

6. Labelling

6.1 The EU has laid down comprehensive rules governing the labelling of still and liqueur wines, sparkling and semi-sparkling wines. The purpose of these rules is to provide consumers with sufficiently clear and accurate information to enable them to identify the origin and quality status of any wine put on sale, and to prevent them from being misled or confused by information displayed on the label.

6.2 Council Regulation (EC) No 1493/99 contains general rules on the description and presentation of still wines, with more detailed rules in Commission Regulation (EC) No 753/02. Council Regulation (EC) No 1493/99 (Annex VIII) contains general rules on the description and presentation of sparkling wines. For further information concerning Semi-Sparkling and Liqueur wines please consult the WSB.

6.3 The wine sector labelling provisions apply to all wine produced and marketed in the UK. The type of information which may be shown falls into three categories:

- **Compulsory (Mandatory) Information** which is necessary to enable the product to be identified. Must be grouped together in the same field of vision (so that it can be seen without having to turn the bottle) and in easily readable, indelible characters that show up clearly against the background on which it is printed and can be clearly distinguished from all other writings and designs. It should be displayed in English.
- **Optional Information (specified)** that provides supplementary information about the product.
- **Additional Optional Items** (which do not conflict with either of above).

6.3.1 Mandatory and optional labelling information may be displayed either on a label(s) affixed to the container or directly on the container itself. 'Labelling' means all references, symbols, illustrations and marks or any other description which serve to distinguish the product and which appears on the same container, including closure, or on tags attached to the container and the sheathing covering the neck of bottles.

6.3.2 Information that does not fall into the permitted mandatory or optional information categories may not be indicated on the label (but see section 6.7.4).

6.3.3 The rules on description and presentation do not simply cover the description of wine on labels. They also apply to information contained in:

- official documents, such as records and accompanying documents.
- commercial documents, particularly invoices and delivery notes.
- in advertising material (see section 6.12).

6.4 Foodstuffs Regulations

Although many aspects of wine labelling are set out in wine regulations, food regulations apply whenever there are no specific wine provisions. The main areas are:

- Nominal volume measurement.
- Lot marking.

- Food labelling provisions, not otherwise covered by wine sector regulations.

Under UK legislation these are the responsibility of Local Authorities, who also have responsibility for Weights and Measures and Food Labelling Regulations. Trading Standards should be consulted about these issues.

6.5 Trades Descriptions Act 1968

In the UK, EU wine regulations are supplemented by the **Trade Descriptions Act 1968**, which makes it a criminal offence to apply a false or misleading description to wine **sold by retail** (if deception occurs the Theft Act 1968 could also be invoked). The Act is enforced by local authorities trading standards departments.

6.6 Exemptions

Bottled wine must usually be labelled before it leaves the producer's premises. However, a label is not required in the following circumstances (Art 5.1 Reg. 753/02):

- batches of wine not exceeding 15 litres and not intended for sale.
- wine intended for the domestic consumption of the producer and his employees.
- wine transported between two or more establishments, or between vineyards and wine-making plants. In either case the wine belongs to the same undertaking, or wine is being returned to its owner on completion of one of the operations listed in section 5.1. In the latter case, the exemption only applies **if no sale of wine or grapes has taken place**.

Movement of unlabelled wine requires the use of accompanying documents prepared by the consignor, except as shown in section 5.1. If there is any doubt as to the necessity for these documents, the WSB should be consulted before transporting the wine.

6.7 English and Welsh Table Wine

EU wine regulations distinguish between table wines described by reference to a geographical area and those which do not declare their geographical origin. Table wines entitled to show a geographical unit must be described as 'Regional Wines' but only after satisfying analytical and tasting criteria.

Table wine must be made from vine varieties authorised for cultivation in the UK (see 6.13). For details of geographical units authorised to produce 'Regional Wines' see Section 7.

Although it is legal to produce wine in the UK using grapes from other EC countries, it is assumed, for the purposes of this document, that wines will only be made using authorised grape varieties grown in the UK. For information about non-UK sourced grapes please contact the WSB.

