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| 2016 Ottawa Technical Meeting Summary, Outcomes, and Next Steps  "*Winemaking Practices and International Trade*" |

The sixth meeting of the [APEC Wine Regulatory Forum](http://wineregulatoryforum.blogspot.com/) (WRF), was held on October 6-7, 2016 in Ottawa, Canada.[[1]](#footnote-1) The WRF seeks to eliminate non‐science based testing and certification requirements for wine trade in an effort to increase wine production, expand trade, and create jobs in the region.

Government officials and wine sector representatives from 14 APEC economies participated in the 2016 meeting: Australia, Canada, Chile, the People’s Republic of China (China), Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Thailand, United States and Viet Nam. In addition, two observers participated, representing the governments and industries of Argentina and South Africa.

1. The meeting opened with remarks from Mr. Frederic Seppey, Canada’s Chief Agriculture Negotiator, who underscored the importance of good regulatory practices and risk based regulatory systems for wine importing economies. Ms. Shendra Melia, the Canadian Chair of the [World Wine Trade Group](http://ita.doc.gov/td/ocg/wwtg.htm) (WWTG), presented the meeting highlights from the 2016 Annual Meeting and noted key future priorities, including additional work on good regulatory principles for wine.

2. Wine as a low risk food product from a microbiological perspective continued as a theme. Regulators noted an interest in receiving guidance on heavy metals in wine. Noting that there are two years left in the APEC WRF Project Proposal, participants expressed support for addressing key issues before the project concludes.

3. An economic analysis on the growth of wine trade in APEC indicated that APEC region wine trade is growing at an unprecedented rate and consumer acceptance of wine has increased. Between 2006 and 2015, APEC region wine trade increased by 52%, wine consumption increased by 32%, and per capita wine consumption increased by 23.4%. In 2015, APEC wine production exceeded consumption by 6.35 million liters.

4. A presentation from the Canadian wine industry underscored the importance of the WRF from an industry perspective. Canada is the 3rd fastest growing wine market in the world and 68% of the wine sold in Canada is imported. Canada’s top export markets are key APEC economies: China, the United States, Japan, Hong Kong, China, and Chinese Taipei.

5. The Economy Roundtable served again as a valuable opportunity for the exchange of information among economies. The discussion focused on the cause of rejections for imported wines, economy mechanisms for the approval of winemaking additives, and the acceptance of electronic certificates. Wines of Chile shared partial results of research it has concluded on how pesticide residues dissipate during the wine production process. It was observed that some of the world’s largest wine importing economies reported no rejections during the last year while smaller importers reported considerable rejections. The results of the second round of laboratory ring tests were presented and revealed considerable disparity between values reported by participating regulatory laboratories. There could be a connection between the results of the ring tests and the rejections. Economies are encouraged to work with the Enhanced Risk Controls Working Group to improve testing performance.

6. A wine producer made a presentation on the practical implications of regulation concerning winemaking additives and processing aids. Key takeaways from the presentation included the concepts that: (1) wine is a single ingredient food as opposed to a recipe product; (2) substances used in winemaking are safe, and often naturally occurring; (3) many substances used in winemaking simply supplement compounds already present in grapes and wines; (4) winemakers’ use of additives and processing aids will vary according to factors such as different growing conditions, winemaking styles, and climate; (5) and where substances have been evaluated by JECFA[[2]](#footnote-2) and assigned an Acceptable Daily Intake “Not Specified” designation, a maximum use level of Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) could be an effective means of removing unnecessary barriers to trade.

7. The FIVS-Apace[[3]](#footnote-3) database for additives and processing aids was previewed and may be available to WRF economy regulators at the 2017 WRF meeting.

8. A presentation on the progress of approvals for wine additives in the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA) was made.  The 49th CCFA will be held in March 2017 in China.  The meeting will consider the recommendations from an electronic Working Group established to “develop and analyse recommendations for the amendment of the [General Standard for Food Additives (GSFA)] with respect to food additives in wine*.*”[[4]](#footnote-4)  APEC member economies were urged to preserve the integrity of the GSFA and consider that unless a scientific justification or health and safety reason for a limit can be provided, then a GMP approach is appropriate.  The additives under consideration should be approved regardless of the presence of any footnote as they are commonly used internationally, have no health or safety implications, and have a proven technical function. Failure to agree at the next meeting of the CCFA will have serious impacts on trade in wine.

