



Glossary of Label Terms

The following is a brief list of terms that are often used when discussing wine label approvals. If you have any questions regarding any of these terms or any terms that are not listed, please contact WineAmerica's Label Compliance Specialist at labels@wineamerica.org.

Allowable Revisions – The changes one can make to a previously approved label without resubmitting to the TTB. A list of these can be found on page three of the COLA application.

Appellation – The classification for geographical significance pertaining to where the grapes were grown that resulted in the wine. This can be a Country, State, County, or AVA (approved viticultural area). http://www.ttb.gov/appellation/us_by_ava.pdf.

Bottler's Statement – This statement is required on every label. It indicates who bottled the wine and also additional information such as who produced, cellared, or vinted the wine and their location.

Certificate of Exemption from Label Approval – This can be requested only if your wine will be sold within the State of production (and not outside of that State's borders). This exemption allows the applicant greater flexibility concerning label regulations (i.e. Appellation and Vintage requirements are relaxed)

Class/Type – Mandatory information. There are nine different and distinct classes of wine: grape wine, sparkling grape wine, carbonated grape wine, citrus wine, fruit wine, wine from other agricultural products (such as honey), aperitif wine, imitation or substandard wine and retsina wine. The type of wine is a specification of grape variety, such as Merlot or Pinot Noir.

COLA – Certificate of Label Approval- This is the technical name for the label application.

DBA – “Doing Business As;” Some producers use their corporate name on their wine labels, while others only use the corporate name for business purposes and have a separate winery name that appears on labels – this is known as the corporation doing business as the winery name. A winery can have multiple DBAs, but a notice must be submitted to the TTB and the brand name on the wine and the brand name on the COLA application must match.

Expedite Request – If there is a bottling deadline it is possible to request an expedite from the TTB. This allows for the label to be reviewed within two business days, rather than the standard three to four weeks. A bottling schedule is sometimes required.

Fanciful Name – An optional name that further identifies the product, such as: Winemaker's Red, Big Sky White, Meritage, etc.

Formula – Approval of a formula by the TTB is required prior to submitting a COLA for wines that don't meet standard class definitions. The TTB provides a form for formula submission that allows a winery to describe in detail the components and how the wine is produced. Formulas are needed for wines that are a combination of different classes blended after fermentation (such as sangria), wines made from agricultural products (i.e. honey), wines with flavor additives, and wines that don't fit into any of the classes, such as sake (rice wine) and raisin wine (wine made from dried grapes).

Puffery – Area on the label with personalized information, other than required information, used to describe the wine, winery, or anything else that the designer decides (within reason).

TTB – The Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau. A division of the United States Treasury Department, the TTB collects alcohol, tobacco, firearms and ammunition excise taxes and ensures that these products are labeled, advertised and marketed in accordance with the law.

Vintage Date – The year that your grapes were harvested. This can be listed on a label, but must conform to standard set forth by the TTB (check WineAmerica website for details). Not applicable to non-grape wines.