

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy - Tel: (+39) 06 57051 - E-mail: codex@fao.org - www.codexalimentarius.org

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CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

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COMMUNICATION FROM OIV¹

The International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV) appreciates the opportunity to provide a summary of current work undertaken by OIV that may be of interest to the Codex Alimentarius Commission. The OIV is keen to demonstrate its interest in the works of the Codex and the need for our two organisations to coordinate and cooperate in fields of common interest.

The International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV) is an intergovernmental organisation with 46 Member-States producers and consumers of wines representing 85% of world production and almost 80% of world wine consumption respectively..

The Organisation's missions have been modernised and adapted to enable it to pursue its objectives and in particular to:

- a) Inform its members of measures whereby the concerns of producers, consumers and other parties in the vitivinicultural sector may be taken into consideration;
- b) Assist other international organisations both intergovernmental and non-governmental, especially those which carry out standardisation activities;
- c) Contribute to the international standardisation of existing practices and standards and, as necessary, to the preparation of new international standards in order to improve the conditions for producing and marketing vitivinicultural products, and ensure that consumers' interests are taken into account.

To this end, it defines products, sets recommended limits in terms of additives and contaminants, determines the methods of analysis for musts and wine and spirituous beverages of vitivinicultural origin, advises on labelling standards and prepares a whole range of recommendations in the interest of both producers and consumers.

The international trade of grapes, wine and spirituous beverages continues to grow. The share of export volumes of wine has developed significantly over the past decade: at over 100 million hectolitres, it is equivalent to 43% of world consumption, compared with 25% 10 years ago. Every two bottles out of five consumed in the world are imported.

In the context of this globalisation of trade, where there is increasing competition between countries, the OIV defines the characteristics of vitivinicultural products and their specifications, and contributes to the promotion of good regulatory practices in order to ensure fair trade, as well as the integrity and sustainability

¹ Document prepared by and under the responsibility of the OIV.

OIV Member-States : Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany , Greece, Hungary, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Luxemburg, FYR Macedonia, Malta, Moldavia, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Uruguay.

of different viticultural products on the global market. The OIV contributes to the harmonisation and definition of new international standards in order to improve conditions for producing and marketing vitivinicultural products.

The OIV ensures a balance between traditional winemaking and innovation

Works in connection with the Codex Committee on Food Additives

The OIV plays an active part in the works by the Codex Committee on Food Additives, especially during discussions concerning provisions relating to food additives in the Codex General Standard for Food Additives (GSFA), in particular for the “grape wine” category and its sub-categories.

As a matter of consistency, it is important for the OIV that the Codex General Standard for Food Additives (GSFA) includes commonly used wine additives so as not to restrict trade among all countries, whether they produce wine or not. If the GSFA is not updated, it could become an inadvertent barrier to trade by not listing legitimately used wine additives already approved in a number of producing countries and widely traded amongst them.²

The objective of oenological practices include ensuring the wine is safe for human consumption and the conservation of the wine to permit consumption in good condition. Recent progress in chemistry has made possible the development of a group of treatments and practices, which, although they still aim at the preservation of wine, also seek to make up for its faults or to improve its qualities.

Meanwhile, the number of producer countries increased and different ideas of wine appeared in the world, that is to say different definitions notably of authorizable oenological practices.

In most countries, these practices are regulated by reference to a positive list of additives and processing aids and in some countries of practices. These positive lists are generally set according to the production practices dictated by the legal, cultural and climatic (terroir) nature of the country. Differing regulations have the potential to create technical barriers to trade and may lead disputes.

Therefore, the international standardization of oenological practices through harmonization relying on scientific bases as well as on other legitimate factors, or systems of mutual recognition or equivalence is desirable.

During the last session of the CCFA, it has been noted that the concern on the use of food additives in this product was not about safety but about the technological justification of the provisions and especially the reasons for using two approaches i.e. numerical basis and GMP in this food category

The Committee generally could agree on the principle that the intent of use of additives at GMP level in grape wine production should not result in “substantial change in the characteristics of the wine, but the main discussion are related to the guidance on GMP from Internationally recognised bodies”. Many Members consider that GMP was acceptable only as long as it was linked to a footnote specifying clearly that the use of additives in wine shall be consistent with the OIV recommendations.

² During the 31st Session, the Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants has indicated in its report that “*The Committee noted the necessity for the GSFA to be consistent with the OIV standards for wine*”. Report of the 31st Session, the Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants 1999 p6 <http://www.codexalimentarius.org/download/report/25/AI9912ae.pdf>

In this framework,

1. The OIV considers that

- ✓ A list of authorized additives established by the GSFA should take into account the recommendations of intergovernmental organizations, such as the OIV.
- ✓ OIV Member States have incorporated in the OIV 2015 work program "a collaboration with the Codex Alimentarius continued especially with the initiation of discussions to eventually lead to a cooperation protocol"³.
- ✓ The works of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) should be taking into account regarding the safety assessment of food additives and the specifications for those additives.
- ✓ the OIV International Code of Oenological Practices gives recommendations for the quantity of additive to be added to wine, which is limited to the lowest possible level necessary to accomplish its desired effect,
- ✓ Regarding the numerical use level of these additives, the OIV "International Code of Oenological Practices" could be referenced on what concentration of an additive may be considered as GMP.