9. The regulatory issues surrounding the presence of methanol in wine were highlighted in a presentation. It emerged that the levels of naturally occurring methanol typically found in wine are not a matter of public health concern.  Regulatory limits have been set historically for technological, rather than toxicological, reasons.  Accordingly, economies were urged to consider whether routine testing for methanol is necessary as part of a certificate of analysis linked to market entry of wine.  Where economies decide to maintain limits on methanol, they were encouraged to establish them in light of all permitted winemaking practices and to harmonize values where possible with those in other economies’ regulations.

**Outcomes and Next Steps**

Following on the 2016 endorsement of APEC Model Wine Certificate[[5]](#footnote-5) by the APEC Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI) at the Second Senior Officials’ Meeting (SOM2) in Peru, the WRF **Working Group on Export Certificates** outlined its two-pronged plan towards implementation of the Model Certificate. Members also shared experiences on the length of time it currently takes for regulators to issue export certificates, noting that the average is 2-5 days.

The next steps for this Working Group include:

1. The United States will continue to engage bilaterally with key partners and will report on its progress at the 2017 WRF meeting. All economies that issue export certificates are encouraged to work bilaterally to encourage implementation of the voluntary Model Certificate where it could be used to consolidate requirements and reduce the overall burden of certificates.
2. The U.S.-APEC Technical Assistance to Advance Regional Integration (US-ATAARI) initiative will begin work on a Business Case Study Report to articulate the benefits of using the Model Certificate within a given economy, ultimately encouraging its use where appropriate. The case studies will be shared with the CTI, Sub-Committee on Standards and Conformance (SCSC), and other relevant APEC Committees when completed. Economies are encouraged to self-identify for participation in the business case studies. The business case reports will be completed by the 2017 WRF meeting. US-ATAARI also identified other possible activities the WRF could undertake to encourage domestic implementation of the Model Certificate.

The **Working Group on Compendia** proposed the creation of a Compendium on Methods of Analysis used in the regulation of wine within the APEC trade environment. Following on the 2015 Outcomes, the [International Wine Technical Summit](http://www.iwts.org/p/about-us.html)[[6]](#footnote-6) (IWTS) produced a compendium template and provided a draft to the WRF Working Group on Compendia. The purpose of the Compendium is to encourage transparency regarding analytical methods and the continued exchange of information among APEC WRF economies. An overview of [FIVS-Abridge](http://fivs-abridge.com/index.htm) was provided to participants and an illustration of the database was provided using the example of copper levels among APEC economies. APEC economy regulators with access to FIVS-Abridge will begin receiving international wine trade regulatory development newsletters every 6-8 weeks.

The next steps for this Working Group include:

1. The template was circulated to WRF members on November 21, 2016. Members are requested to provide the requested information by December 16, 2016.
2. Consistent with the existing APEC/FIVS-Abridge contract, three regulators from each economy are granted access to the database.  Members are encouraged to work with FIVS-Abridge staff to ensure that the proper regulators have access to the database.
3. Members are also reminded that they are required to notify any regulatory changes to FIVS-Abridge staff, at a minimum, on a bi-annual basis and are requested to work with FIVS-Abridge staff to ensure regulatory accuracy.
4. Updates for the 2nd round of Regulatory Updates were due by October 31, 2016.

The **Working Group on Enhanced Risk Controls** presented the results from its second year of ring test results overseen by the [Interwinery Analysis Group](http://www.interwinery.com.au/). Participation in the 2016 tests included 20 laboratories from 12 economies. Difficulties with sample shipments continued and the Working Group Chair met with economies to resolve specific issues. APEC economy laboratories continued to show a high variability in testing results that needs to be addressed.

The Working Group held a successful training workshop for APEC WRF laboratory managers on the margins of the IWTS meeting in San Luis Obispo, California on May 23, 2016. The workshop covered issues related to quality and methods in laboratories and reviewed the underlying chemistries, methodologies, and best practice for the analysis of a number of core parameters used for the assessment of wine: *sugar, titratable acidity, alcohol* and *total sulfur dioxide*. Key workshop documents are available on the WRF website and economies are encouraged to share the papers with laboratories in their economies.

The next steps for this Working Group include:

1. Consideration of future rounds of the ring test, including the extension of testing to a range of heavy metals.
2. Consideration of another workshop to extend the training and outcomes from the 2016 workshop.
3. A series of virtual meetings by ring test participants to discuss group results, best analytical practice, and strategies to improve performance going forward.
4. A consolidated report will go to the participants of the ring tests and program supervisors that will offer direct assistance to participants who had specific issues with analysis.
5. Consideration of a technical paper on heavy metals and practical limits of measurement.
6. Nominations for participation in the 2017 ring test should be sent to the Project Overseer by December 2, 2016. This applies to new laboratories only. Laboratories which participated in the 2016 Ring Test are automatically enrolled unless they request to be removed from the program.