6.7.1 The minimum natural alcoholic strength for grapes/grape must to be enriched is 5%. The minimum actual alcoholic strength is 8.5%. The total alcoholic strength (maximum-**unenriched** wines) is 15%. (For enrichment criteria- 'all wines'- see Section 4.3.3)

6.7.2 Compulsory (Mandatory) Information

The following information must appear on the label, in a single field of vision (apart from the Lot Number and ingredients listing).

- The words – ‘Table Wine’
- Country of Origin ‘UK’ (for Table Wine sent to another country)
- Bottler Details
- Nominal Volume
- Actual Alcoholic Strength
- Allergenic Ingredients (mandatory from 25th November 2005)
- Lot Number (not on the closure)

An example is included at 6.8.

Bottler Details: Name, local administrative address and member state of the responsible bottler. The local administrative area and member state in which the bottling took place be included. Preceded by the words ‘Bottled by’ or ‘Bottler’ or, in the case of wine bottled under contract, ‘Bottled for’. The address and member state (**UK**) of the bottler must not be indicated in characters greater than half the size of the words ‘Table Wine’ and must not include the name of a Quality Wine. The text must appear in letters of the same type and size. The name and address of the bottler may be replaced by a Code Number issued by the WSB. Written application for issue of a bottler code number should be made to WSB Head Office. When a code is used, the name and address of the person marketing the wine must be shown e.g. Selected by....

Nominal Volume: It shall be stated on the label in litres, centilitres or millilitres and expressed in figures, accompanied by the unit of measurement used. The information shall be shown in figures at least 6mm high, if the nominal volume is greater than 100cl, at least 4mm high if equal to or less than 100cl, but greater than 20cl, and at least 3mm high if equal to or less than 20cl. For detailed information please consult Weights and Measures legislation.

Actual Alcoholic Strength: Must be expressed in ‘whole’ or ‘half’ unit formats e.g. XX% vol. or YY.5% vol. and may be preceded by the words ‘Actual Alcoholic Strength’; ‘Actual Alcohol’ or the abbreviation ‘Alc’. Min height i) 3mm : over 20cl-100cl ii) 5mm : over 100cl iii) 2 mm : 20cl or less

Ingredients: From 25th November 2004 it is optional to record details of certain allergens on the label, but from 25th November 2005 it will become a mandatory requirement. For wine the main allergen is sulphur dioxide. Where the finished wine contains more than 10 milligrams per litre of free SO₂, which will apply to most wines, the label must include the term ‘contains sulphites’ or ‘contains sulphur dioxide’. The wording can be of any size as long as it is ‘readable’
Lot Number: The lot mark is to be in accordance with Lot Marking Regulations 1996 - SI No 1502.

6.7.3 Optional Information (Specified)

May be shown either on the same label as the compulsory items or on another label (permitted for all wines). It may be displayed in any official language of the EU, but it is recommended that only English should be used in order to reduce the possibility of confusion.

The following are examples of the type of information that may be included:

- (i) An indication as to whether the wine is **red, white** or **rosé**.
- (ii) Details of persons taking part in marketing the wine. Those involved in marketing would come under the supplementary descriptions 'wine-grower', 'harvested by', 'distributed by' etc, additional to the bottler details.
- (iii) Type of Product - defined as residual sugar content (i.e. Dry, Medium Dry, Medium or Medium Sweet, Sweet).

Dry	Maximum of 4g/l, or 9g/l where the total acidity content is not more than 2g/l below the residual sugar content.
Medium Dry	The residual sugar content must exceed the maximum for "dry" but not exceed 12g/l, or 18g/l where the total acidity content is not more than 10g/l below the residual sugar content.
Medium or Medium Sweet	The residual sugar content must exceed the maximum for "medium dry" but not exceed 45g/l.
Sweet	At least 45g/l.

- (iv) Brand Name. A brand name may be used providing it is not likely to cause confusion or mislead but must not include geographical origin, vine variety etc. (Reg 1493/99 Annex V11.F).

The following are examples of the type of information that may not be included:

- (i) Details of vintage and/or vine variety (Reg. 753/02).
- (ii) The name of the vineyard (Reg. 753/02).

Consumer recommendations may only relate to: dishes with which the wine concerned may be served; the manner of serving the wine; the handling of wine containing deposits (tartrate); acceptability of the wine for religious purposes; and storage.

