

Guide to meet grape wine labelling requirements



A Name or description of the food

The name of the wine must accurately describe the wine and not be misleading. See Standard 1.2.2 Food Standards Code.

B Net contents

A wine label must include the net contents i.e. 750mL. See Weights and Measures Regulations.

C Alcohol content

A wine label must include an alcohol declaration. See Standard 2.7.1 Food Standards Code.

General requirements

Vintage, variety, area statements

A wine label must meet the 85 percent rule for any statements made about vintage, variety, area. In summary the wine must contain at least 85 percent of the vintage, variety, area included in the statement. See Wine Specifications Notice and Page 3 of this guide.

There are also some synonyms that can be used if making a statement about the variety. See the OIV guide – New Zealand section for a list of the wine varieties and their synonyms.

Legibility

Wine labels must be easy to read and in English. The information must be in prominent type which is distinct from the background. Retailers or manufacturers may choose to present the required information in other languages too. In that case the information must not be different to the information presented in English. See Standard 1.2.9.

Labels must tell the truth

Information on the wine label should be clear and accurate. You cannot include misleading information on the label. See Fair Trading Act.

Important: For full details of requirements refer to the websites for FSANZ – Australian New Zealand Food Standards Code, MPI – wine section labelling and Commerce Commission – Fair Trading Act. Please also note that these requirements are for grape wine sold in New Zealand. For grape wine that is exported please refer to the MPI website – wine section exports.

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D Warning and advisory statements

A wine label must include an allergen declaration if the wine contains >10mg/Kg of sulphur dioxide. A wine label must also include an allergen declaration if milk, egg and fish (except isinglass) are present. See Standard 1.2.3. Food Standards Code.

E Country of origin

A wine label must include a statement indicating the country of origin. See Wine Regulations.

F Name and address of the business

A wine label must include the physical address of the supplier. The supplier may be the producing winery, packer, vendor or importer. See Standard 1.2.2. Food Standards Code.

G Nutrition, health and related claims

A nutrition content or health claim cannot be made for wine containing more than 1.15 percent alcohol by volume.

You can make a nutrition content claim about energy content or carbohydrate content. See Standard 1.2.7 Food Standards Code.



H Standard drinks

A wine label must include a standard drinks declaration. See Standard 2.7.1. Food Standards Code.

I Lot identification

A wine label must include lot identification on the label or bottle. See Standard 1.2.2. Food Standards Code.

If there is just one bottling run for a particular wine then there is no need to include a lot number. The name or description of the wine would be sufficient for lot identification.

Important: For full details of requirements refer to the websites for FSANZ – Australian New Zealand Food Standards Code, MPI – wine section labelling and Commerce Commission – Fair Trading Act. Please also note that these requirements are for grape wine sold in New Zealand. For grape wine that is exported please refer to the MPI website – wine section exports.

85 percent rule



From vintage 2007, wine label statements about grape variety, vintage or the area where the grapes were grown (area of origin) must meet the “85 percent rule”.

1. If the label states that the wine is from a single grape variety, vintage or area of origin, it must be at least 85 percent from that variety, vintage or area e.g. a “2007” wine must contain at least 85 percent of vintage 2007 wine.
2. If the label states the wine is a blend of grape varieties, vintages or areas of origin, at least 85 percent of the blend must be from those varieties, vintages or areas e.g. a “Chardonnay Chenin Blanc” must contain at least 85 percent from Chardonnay and Chenin Blanc grapes.
3. If the label says the wine is a combination of grape variety, vintage, and area of origin, the combination referred to must be at least 85 percent of that wine e.g. “2008 Marlborough Pinot Noir” must contain a minimum of 85 percent Pinot Noir from Marlborough that was harvested in 2008.
4. Blend statements must be presented in descending order of proportion in the blend. e.g. “Chardonnay Chenin Blanc” must contain more Chardonnay than Chenin Blanc in the blend.
5. You cannot include a claim about grape variety, vintage or area of origin if the wine contains a greater percentage of wine from another grape variety, vintage or area not referred to on the label. e.g. a wine that contains 75 percent Cabernet Sauvignon, 15 percent Pinotage and 10 percent Merlot could be referred to as a “Cabernet Pinotage” or a “Cabernet Pinotage Merlot” but not a “Cabernet Merlot”.
6. Export wine may make claims about grape variety, vintage or area of origin that differ from New Zealand’s requirements when the overseas market access requirements (OMAR) have been notified under the Wine Act.

Yeasts (up to a maximum of 50ml/L) and brandy or other spirit used for fortification may be excluded from the calculations.

Note: The 85% rule is based on requirements in Part 2 of the Wine Specifications Notice.