



21 April 2009

Dear Interested Parties

Laboratory analysis for export wine

I write to outline in detail NZFSA's proposed way forward for the provision of the laboratory analysis service for export wine.

The current provider of this service, the Institute of Environmental Science and Research (ESR), has indicated that it intends to exit from the service at the end of the existing contract.

NZFSA is committed to introducing more contestability in this area when the current contract expires. We are currently deciding how the service and the cost recovery will be administered.

We intend to fully implement our laboratory recognition platform. This means that any laboratory can apply to be recognised by NZFSA and recognition is subject to their meeting specified criteria under the Wine Act 2003. Under this arrangement there won't be any commercial contract between NZFSA and any laboratory to provide export wine analysis.

These new arrangements allow for more than one laboratory to be recognised to provide the service. Exporters/winemakers will choose which laboratory they wish to use (if there is more than one recognised laboratory), and establish a direct commercial arrangement with that laboratory. These arrangements could extend beyond the regulatory laboratory analysis.

Arrangements for the payment of analysis services in a Crown funded environment have yet to be finalised. Our proposal is that exporters/winemakers will pay laboratories directly for analysis. If Crown funding continues, NZFSA will agree a fixed cost that Crown will cover per sample and exporters/winemakers will invoice NZFSA for a rebate. If Crown funding ceases, then the arrangements for user-pays will be in place, and laboratories will agree fees with clients in the usual way.

Winemakers would send their sample directly to the laboratory and two samples from the same batch to the Wine Export Certification Service for sensory analysis and reference.

Recognised laboratories will be able to provide the service from 1 October 2009.

The regulatory platform to support recognition of laboratories is already in place. The Wine (Recognised Laboratory) Notice 2007, the Wine (Recognised Laboratories) Amendment Notice 2007 and the Operational Guideline: criteria for NZFSA approval of export wine test methods are all on our website. We are in the process of making some nominal amendments to these documents, and hope to have new drafts for you to consider as soon as possible.

<http://www.nzfsa.govt.nz/wine/legislation/recognised-laboratory-notice.pdf>

<http://www.nzfsa.govt.nz/wine/legislation/recognised-laboratory-amendment-notice.pdf>

<http://www.nzfsa.govt.nz/wine/recognised-laboratory/test-method-approval-guideline/index.htm>

We are also working on administrative criteria for laboratories. This will form part of the letter of recognition.

Finally, recognised laboratories will transfer test results directly into a web portal where exporting winemakers are able to view the status of their wine and apply for export documentation.

Yours sincerely

[Signed]

Kay Shapland
Assistant Director
Trade Standards