



1. AMENDMENTS TO REGULATIONS OF LIQUOR PRODUCTS ACT
2. AMENDMENTS TO WINE OF ORIGIN SCHEME
3. MEAD AMENDMENTS

1 AMENDMENTS TO REGULATIONS OF THE LIQUOR PRODUCTS ACT

The Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development has recently approved and published amendments to the Regulations under the Liquor Products Act, 60 of 1989.

The updated Regulations can be downloaded [here](#). For easy reference additions are shown in red and deletions are struck through.

Noteworthy amendments are:

1.1 Spirit aperitif

Spirit aperitif, as one of the classes of spirit-based products, is now defined as:

*The product shall be produced by the addition of herbs, natural extracts of herbs, other flavourings of vegetable origin or flavourings which are nature-identical (excluding spirit flavourings and Cannabis flavourings), egg, milk, sugar of plant origin or water **to only one of the spirits** referred to in regulation 10 [grape spirit], 10A [100 % agave], 11 [husk spirit], 13 [brandy], 15 [whisky], 16 [malt whisky], 17 [blended whisky], 18 [cane spirit], 19 [rum], 21 [compound gin], 21A [infused gin], 21B [distilled gin] or 22 [vodka]. Words in square brackets [] and bolding added by writer for easier reading and emphasis respectively.*

A spirit aperitif shall have a minimum alcohol content of 24 % and a maximum of 30 %. A minimum sugar content no longer applies.

On a label the class designation must consist of the name of the spirit base with “aperitif”. For example: “Brandy aperitif”. Wherever it appears on a label the name of the spirit base must always be used in conjunction with and in letters of the same colour, type and size as the word “aperitif”.

The administering officer of the Liquor Products Act (Wendy Jonker - WendyJ@Dalrrd.gov.za) may until 31 December 2024 give permission for the sale of a spirit aperitif complying with the previous requirements.

1.2 Absinthe

Absinthe is now a separate spirit class with the following requirements:

Absinthe shall -

(a) be produced by -

- (i) *the distillation of any fermented harmless vegetable article with or over common wormwood (Atemisia absinthium L.), anise (Pimpinella anisum) in seed form and other flavourings of plant origin, but not extracts or essences thereof;*
 - (ii) *the redistillation of a spirit with or over common wormwood (Atemisia absinthium L.), anise (Pimpinella anisum) in seed form and other flavourings of plant origin, but not extracts or essences thereof; or*
 - (iii) *the admixing of the distillates referred to in subparagraphs (i) and (ii);*
- (b) *have a predominant taste and aroma characteristic of absinthe;*
 - (c) *contain at least 20 mg of thujone per litre of the final product; and*
 - (d) *have an alcohol content of at least 45 per cent.*

1.3 Flavoured/spiced rum

As is currently the case for vodka, it is now allowed to flavour rum. Flavoured/spiced rum must have a “discernible” rum taste as opposed to a “distinctive” rum taste for the unflavoured product.

For labelling the following applies:

If rum is flavoured, the word "rum" shall only be used on any label if it is used in conjunction with and in letters of the same colour, type and size as the name or names of the flavouring or flavourings and the word "flavoured" or, if that is the case, "infused": Provided that -

- (i) *the names of such flavourings may be substituted by a collective name for such flavourings; and*
- (ii) *if rum is spiced, the name or names of such spice or spices and the word "flavoured" or "infused" may be replaced by the word "spiced".*

1.4 Gin classes

Gin has now been split into three different classes – compound gin (Regulation 21), infused gin (Regulation 21A) and distilled gin (Regulation 21B). All these classes may be called just “gin” until 31 December 2024. Thereafter only distilled gin may be called just “gin”. A distilled gin may be called “London gin” or “London dry gin” if its sugar content is not more than 0,1 gram per liter and if the product is clear with no colour.

