

TO ALL WINE EXPORTERS

Procedures for Exporting Wine to the European Union

The European Union (EU) requires that a document known as the VII be used to export wines to the EU (Document For The Importation of Wine, Grape Juice, or Must Into The European Community). The VII form serves as a certificate of analysis and compliance with EU regulations in regard to enological practices. A laboratory, chemist, or enologist that has been certified by the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) must conduct the wine analysis. The exporter must utilize the services of a certified laboratory, chemist, or enologist.

There are two methods of processing the VII form: Self-certifying and non self-certifying. The type of category your company falls under will determine the method you use to process the VII form. TTB strongly recommends that you consider becoming a self-certifier. This is the most efficient way to export your product.

To become a self-certifying winery, the wine producer must submit a specifically worded statement labeled "Attachment IV" to:

Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau
International Trade Division (ITD)
1310 G St. NW, Suite 400W
Washington, D.C., 20220

An example of a blank Attachment IV with the required language can be found on page five of this document. The statement certifies that the wine exported to the EU complies with United States rules of production, has not been subjected to enological practices that are not permitted under EU regulations, and that exported wines will be accompanied by a properly completed VII form. Only an individual with signing authority recognized by TTB can fill out and sign the form. ITD will notify the EU when the winery becomes authorized to self-certify its wines on the VII forms. This notification is done twice a year, usually during the first week of February and the first week of August. Normally, the producing winery can begin self-certifying six weeks after the EU is notified by TTB.

Processing the VII Form.

A. For non-self-certifying wineries, the exporter must submit an original and three copies of the VII Form, the Attachment III certification statement, and a 750ml sample of the product, to a TTB certified laboratory, chemist, or enologist. An example of a blank Attachment III with the required language can be found on page five of this document.

The laboratory, chemist, or enologist will conduct the seven tests specified in Block 11 of the VII and complete the section to ensure that the standard analytical units of measurement are precise and accurate. The certifier will keep a copy of the VII Form for its records and forward the original, the remaining 2 copies and the Attachment III certification statement to:

Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau
International Trade Division
Attn: Export Certificate Program
1310 G St. NW, Suite 400W
Washington, DC 20220

The International Trade Division will complete Block 10 of the VII Form. The original VII Form along with the two copies will be returned to the exporter. The exporter must keep a copy of the form and forward the original and a copy along with the shipment.

B. For self-certifying wineries, the winery must submit an original and three copies of the VII form and a 750ml representative sample to a TTB certified laboratory, chemist, or enologist.

The laboratory, chemist, or enologist will determine and complete only the following items in Block 11: actual alcohol strength, total acidity, and total sulfur dioxide. They must ensure that the standard analytical units of measurement are precise and accurate.

The rest of the blocks in item 11 are left blank at this stage. The laboratory, chemist, or enologist will retain one copy of the VII form and return the original and three remaining copies back to the winery. An individual, with signing authority recognized by TTB, must complete the rest of the form. In Block 10, put a check in the box that states if the product is or is not for human consumption. In the space "Full name and address of the official agency;" type in

Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau
1310 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20220, U.S.A.

In the space immediately to the right of the address above, fill in the "place and date", delete or cross out the words "name and title of official", and then sign the form under the word "signature". A stamp is not needed.

In Block 11, the name and address of the laboratory is not required and may be left blank. Some choose to fill it in. In the space immediately to the right, fill in the "place and date", delete or cross out the words "name and title of official", then sign the form under the word "signature". A stamp is not needed. Keep one copy for your records. Per EU regulations, this company copy must be retained for five years. The original VII form and one copy are forwarded with the consignment.

C. Additional information on processing the VII Form:

1. The form needs to be filled out correctly to minimize delays. In Block 1 of the form, “Exporter’s name and Address” should agree with the exporter’s U.S. basic permit address held by the exporting winery or wholesaler and the basic permit number needs to be provided.
2. In the space to the right of Block 1 put in “U.S.A.” or “United States of America” in the space beside “Third Country of Issue”. Also in this block is a space for a Serial number. Put in two digits for the year, followed by a dash, and then the number for this submission. For example, if this is your fifth submission in the year 2004, the serial number will be 04-005.
3. The VII form is required for shipments going to European Member States ONLY.

Current members include the following countries:

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

4. In accordance with Article 42 of Reg. (EC) No. 555/2008, no certificate or analysis is needed for products in containers of 5 liters or less, with a non-reusable closing device, when the total shipment does not exceed 100 liters. A certificate is also not required in cases where wine and grape juice forms part of the personal property of private individuals transferring their normal place of residence from a third country to the European Union within the meaning of Article 2 of Regulation (EEC) No 918/83.
5. EU regulations and not those of the United States require the VII form.

It is the exporter’s responsibility to obtain the forms from private or EU government sources. ITD will fax or mail a copy of the VII form that can be used as a reference. Detailed information concerning the VII form can be found in Commission Regulation (EC) No. 555/2008 of 27 June 2008. This regulation, along with attached VII forms, can be found via a link on the USDA’s Foreign Agricultural Service website, at <http://www.useu.be/agri/usda.html>.

ATTACHMENT III

It is hereby certified that the consignment of wine referenced on Forms VII, identified by serial No. _____:

a) has been produced by i _____

b) will be exported by ii _____

c) complies with United States rules of production; and,

d) has not been subjected to enological practices which are not permitted under current EEC provisions relating to the import of the product in question.

It is further certified that the above referenced Forms VII have been completed in accordance with ATF Procedure 86-1 and subsequent amendments relating to the requirements thereof.

I, the undersigned, as the duly authorized representative of the above named exporter, certify the statements herein to be true and, furthermore, consent:

- upon request, to provide the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau any information required to evaluate the data included on the above referenced Forms VII; and,

- to the disclosure by the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau to the governing bodies of the European Economic Community and its Member States of any information which would have a material bearing on the representations made by this certificate.

Signature of Duly Authorized
Representative of Above Named Exporter

Date of Signature

Typed Name and Title of Above Representative

ⁱ Insert name, address and bonded winery registry number of producer as shown on "Wine Producer's and Blender's Basic Permit" (TTB F 5120.18).

ⁱⁱ Insert name, address and Basic Permit number of exporter as shown on "Wholesaler's Basic Permit" (TTB F 5170.3).

i
Insert name, address and bonded winery registry number as shown on "Wine Producer's and Blender's Basic Permit" (TTB F 5120.18).

ATTACHMENT IV

It is hereby certified that wine produced by i

1. _____

which is exported from the U.S. to the European Economic Community (EEC) by the above named producer on or after April 2, 1986:

- a. complies with United States rules of production;
- b. has not been subjected to enological practices which are not permitted under current EEC provisions relating to the import of the product in question; and,
- c. will be accompanied by forms VII completed in accordance with ATF Procedure 86-1 and any subsequent amendments relating to the requirements thereof.

I, the undersigned, as the duly authorized representative of the above named exporter, certify the statements herein to be true and, furthermore, consent:

- upon request, to provide the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau any information required to evaluate the data included on the above referenced Forms VII; and,

- to the disclosure by the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau to the governing bodies of the European Economic Community and its Member States of any information which would have a material bearing on the representations made by this certificate.

Signature of Duly Authorized
Representative of Above Named Winery

Date of Signature

Typed Name and Title of Representative Above