



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

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COMMUNICATION FROM OIV^{1,2}

The International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV), which has an Observer status, appreciates the opportunity to provide a summary of his works that may be of interest to the Codex Alimentarius Commission. The fields of common interest justify for the OIV a strengthened partnership between both organisations. .

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 vitivincultural 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 vitivincultural 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 vitivincultural origin, advises on labelling standards and prepares a whole range of recommendations in the interest of both producers and consumers.

In the context of this globalisation of trade, where there is increasing competition between countries, the OIV defines the characteristics of vitivincultural 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 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 vitivincultural products.

The OIV ensures a balance between traditional winemaking and innovation

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

² OIV Member-States : Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Luxemburg, FYR Macedonia, Malta, Mexico, Moldavia, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Uruguay

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.

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 status³, 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
- ✓ All OIV recommendations are either frequently included in national and regional regulations or used as reference in the bilateral, multilateral agreements^{4,5,6}
- ✓ OIV has the same principles of membership that form the basis of membership in the Codex Alimentarius Commission and equivalent principles of standards-setting⁷.

Works in connection with the Codex Committee on Food Additives

So, it is important for the OIV that the Codex General Standard for Food Additives (GSFA) includes commonly used wine additives to meet the objectives above-mentioned such as preserving the natural and essential characteristics of wine, a substantial change in the composition of the wine and to avoid any technical barriers to trade.

Therefore, during the previous sessions of the CCFA, it was noted that the justification of the limits for the use of food additives in the grape wine category was not only about safety, but also about the preservation of characteristics of the product, Good Manufacturing Practices should refer to a note clearly indicating that the use of these additives should be consistent with the OIV recommendations

At the end of the last session of the Committee on additives, a number of delegations expressed regret for not having found a solution to advance work on the food additive provisions for grape wine. It was mentioned that it was important to highlight the fact that the current set of adopted food additive provisions for wine in the GSFA was still incomplete in order to prevent possible impediments in the international trade. The importance of having comprehensive and harmonised international practices and standards for wine was also highlighted.

³ 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

⁴ Bilateral Wine Agreement UE/South Africa <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:028:0003:0087:en:PDF>

⁵ Bilateral Wine Agreement UE/Australia http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2002.028.01.0004.01.ENG

⁶ Reglamento vitivinícola del mercosur MERCOSUR/GMC/RES Nº 45/96 http://www.mercosur.int/msweb/Normas/normas_web/Resoluciones/ES/Res_045_096_.PDF

⁷ 26th Codex Alimentarius Procedural Manual (2018) pp 217

The Director General of the International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV) regretted that agreement had not been reached on the issue of additives in wine. He pointed out that the OIV was developing a whole set of standards for world wine production, and that OIV was the only intergovernmental organisation that currently fulfilled this function, which justified its being recognised as reference organisation at the Codex level. The OIV would continue to fulfil its mission and was committed, as it already does, to systematically take into account the JECFA assessments or, when they do not exist, those of other recognised food safety agencies. Similarly, the OIV would continue to work with full confidence and collaboration with the Codex Secretariat.

It has also been noted that OIV was currently the only international intergovernmental organisation with a public, comprehensive and international standard for wine and almost all internationally traded wine was produced according rules setting numerical value for the maximum level of additives.

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 work of the Codex Committee on Food Additives, especially after the suspension of the works on wine grape category, the OIV wishes, on the basis of the works of the electronic working group, that its role be formalized as quickly as possible.

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.

Works in connection with the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Food

At its last session, the CCCF discussed the revision of maximum lead levels in food including wine. In this framework the working group established in 2017 recommended to reduce the current maximum Codex limit from 0.20 mg / kg to 0.05 mg / kg.

The OIV indicated that the Organisation has adopted various recommendations on lead in wines for many years, especially in 1996, the OIV has set a maximum limit of 0.20 mg / L, which has been approved by Codex in 2001. In 2006, the OIV established a new maximum limit of 0.15 mg / L, which is still ongoing today.

The OIV drew the attention of the CCCF to the fact that a too low limit, based only on a statistical analysis of the samples and which is not specifically justified from a strictly sanitary point of view, could have an important consequence in international trade.

Based on the data from the working group, a maximum limit of 0.05 mg / kg would lead to the elimination of around 3% of wines, approximately 7.5 million hectoliters of wine that would be excluded from the international wine trade and especially the rejection a significant portion of fortified wine (24%).

On the other hand, the OIV indicated that the organisation continues to work on this issue and, in particular, has already begun a discussion on the potential reduction of the current limit (0.150 mg / L) and encouraged the CCCF to take into account the new work of the OIV on this issue, in order to avoid any duplication or incoherence in the potential limits in the future.