1.5 100 % agave

100 % agave is now a separate spirit class with the following requirements:

100 % agave shall -

- (a) *be distilled from fermented mash of agave hearts, also known as piñas, containing sugar obtained exclusively from such agave hearts;*
- (b) *have an alcohol content of at least -*

- (i) 40 per cent in the case of aged 100 % agave and extra-aged 100 % agave as defined in item 13E of Table 10;
- (ii) 38 per cent in the case of ultra-aged 100 % agave as defined in item 13E of Table 10;
and
- (iii) 43 per cent in all other cases.

1.6 Descriptors for pot still brandy and vintage brandy

The descriptors VS, VSOP, XO and XXO can only be used if the maturation requirements listed below are complied with.

VS = 3 years of oak maturation required

VSOP = 4 years of oak maturation required

XO = 10 years of oak maturation required

XXO = 14 years of oak maturation required

1.7 Cider requirements

Up to 25 % of the final volume of a cider may now consist of either pear juice or grape juice or a mixture thereof.

1.8 Méthode Cap Classique

As from 2023 harvested grapes, Méthode Cap Classique sparkling wine will be a separate class with its own requirements apart from Sparkling Wine according to the traditional method. The requirements for the latter will remain unchanged but will at that time no longer be able to use the designation Méthode Cap Classique or MCC. In addition, a new class - Méthode Cap Classique with Extended Lees Aging – was created. Certification in terms of the Wine of Origin Scheme is compulsory for MCC sparkling wines. See items 17A and 17B in Table 2 of the Regulations.

1.9 Rosé from white wine aged in wooden casks, previously used to age red wine

Above-mentioned was created as a new class of wine. See item 19a in Table 2 of the Regulations. For labelling requirements see Regulation 35(1)(aA).

1.10 Rules for “lower in alcohol” and “low in alcohol” for wine

For “lower in alcohol” (and the like) a maximum of 10 % actual alcohol is allowed. For “low/very low in alcohol” (and the like) a maximum of 4.5 % actual alcohol is allowed.

1.11 Wine additives

Calcium tartrate added as an approved additive to wine.

1.12 List of varieties allowed for wine production

Table 1 of the Regulations updated with new varieties and new synonyms.

2 AMENDMENTS TO WINE OF ORIGIN SCHEME

The Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development has recently approved and published amendments to the Wine of Origin Scheme.

The updated Scheme can be downloaded [here](#). For easy reference amendments are shown in red.

2.1 List of varieties allowed for production of certified wine

Table 1 of the Scheme updated with new varieties and new synonyms.

2.2 Indication of the name of an origin area

It is compulsory for a certified wine label to indicate the name of the origin area concerned together with the expression "Wine of Origin" or "W.O." in the prescribed manner. Once this requirement has been met, producers are free to use the name of such an origin area without the expression "Wine of Origin" or "W.O.". This has been the case since the Wine of Origin Scheme came into operation in 1973. For the avoidance of any doubt, it is now made even clearer in the Wine of Origin Scheme.

3 AMENDMENTS TO MEAD REGULATIONS

The Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development has recently approved and published amendments to the Mead Regulations.

The updated Mead Regulations can be downloaded [here](#). For easy reference additions are shown in red and deletions are struck through.

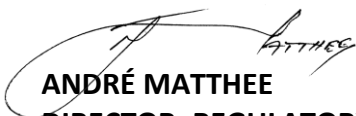
The Mead Regulations have been extensively amended. Especially Table 2 (classes for mead and requirements for such classes) and Table 3 (substances which may be added to mead). Other noteworthy amendments are:

2.1 Compulsory designation

The expression "alcoholic honey beverage" was the compulsory designation for all meads. "Mead" may now be used in place of "alcoholic honey beverage".

2.2 Yeast

Previously only wine yeast was allowed to produce mead other than beer mead. Now any yeast is allowed, but beer mead is limited to ale or lager yeast.



ANDRÉ MATTHEE

DIRECTOR: REGULATORY SERVICES

WINE AND SPIRIT BOARD

Tel: 083 444 6963 **Email:** matthee@wo.org.za

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