



Adding your Winery/Cidery to the Scope of your Certification

(when you already have a certified organic vineyard or orchard)

This guidance document is to provide information to those operators who have certified organic vineyards and orchards and wish to include their wineries and cideries in the scope of their certification. It provides timelines and background to winery certification to help operators prepare. This document covers both fruit and grape wines and ciders.

Before the initial inspection

Winery certification has specific requirements for the initial inspection. The Verification Officer must attend at the onset of wine production to verify that grapes harvested and crushed during the inspection (and thereafter, assuming the inspection is successful) will be eligible for use in certified organic wines. This verification needs to occur within a week or two of harvest or crush of the current year's grapes (ideally during that time but several days before or after the actual harvest or press is fine).

Wine that is in inventory prior to the inspection may not bear an organic claim as the winery will not have been certified for the activity. That is why it is important to let PACS know your approximate timing for the grape crush as soon as you know. Only a winery that is certified can claim that the resulting wine produced is organic.

Steps and Processes:

1. Certification of the winery will require that you complete a PACS Preparation Plan which will provide us with all the details of what you are using by way of ingredients, processing aids, sanitation protocols, storage, labelling, etcetera. As part of the Preparation Plan, each vintage and variety of wine you bottle requires its own recipe, captured on the PACS Organic Product Profile (OPP) Excel template. The Preparation Plan and OPPs should be submitted with your vineyard Renewal so that there is plenty of time to schedule a Verification Officer.

The Certification Committee uses the OPPs to track approved ingredients (both organic and non-organic), the support documentation for the ingredients, as well as percentage of organic ingredients.

2. We understand that a wine "recipe" can change as you add various inputs depending on the flavour profiles you wish to achieve. We do not require a finalized OPP until you have a finished wine ready to certify but a representative OPP that approximates what you are likely to be doing must be submitted. As well, by the time of the inspection, you should have the majority of the ingredients and processing aids in inventory. Please be sure to have each ingredient approved by PACS before use. This includes yeasts, enzymes, filtering aids, etcetera. Allow yourself time to ensure these inputs will be approved. Ingredients should be listed on the Organic Product Composition (OPC) document (available on the website or contact the PACS office).
3. PACS requires specific information about the ingredients, additives, and processing aids you will use in your wine. This information (organic certificates, Non-Organic Ingredient declarations, specification sheets, etc) should be submitted for our review and approval, prior to purchase, as soon as you consider using them. Ideally, the bulk of the ingredient documentation will be known and reviewed by PACS prior to the inspection). We strongly emphasize the importance of seeking

approval for using ingredients prior to purchasing and using them. The use of an ingredient that contains prohibited substances will result in the wine being disqualified from organic status.

4. In seeking certification for your winery, all activities and inputs that contribute to the wine (or cider) must be verified. If you use the services of a third party, such as a mobile juicer, mobile bottler or filtering service, submit the service provider's organic certificate or Attestation of Compliance documentation with your initial application. If the service provider does not hold certification, submit a completed Third Party Service Provider form. A service provider performing off-site activities for you will be subject to inspection in your second year of wine production.
5. Please note that you must ensure that a certified operator's organic certification document lists the service you are using. For example, if the service provider is juicing apples for you, then "custom pressing" or "custom juicing" should be listed on their certification document.

After the facility inspection

Once your facility has been inspected the Certification Committee will review the VO's inspection report, along with your file, and assuming the inspection was successful you will receive your Crop and Preparation COR Certificate. At that time, there will be no products listed other than the orchard or vineyard crops, since there will be no organic wine available yet. The VO will have verified only the facility and activities related to winemaking. As wine is bottled, you will correspond with the PACS office to add products throughout the year.

Adding products to your organic certificate:

- Once you have fine-tuned your wine recipe with approved ingredients, submit the finalized **OPP** to us.
- Submit the residual sugar and free and total sulphur **values**, measured at the time of bottling, for evaluation to COR standard.
- Submit your product **labels** for PACS approval. Labels must be submitted and approved by PACS before the wines are listed on your certificate and before they can be sold in the marketplace.

The most cost-efficient way to have a product approved is to submit the final OPPs, label and sugar & sulphur levels all at the same time.

The second-year inspection

The VO will not be able to conduct in/out or traceback audits at your initial inspection because there will not be any organic product until the second-year inspection. Therefore, you must maintain a tight system of recordkeeping and standard operating procedures.

Ensure you have the following in place for your second inspection:

- invoices for all purchased commodities and ingredients
- inventory records
- production records (that track quantities used, dates and times of runs)
- a lot-numbering system
- Third Party Service Provider forms
- updated organic certificates for organic ingredients
- approved Non-Organic Ingredient Declarations and spec sheets for ingredients

Note: Inspections from the second year onward are not necessarily required to take place during crush.

We hope this information gives you a better understanding of what will be involved in certifying your winery or cidery. We look forward to working with you and are excited to see this growth in the organic sector.