Works in connection with the Codex Committee on Food Labeling

At its last session, the CCFL considered the items identified as potential work and noted broad support for them, and in particular for the following: internet sales/e-commerce; allergen labelling; innovation – use of technology in food labelling; alcoholic beverages labelling; criteria for the definition of “high in” nutritional descriptors for fats, sugars and sodium; and labelling of foods in multipack format.

As it has been noted in the CCFL report RP18/FL, while there was broad support for work on these items, some concerns were raised on the proposed work on alcoholic beverages labelling, and there was already considerable work on alcoholic beverages labelling being undertaken in other international fora such as the Organisation internationale de la vigne et du vin (OIV) and Codex work was therefore not necessary. In addition, a comprehensive review of national legislation and work in international fora was needed.

The OIV assures Codex that it will bring all its proficiency and expertise in wine and alcoholic beverages to CCFL in this field.

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.

Participation in the Panel ‘Food Authenticity and Integrity’

The OIV will participate in the panel ‘Food Authenticity and Integrity’ convened on the occasion of the 41st session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

In addition to the principles of Codex in regards to consumer protection and the integrity of international commerce, the OIV endeavours to guarantee the authentic nature and organoleptic qualities of wine.

The defense of the authenticity and identity of wine has arisen at the CCFA via the introduction of oenological practices in the General Standard for Food Additives.

The Codex committee on Food Additives has, in a general manner, agreed to these principles “The Maximum level of the additive in grape wine set as Good Manufacturing Practice must not result in (i) the modification of the natural and essential characteristics of the wine and (ii) a substantial change in the composition of the wine”

For the OIV the authenticity and identity of viticultural products is a key action as the OIV is charged in the *Agreement Establishing the International Organisation of Vine and Wine* with the creation of proposals relating to:

- (i) guaranteeing the authenticity of vine products, especially with regard to consumers, in particular in connection with the information provided on labels
- (ii) protecting geographical indications, especially vine- and winegrowing areas and the related appellations of origin, whether designated by geographical names or not, insofar as they do not call into question international agreements relating to trade and intellectual property,
- (iii) improving scientific and technical criteria for recognising and protecting new vitivinicultural plant varieties

The vision of guaranteeing the authenticity and identity of wine is long term. Wine is not an everyday foodstuff, it is a product that has existed for thousands of years which is impossible to disentwine from the history of humanity.

In this framework multiple elements but be taken into account.

1. Oenological Practices

For the OIV these practices and also oenological treatments take into account the following.

- **Consumer Safety**

The work of the OIV in this domain is based, in particular, on evaluations of the safety of food additives of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA).

- **Preserving the original qualities of grapes and wine**

Certain oenological practices are also subject to maximum dosages. For example:

- Acidification and certain stabilisers.
- Dealcoholisation, where limits were fixed in order to fit the definition of wine past which the product is no longer considered a wine and other definitions apply.

- **Not misleading consumers**

Certain practices are prohibited, such as colouring and aromatization, except for certain specific categories on wine.

2. Indications of Origin

Indications used for products which have a precise geographic origin and specific qualities or is known due to its links with the place of origin. These include, notably, Geographic Indications, Appellations of Origin or in certain countries Geographic Areas.

3. Implementation of Methods or Means to Assure and Control Authenticity

- **Traceability Norms**

In 2007 the OIV published Traceability Guidelines as the base of the development of a coherent and harmonized approach to traceability which is applicable between countries for the vitivincultural sector. Its objectives include ensuring, throughout the production process, supply chain and the commercial life-cycle of a product, the availability, as appropriate, of key information to the competent authorities, sector operators, distributors, retailers and consumers. These OIV Guidelines are based on the Codex norm on traceability.

- **Methods of Analysis to Control Traceability and Origin**

The OIV has adopted multiple analytical methods, which are internationally accepted. Among these certain regarding methods of analysis for isotopic ratio determination to verify:

- The Origin of Water (watering-down)
- The Origin of CO₂ in Sparkling Wines
- The Origin of Sugar (enrichment)
- The Origin of Ethanol

Methods have also been adopted for certain trace elements, those least affected by technological factors such as earth alkalis, lithium, rubidium and strontium which are pertinent for the authentication of geographic origin. However, macro and micro-nutrients which are subject to substantial change during the course of technological processes and could be useful in the case of raisins, juices and musts are less so in the case of wine.

Therefore, via its network of over 1000 experts, the OIV promotes viticulture which responds to the expectations and demands of consumers in safety, quality, diversity and identity as well as also to the general citizen via the use of practices which respect the environment.

Today in the domain of the authenticity of products and wine in particular, while international norms have grown significantly due to the mechanisms put in place by the WTO, the relationship between the Codex Alimentarius and the OIV should be consolidated, in particular in the wine and vine sectors.