



## WineGB response to DEFRA Wine Regulation 2011 questionnaire

5th August 2024

### **Do you consider that the Wine Regulations 2011 have met the purpose for which they were intended, as set out above?**

Yes. The Wine Regulations 2011 (WR11) implemented the then new EU Wine Regime in the UK. This new regime altered and clarified the market for wine in the EU, introducing several new generic terms (which are recognised globally), clarified the specification of what constituted a Quality Scheme and simplified the procedures for establishing such Schemes.

The WR11 gave force to these regime rules within the UK and gave enforcement powers to appropriate Government bodies. The WR11 also established two Quality Schemes in the UK with the intention of protecting the terms “English” and “Welsh” for use solely on wines made from grapes harvested in the UK, and subject to certain quality standards.

### **Do you consider that the objectives for which they were developed are still relevant today?**

Although the UK is no longer in the EU, there is still a need for an organised, orderly market for wine within the UK. The EU rules are, in the main, appropriate to the UK; although there are some aspects of the EU regime that could be dropped (as they are not relevant in the UK anymore) or simplified (because the UK market is smaller and less diverse than the EU market).

The two Quality Schemes are increasingly relevant for the UK wine producers. These schemes give the UK industry the opportunity to clarify the identity and manage standards of wine products from fruit grown in the UK. The recent proposed relaxation of market rules is likely to increase the need for the UK industry to utilise these Schemes.

## **Do you think there have been any unintended consequences from the Regulations?**

Not aware of any unintended consequences.

## **If you consider that they have met the purpose and the objectives are still relevant, is there a way the objectives could still be met using a less burdensome approach?**

Yes. The EU regime rules could be simplified for use in the UK market (because the UK market is smaller and less diverse than the EU market).

Many aspects of the EU regime relate to issues arising from areas outside the UK, which are not relevant here. Some of the EU regime rules relating to wine production are intended to manage politically sensitive issues where there are conflicting views across EU States/wine regions. Again, these rules could be simplified for the UK market and this could help UK producers.

## **Examples of potential simplifications**

Below are some examples of simplifications that could be made to the legislation introduced by the Wine Regulations 2011:

### **Reduce the risk of confusing consumers**

- The recent proposed amendments to allow wine be produced in the UK from fruit harvested abroad and the carbonating, sweetening and transformation of imported bulk wine raises concerns that consumers could be misled or confused. To reduce the risk of confusing consumers we would like to see the provenance rules simplified so that provenance refers solely to the country where grapes were harvested.
- Remove the option to use the country where the second fermentation took place as a term of provenance. (Existing EU wine products could be given protection here.)
- Retain the ban on blending imported fruit with fruit grown in the UK.
- Permit the use of a very small number of new terms which are more meaningful for consumers. (relating to sweetness and grape variety)

### **Improve the competitiveness of wine produced from fruit harvested in the UK**

- Improve the identity of English and Welsh wines by removing the concession in para 3 of Article 55 (607/2009). This concession has already been removed from EU regulations. Wines exported to the EU should show provenance as “Wine of United Kingdom” or one of the agreed designations settled on following the Wine Reforms Consultation undertaken earlier this year, and this should apply in the domestic market too. This is a significant change which would allow the UK industry to improve standards over time.
- Simplify the enrichment rules. These rules are unduly complicated and put the UK producers at a commercial disadvantage. We no longer need to accommodate the demands of Mediterranean countries.
- Ease some of the PDO restrictions to allow:
  - Use of Seyval (already done)
  - Use of oak chips

## **Areas that are no longer relevant**

Large sections of the regulations could now be greatly simplified or removed because they are no longer relevant to the UK market or because they are covered elsewhere. These include:

- Support measures
- Trade with third countries
- Production potential
- General provisions
- EU budget information
- Wine zones
- Administrative procedures to establish Traditional terms
- Use of EU symbols