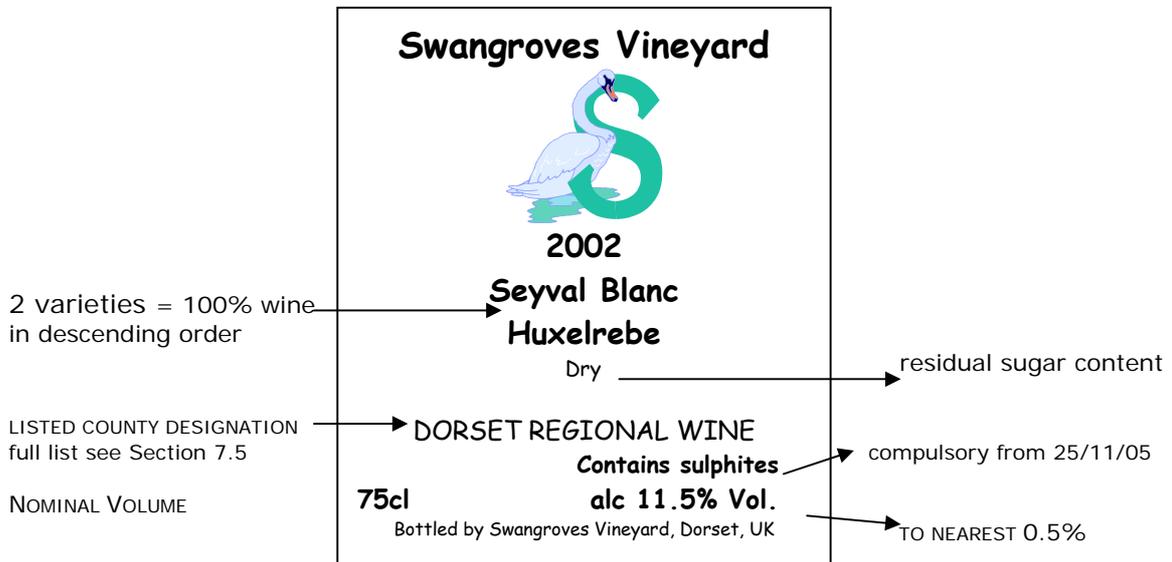
6.7.4 non-labelling information

Apart from the permitted mandatory and optional information there are a few other particulars which may be indicated on the label or container of a wine. Strictly speaking these particulars do not form part of the 'labelling' of the wine, since they do not relate to its description or identity. They include:

- (i) Details of the manufacture or volume of the container. These may be indicated only if they are inscribed directly and indelibly on the container.
- (ii) Signs, designs or figure codes (such as bar codes) which identify the product.
- (iii) The price of the wine.

6.8 English and Welsh Regional Wine

Regional (Table) Wine



Regional Wine is an 'upper' category of Table Wine (equivalent to French Vin de Pays etc.) The minimum natural alcohol is 6% and minimum actual alcohol is 8.5% (see [Table / Regional / Quality Wines, - a summary of the parameters](#)). 85% of the wine must originate from grapes grown in the stated region. For details of approved geographical origins (regions) see Annex .

Regional Wine application procedures are administered by the UKVA, from whom application forms can be obtained. Details are set out in the Defra 'Notice to Vine Growers and Wine Producers'. For further details of the Scheme see Section 7 .

6.8.1 Compulsory (Mandatory) Information

Please refer to 6.8 above. The words 'Regional Wine' together with an approved geographic unit must appear on the label. Other information as shown at section 6.7.2 .

6.8.2 Optional Information (Specified)

Vine Variety: The name of a variety (or an approved synonym) may be shown provided it is authorised. If only one variety is indicated, then at least 85% of the wine must derive from that variety. If two or three varieties are indicated then the wine must be made entirely of those varieties. The vine varieties must be shown in descending order of proportions used and in the same size and characters.

More than three varieties may only be shown on a label which is not in the same field of vision as mandatory information and with maximum height 3mm.

(note: if grape must, concentrated grape must or rectified concentrated grape must is used to sweeten the wine, it need not be obtained from the variety or varieties which are named on the label).

