, presentation and protection of certain wine sector products (Regulation on labels)
- Directive 2000/13 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs (Directive on labels).

1. Mandatory information (table wines, table wines with geographical indication and quality wines psr)

According to the basic Regulation on wine, the mandatory information includes

- the name under which the product is sold
- the nominal volume
- information on the wine's sulphur dioxide content included on the label
- the actual alcoholic strength by volume
- the name or corporate name of the bottler, the local administrative area and the Member State (or the consignor, for containers with a nominal volume of more than 60 litres),
- and the lot number in accordance with Council Directive 89/396 on indications or marks identifying the lot to which a foodstuff belongs.

On table wines and table wines with geographical indication, the words "pöytäviini" ("table wine") are included in the name under which the product is sold. The table wines with geographical indication must also mention the name of the geographical unit. The quality wines' psr must mention the name of the production area.

The labels of wines from third countries must include the word "viini" ("wine"), which must be supplemented by the name of the country of origin. Furthermore, the labels of wines originating in third countries must include the information on the importer or, when bottling took place in the Community, the bottler. It should be noted that the importer means the

importer into the Community, and it is not always necessary to name the importer into Finland on the label.

2. Specifications to the mandatory information (table wines, table wines with geographical indication, quality wines psr and other wine products)

According to the regulation of wine labelling, the mandatory information should be grouped in a single visual field on the container, presented in easily readable, indelible characters that are large enough to stand out well against the background on which they are printed and clearly distinguishable from all other (written and graphical) content of the labelling.

However, the mandatory information on the importer, the lot number and sulphur dioxide content may appear outside the visual field in which the other mandatory information appears.

The actual alcoholic strength by volume is indicated in percentage units or half units ($\pm 0,5$ til-% [% vol]). The figure is followed by "til-%" ("% vol"), and it may be preceded by the words

- "todellinen alkoholipitoisuus" ("actual alcoholic strength by volume") or
- "todellinen alkoholi" ("actual alcohol") or
- "alk." ("alc.")

The actual alcoholic strength must be indicated in characters and numbers at least

- 5 mm high, if the nominal volume is over 100 cl
- 3 mm high, if the nominal volume is 20-100 cl
- 2 mm high, if the nominal volume is 20 cl or less.

3. Information on sulphur dioxide on the label

The amendment 89/2003 of the Directive on labelling foodstuffs 2000/13 requires, among other things, that the labels of wines put on the market after 25 November 2005 must include the information "sisältää rikkidioksidia" ("contains sulphur dioxide") or "sisältää sulfiitteja" ("contains sulphites"), if the concentration is more than 10 mg/kg or 10 mg/litre expressed as SO₂. The information can be included on the label outside the field containing the mandatory information.

4. Languages used for the labelling and validity of the indications

The information on the wine labels must be given in one or more of the official languages of the Community so that the final consumer can easily understand each of these items of information.

An exception from the above is the indication of sulphur dioxide, which must always be made both in Finnish and in Swedish.

The information given on the labels and in any form of advertising of the products must not be incorrect or likely to cause confusion or to mislead the persons to whom it is addressed. The authorities may require bottlers, consignors or importers to prove that the description of the product is accurate.

5. Information on origin on the label

More accurate information on the wine's origin must be included on the label if the wine in question is produced in different countries (either within the Community or in third countries) or if the wine is produced from grapes harvested in another Member State.

The name under which table wines from within the Community are sold should include the following information

- if the wine is sent to another Member State or exported from the State, the name of the Member State if the grapes are produced and made into wine in that State:

- the words "yhteisön eri maissa tuotettujen viinien sekoitus" ("mixture of wines from different countries of the European Community") in the case of wines resulting from a mixture of products originating in a number of Member States;
- the words "...ssa korjatuista rypäleistä...ssa tuotettu viini" ("wine obtained in ... from grapes harvested in ..."), supplemented by the names of the Member States concerned in the case of wines produced in a Member State from grapes harvested in another Member State.

The information on the wine's origin should be marked on the wines originating from third countries in the following way:

- wines made by blending in a third country from wines originating in two or more third countries should be labelled including the words "Euroopan yhteisön ulkopuolisista maista peräisin olevien viinien sekoitus" ("blend of wines from different countries outside the European Community") or "...sta/stä peräisin olevien viinien sekoitus" ("blend of wines from ...") citing the names of the third countries in question;
- wines made in a third country from grapes obtained in another third country should be labelled with the words "...ssa/ssä korjatuista rypäleistä ...ssa/ssä valmistettu viini" ("wine obtained in ... from grapes harvested in ..."), citing the names of the third countries in question.

6. Voluntary information, specific terms, codes and brand names

The mandatory information can be supplemented with voluntary information, specific terms, codes and brand names. Voluntary terms are, for example, the name of the person who took part in marketing, the type of product or a particular colour in accordance with the rules laid down by the Member State of production. Voluntary information for table wines with geographical indication and quality wines psr means, for example, the vintage year and the vine variety, and other traditional terms.

It should be noted that

- the voluntary information and specific terms are controlled very specifically in the regulation of labelling
- when mentioning the vine variety, the varieties whose names include a geographical indication must be considered
- the annex III of the Regulation 753/2002 has a list of the protected traditional terms
- the voluntary information should also be noted on the accompanying documents and registers, if they are included or if they are intended to be included on the labelling.

The actions of the bottler, the consignor or one or more of the persons involved in marketing

can be described by terms such as "pullottaja" ("bottler"), "pullottanut" ("bottled by"), "viiniviljelijä" ("wine-grower"), "korjannut" ("harvested by"), "tukkukauppias" ("merchant"), "jakelija" ("distributed by"), "maahantuoja" ("importer"), "maahan tuonut" ("imported by"), or other similar terms.

7. Applying the requirements for labelling

Only wines labelled according to the Regulation 753/2002 on labelling can be put on the market after 15 March 2004. However, all products that were labelled according to the provisions applicable when they were put into circulation may be held for sale, put into circulation and exported until stocks (within the Community) are exhausted.

Information on the sulphur dioxide content of the wine must be included on the product labels after 25 November 2005. The products which have been manufactured and packaged before the stated date and which do not include the indication of sulphur dioxide content may be sold until stocks (within the Community) are exhausted, provided that they otherwise fulfil the requirements applying to wine labels.

Additional information on the labelling of wines can be obtained from the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health Valvira tel. +358 (0)9-7729 2450 or by e-mail: alkoholi@valvira.fi