

7. Regional Wine Scheme - Procedures

Before a wine can be labelled a Regional Wine, thus allowing the grape variety, vineyard and vintage to be stated, it must be declared analytically sound and be tasted by an expert panel. Growers and producers may enter wines for assessment via the Regional Wine Scheme either by contacting the office of the Representative Industry Body (RIB) or the organiser of a recognised competition. Details of the current RIB and the dates by which applications must be made, are circulated annually by Defra with the Notice to Growers.

7.1 An application consists of:

- Two bottles of wine from the batch of wine for which Regional Wine status is being sought.
- A numbered application form.
- A post-bottling analysis from the designated laboratory, or a Producer's Analysis Certificate.
- Payment of entry fee.
- Alternatively wines may qualify for regional status if they achieve awards in recognised regional or national competitions

7.2 The RIB will:

- check the application forms, analyses, and Producer's Analysis Certificates.
- acknowledge receipt of entry fee.
- select 10% of the wines submitted with Producer Analysis Certificates for independent analysis. If required applicants will be required to send one bottle of the selected wine to the designated laboratory. Copies of analysis certificates will be provided, together with a letter stating whether the wines have passed or failed. Reasons for failure will be provided.
- conduct a tasting of all wines with an acceptable analysis on the next scheduled day.
- notify applicants whether the wines entered have passed or failed Regional Wine Status. Reasons for failure will be provided.
- notify the WSB of passes and failures, including results from Regional Competitions.

7.3 Independent Analysis

To ensure that applicants who choose to use a Producers Analysis Certificate do not receive preferential treatment, it is a requirement of legislation that 10% of wines submitted without an independent analysis certificate are sent to a designated analyst. The applicant will not be charged a further fee and is entitled to a copy of the analysis.

Half of the sampled wines will be selected on a risk assessment basis. They will be selected from wineries demonstrating analysis failures in the recent past, and from wineries failing to demonstrate a good track record of analytical competence. The other half will be randomly selected.