Vintage: Mention of the vintage year is allowed only if at least 85% of the wine originates from the year indicated.

Indication of Bottling on the Producer’s Premises: The expression ‘Bottled by the Producer’ may be used provided that the wine was bottled:

- at a vineyard where the grapes were harvested and vinified.
- by a group of vineyards.
- by a producer group

Awards: Awards granted by an official body or an officially recognised body may be shown, provided that authenticity can be demonstrated by way of documents identifying the geographical unit in which it originates and the vintage. A list of recognised bodies is published by the European Commission (2003 C96). For further information please contact the WSB.

Name of Vineyard: The name of a vineyard may be shown for a ‘Regional’ wine, provided the wine was made exclusively from grapes harvested from vines at that vineyard and the winemaking entailed the active involvement of the grower.

6.8.3 Additional optional items

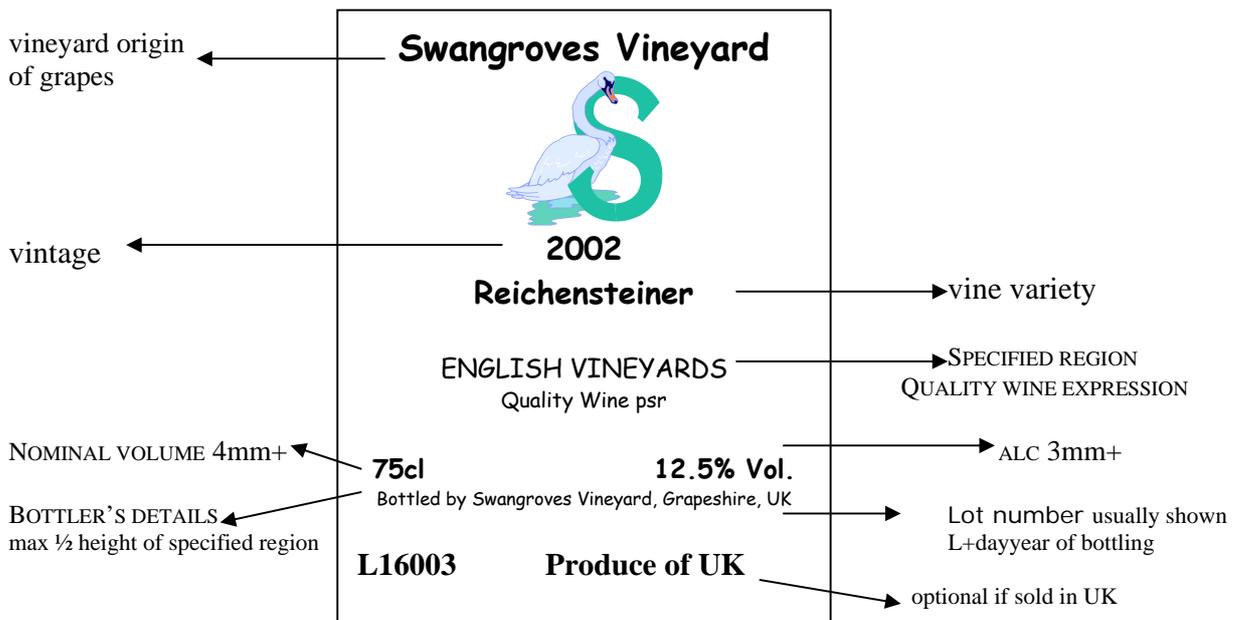
Allowed, providing these do not mislead nor cause confusion with compulsory or specified optional information

6.9 English and Welsh Quality Wine

Quality Wine psr label

UPPER CASE = mandatory item

lower case = optional item



This description applies to wines that have been successfully submitted under the UK Quality Wine Scheme. The minimum natural alcohol is 6% and total alcohol 9%. For details of enrichment see Section 4.8.1 . Full details of Quality Wine production requirements and application procedures are given in Defra ‘Notice to Vine Growers and Wine Producers. Application forms are obtainable from the WSB.