2. **The OIV understands that** there was a difference of opinion on whether the CCFA should recommend maximum levels of use that are numerical or are consistent with GMP.

3. **The OIV supports**, in the spirit of compromise, the idea to set the limit on wine additives at GMP with a footnote in the GSFA that refers to internationally recognised expert bodies that provide guidance on good manufacturing practice in wine production as suggested in Recommendation 1.

4. **The OIV recommends** that international recognised bodies, to be referred in the footnote according Recommendation 1, must be representative, impartial and transparent, with scientific and technical nature.

5. The OIV recalls that

- ✓ OIV is an **intergovernmental organisation of a scientific and technical nature** of recognised competence for its work concerning vines, wine, wine-based beverages, grapes, raisins and other vine products."
- ✓ the recommendations adopted by the OIV Members-states are **based on scientific evidence** resulting from the work of a thousand or so **experts appointed by Member States**, who meet regularly as part of the OIV's specialised scientific structures in viticulture, oenology, methods of analysis, economy, law, safety, health and grapes.
- ✓ Any international non-governmental organisation or stakeholders with an interest in vines, wine, table grapes, raisins and/or products of same, with an OIV **Observers** status⁴, **can participate and intervene** in the works of the Commissions, Sub-Commissions and groups of experts. It is the case, for example, for FIVS and Oenoppia who participate actively to the works of the OIV.
- ✓ The technical **decisions are taken by consensus** of the OIV Members-states, according to an **8-steps procedure comparable to the Codex Alimentarius**, give to the OIV a **technical and scientific references** accepted by its Member States as well as a **transparent functioning**.
- ✓ The OIV makes its publications, standards, congress proceedings and overview of collective expertise **freely and publicly available**.

³ OIV 2016 Annual work program <http://www.oiv.int/oiv/info/enplanstrategique>

⁴ **OIV Observers:** [AIDV](#) - International Wine Law Association, [Amorim](#) Academy, [AREV](#) - Assembly of Wine-Producing European Regions, [AUIV](#) - International University Association of Wine, [CERVIM](#) - Centre for Research, Environmental Sustainability and Advancement of Mountain Viticulture, [FIVS](#) - International Federation of Wines and Spirits, [OENOPPIA](#) - Oenological Products and Practices International Association, [UIOE](#) - Union Internationale des Œnologues, [VINOFED](#) - World Federation of Major International Wine and Spirits Competitions, [ASI](#) - Association de la Sommellerie Internationale, [WIM](#) - Wine in Moderation

- ✓ All OIV recommendations are either **frequently included in national and regional regulations** or used as **reference** in the **bilateral, multilateral agreements**.⁵⁶⁷
- ✓ OIV has the **same principles of membership** that form the basis of membership in the Codex Alimentarius Commission **and equivalent principles of standards-setting**.⁸

Good wine making practices is the basis of our work. In some cases it is necessary to set numerical limits which are based on technical or scientific evidence. The OIV is currently revising some limits taking into account the technological need (i.e. climate change).

Today, the OIV wants to continue its active involvement in the works by the Codex Committee on Food Additives, especially those regarding provisions relating to food additives in the Codex General Standard for Food Additives (GSFA) for the “grape wine” category and its sub-categories.

OIV Works in the field of methods of analysis

One of important task of the OIV is the development of analytical methods, definition of standards for sampling and quality control in laboratories for wine products.

This applies of course wines but also other products such as vinegar. We would like to remind that the OIV methods for vinegars are referenced by the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis.

During the next OIV General Assembly, several analytical methods will be submitted for adoption by the Member States of the OIV in particular

- Determination of volatile acidity in wine – revision of the method
- Determination of total acidity in wine – revision of the method
- Determination of the distribution of deuterium in acetic acid extracted from wine vinegar using nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR)
- Specific methods for the analysis of grape sugar (rectified concentrated must) – determination of meso-inositol, scyllo-inositol and sucrose
- Specific methods for the analysis of grape sugar (rectified concentrated grape musts) – folin-cicolteau index

Works of other Codex Committees

In this context and in the framework of the cooperation between the Codex Alimentarius and the OIV, the OIV follows the works of other Codex Committee for example

- ***Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables,***
- ***Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables and***
- ***Codex Committee on Contaminants.***

⁵ Bilateral Wine Agreement UE/South Africa <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:028:0003:0087:en:PDF>

⁶ Bilateral Wine Agreement UE/Australia http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2002.028.01.0004.01.ENG

⁷ Reglamento vitivinícola del mercosur MERCOSUR/GMC/RES N° 45/96 http://www.mercosur.int/msweb/Normas/normas_web/Resoluciones/ES/Res_045_096_.PDF

⁸ 24th Codex Alimentarius Procedural Manual (2015) pp 217

Finally, it is important to mention that the OIV maintains a close and active collaboration with FAO and especially with the statistics department to develop global statistics of the wine sector regarding the surfaces, production, consumption and import and export of wine products.

Nowadays, as international standards have become increasingly important through the mechanisms established by the World Trade Organisation, relationships between the Codex Alimentarius and the OIV in the field of vine and wine in particular should be consolidated.