

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: EU Commission Proposes an Update to Labeling Rules for Wine

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Report Highlights:

On March 28, 2025 the European Commission published a proposal for a Regulation laying down a range of measures to support the EU wine industry. This includes the creation of common product denominations for lower alcohol wine products across the Single Market with “alcohol-free” and “alcohol-light” wines. The proposal also addresses the non-harmonization between Member States of the electronic presentation of the list of ingredients and nutrition declaration.

On March 28, 2025, the European Commission published a [legislative proposal](#) that introduces changes to wine labeling rules in the EU. The proposal also introduces changes to vine planting schemes in the EU and financial support for wine growers. This report only covers changes to labeling requirements.

In 2024, the United States exported \$167 million of wines and related products to the European Union, making the EU the second largest market for U.S. wines after Canada.

“Alcohol-free” and “alcohol-light” wines

In response to consumer demand for wine products with a reduced alcohol content, the European Commission proposes to create two definitions to harmonize the use of terms used to describe these products:

- **“alcohol-free”** for wine with an actual alcoholic strength not exceeding 0.5% by volume; accompanied by the expression “0.0%”, if the actual alcoholic strength does not exceed 0.05% by volume.
- **“alcohol-light”** for wine with an actual strength above 0.5% by volume and at least 30% below the minimum actual alcoholic strength of the category before de-alcoholisation.

For products that are designated on the label as “alcohol-free” or “alcohol-light”, the designation of the category shall be accompanied by the expression “produced by de-alcoholisation.”

Harmonization of the presentation of the ingredients and nutrition declaration

In December 2021, the European Union adopted new rules introducing a compulsory nutrition declaration and a compulsory list of ingredients for wine products sold on the EU market¹. EU rules leave producers the option of having the nutrition declaration on the package or on a label limited to the energy value, which may be expressed by using the symbol “E” for energy. In such cases, the full nutrition declaration shall be provided by electronic means identified on the package or on a label attached thereto (e.g. via a QR code). However, implementation in the different Member States has been diverging and there is a lack of harmonization on the presentation of the nutrition and ingredient declaration across the European Union, especially if producers decided to use a QR code. This has led to increased costs for U.S. wine producers who want to export to the EU.

Therefore, with this new proposal, the European Commission is requesting the authority from the co-legislators to propose, through secondary legislation, the harmonization of:

- The identification on the package or label of the electronic list of ingredients and nutrition declaration, including by means of a pictogram or symbol instead of words.
- The form and layout of the information provided by electronic means.

¹ For more information, please see [GAIN Report New EU Labeling Rules for Wines](#).

The harmonization is expected to reduce red tape and costs for U.S. exporters.

Next Steps:

The publication of this proposal initiates the beginning of the EU legislative process. The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, as co-legislators, will now assess the Commission's legislative proposal. Amendments to the legislative proposal are done separately by the Parliament and Council; however, negotiations will eventually occur to find institutional agreement before the proposals are adopted as official EU law.

Once this proposal is adopted and becomes law, the Commission will need to draft a delegated regulation to harmonize presentation rules. This delegated regulation will then need to be approved by Parliament and Council, without the possibility of amendments. Until this future delegated act is adopted, current rules on labeling will continue to apply.

Attachments:

No Attachments.