6.9.1 Quality Term

The Quality Term must include:

- (a) The name of the specified region, ie: English Vineyards or Welsh Vineyards (Quality Wine must originate in a specified region).
- (b) The term ‘Quality Wine Produced in a Specified Region’ or ‘Quality Wine psr’ must appear on the label.

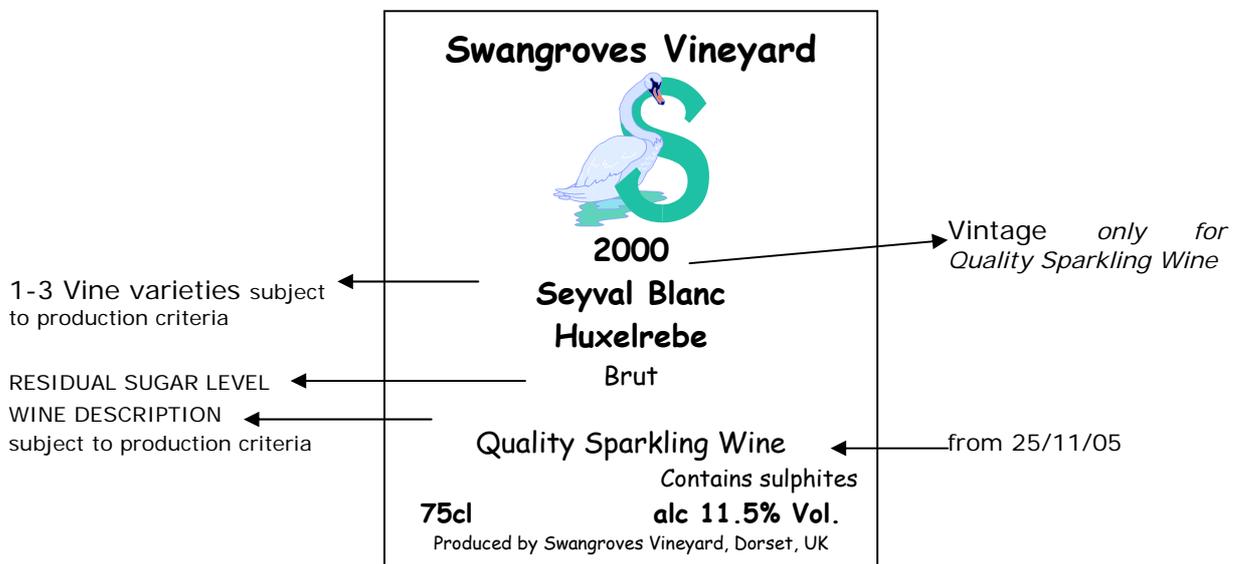
and must appear as follows:

ENGLISH (or WELSH) VINEYARDS QUALITY WINE PSR

6.9.2 Mandatory and Optional Information

In other respects the mandatory and optional information requirements are largely the same as those for Regional Wines (see section 6.8) and 6.9 illustration .

6.10 Sparkling and Quality Sparkling Wine



6.10.1 Mandatory (Compulsory) Information (see figure).

The Term ‘Quality Sparkling Wine’, ‘Aerated Sparkling Wine’ or ‘Sparkling Wine’ as appropriate:

- (a) The term ‘Quality Sparkling Wine’ is restricted to wines which satisfy the strict production criteria laid down by Council Regulation (EC) 1493/99 Annexes V and VIII for those products (see Section 4.4).
- (b) The term ‘Aerated Sparkling Wine’ must be used (in letters of the same type) when the wine is made by carbonation. It must be supplemented by the words ‘**obtained by the addition of/adding carbon dioxide**’ to appear in letters of the same size type and on the same line or immediately below.
- (c) The term ‘Sparkling Wine’ should be used in all other cases.

The Name and Address of the Producer or Vendor

Producer means the natural or legal person or group of persons by whom production is carried out. Production means the processing of fresh grapes, grape musts and wines into a ‘sparkling wine’ product.

The producer or vendor address should consist of the local authority area in which the head office is situated, followed by the words ‘United Kingdom’. The name and address must be preceded by the words ‘producer’, ‘produced by’, ‘distributor’ or ‘distributed by’ as appropriate.

Nominal Volume

This is expressed in litres, centilitres or millilitres.

Actual Alcoholic Strength

This must be indicated in units or half units, using the symbol ‘XX% vol’. The strength shown may not be more than 0.8% higher or lower than the strength determined by analysis. The figure indicating the actual alcoholic strength may be preceded by the words ‘actual alcohol’ or ‘actual alcoholic strength’.

Residual Sugar Content

Permitted terms are as follows:

Permitted Term	Residual Sugar Content
Brut Nature	Less than 3g/l
Extra Brut	0 - 6g/l.
Brut	Less than 15g/l.
Extra Dry	12 - 20g/l.
Dry	17 - 35g/l.
Medium Dry	33 - 50g/l.

Lot Marking

In accordance with the Lot Marking Regulations 1996 SI No 1502 (enforced by Local Authorities).

Allergenic Ingredients - sulphites

Requirement becomes mandatory from 25th November 2005.

6.10.2 Optional Information

The rules governing the use of optional information on sparkling wine labels are not as strict as those for still wines. In general terms any items must not be likely to mislead the consumer, and must be distinguishable from mandatory information. However, the use of certain types of optional information is regulated by EC Regulation 1493/99 Annex V111. In particular, it should be noted that the following items may only be used to describe a Quality Sparkling Wine:

- the term 'Quality Sparkling Wine'
- The defined geographical units '**England**' or '**Wales**'
- the term 'Bottle Fermented' providing the wine is made sparkling by a second alcoholic fermentation in the bottle; production process last a minimum of 9 months; fermentation and cuvee on lees is for at least 90 days and separation from the lees is by racking or disgorging.
- The terms 'Bottle Fermented by the Traditional Method' or 'Traditional Method' providing the wine is made sparkling by a second alcoholic fermentation in the bottle; remains in contact with the lees for at least 9 months and within the same undertaking from the time when the cuvee is constituted; and is separated from the lees by disgorging.
- **Vintage Year.** The 85% rule applies with the exception of the products contained in triage liqueur or expedition liqueur.
- Reference to '**Superior Quality**', including the terms '**Premium**' and '**Reserve**'
- The names of up to **Three Vine Varieties.** The 85% rule applies for one variety. If three varieties are named they must constitute 100% of the wine and be shown in descending order of proportion, provided the distinction is essential to convey the product's distinctive character. [Sparkling Wines are also entitled to show vine varieties provided that specific production requirements (including secondary fermentation of 60 days or 30 in containers with stirrers) are satisfied].

Note: Use of the term 'Method Champenoise' is prohibited

The terms 'Bottle Fermented by the Traditional Method', 'Traditional Method', 'Classical Method' or 'Classical Traditional Method' may be used providing the wine is made sparkling by a second alcoholic fermentation in the bottle; remains without interruption in contact with the lees for at least nine months in the same undertaking from the time when the cuvee is constituted; is separated from the lees by disgorging.

There are no restrictions on where optional information may appear. It may be displayed in any official language of the EU, but it is recommended that only English should be used in order to reduce the risk of confusion.

6.10.3 Other Matters

Welsh Quality, Regional or Table Wine and Sparkling Wine produced in Wales may show the labelling information in Welsh provided the details also appear in English. The use of labels only in Welsh is not permitted.

6.11 Overseas Markets

English and Welsh Wine produced, labelled and packaged in accordance with the wine regulations and accompanied by the necessary documentation should not normally experience any problems when exported to another Member State.

In the case of wine exported to a Third Country it is advisable to check with a commercial agent to find out whether any particular labelling requirements are imposed which differ from those laid down by the EU. The wine regulations permit wine to be exported to Third Countries labelled with information not permitted on labels under EU rules but required under the legislation of the Third Country concerned.

There are a number of additional requirements for wines exported to the United States and exporters should contact a WSB Inspector.

6.12 Advertising

Advertising and advertising material are subject to rules, although not as detailed as those which apply to labels. Advertising includes leaflets, wine lists and other promotional material. Under UK and EU legislation advertising must be true and not likely to mislead the consumer, particularly as regards the nature, substance or quality of any food including wine. An obvious infringement would be the description of a sparkling wine as 'Champagne' if it did not originate from the Champagne region of France.