The **Working Group on Pesticide MRLs** outlined its next steps in conjunction with the APEC Food Safety Cooperation Forum (FSCF) and on the program designed to reduce trade barriers arising from differing maximum residue limits (MRLs) across the APEC region. The results of the WRF MRL Guideline “Road Test” Questionnaire highlights the importance of consulting with importing economy agencies to confirm the data needed to support an Import MRL request, and that early involvement of pesticide manufacturers is essential.

The next steps for this Working Group include:

1. Report out to the FSCF at the 2017 SOM2 in Viet Nam.
2. Test the application of the Guideline by selecting several priority compounds for which member economies will be asked to consider whether they could establish MRLs based on the Guideline criteria.
3. Consider how to improve the MRL Compendium.

The **Good Regulatory Practices Working Group** was formed to identify and promote examples of good regulatory practices in wine regulation in the APEC region in order to avoid unnecessary impediments to trade. An initial draft of the document previously referred to as the Model Wine Standard, now referred to as the “*Guide to Development of Wine Standards that align with widely accepted International Regulatory Practice”* was discussed in detail. The Guide seeks to be a reference source for economies to consult when creating or reviewing wine standards. It is not intended to be adopted as a standard.

The next steps for this Working Group include:

1. Economies are requested to provide comments on the Guide by December 9, 2016.
2. Work to complete the WRF “*Guide to Development of Wine Standards that align with widely accepted International Regulatory Practice”* by the 2017 WRF meeting.
3. Consider how best to gather and share within the WRF reliable reference information on naturally occurring components in wine, including metals, and regulatory limits that are imposed on such components. Consider how the current International Federation of Wines and Spirits (FIVS) Scientific and Technical Committee (STC) work can be incorporated.
4. Prepare a stock-take of relevant work already completed or underway within APEC WRF and its Working Groups, and identify the next steps for the WRF in examining good regulatory practice principles.
5. Develop case studies of good regulatory practice principles for wine being applied.  This could include the review and reporting to the APEC WRF on any relevant technical papers on good regulatory practice principles for wine, such as IWTS papers[[7]](#footnote-7) on:
   * + 1. Harmonizing Expression of Measurement Results in Wine Analysis: Testing for Total or Titratable Acidity (TA) of Wine, and
       2. Harmonizing Reporting of Regulatory Limits in Wine Analysis via International Systems of Units.
       3. Laboratory Data Quality and Certificates of Analysis.

**WRF References in Key 2016 APEC Statements**

On May 18, 2016, in Arequipa, Peru, the APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade (MRT)[[8]](#footnote-8) issued its statement which included this reference to the WRF:

“We congratulate the SCSC Wine Regulatory Forum (WRF) for fulfilling its goal to develop a consolidated APEC wine certificate, which will facilitate wine trade in the APEC region.  We look forward to continued work by the WRF to promote reduction and elimination of technical barriers for wine trade including through its efforts to promote good regulatory practices for wine through voluntary implementation of the APEC Model Wine Certificate.”

On November 18, in Lima, Peru, APEC Ministers issued a second statement supporting the work of the WRF[[9]](#footnote-9):

We congratulate the SCSC Wine Regulatory Forum (WRF) for fulfilling its goal to develop a consolidated voluntary APEC model wine certificate. We look forward to continued work by the WRF to promote the reduction and elimination of technical barriers on wine trade.

**Collaboration with non-WRF Organizations**

Members acknowledged the cooperative relationship between the WRF and the FSCF and the role that the groups play in furthering the work of the SCSC. Coordination between the two, particularly at the FSCF’s 2017 meeting in Hanoi, Viet Nam were discussed and future work projects together were encouraged.

Recognizing the importance of links with both APEC and non‐APEC forums, presentations were made on the work of the WWTG, IWTS, and FIVS (including FIVS-Abridge, FIVS-Apace, and the FIVS STC) and future cooperation with these organizations was supported.

**2017 WRF Meeting**

Economies were encouraged to submit nominations to the WRF Project Overseer by January 1, 2017 for membership in any of the five WRF Working Groups (particularly to those working groups on which the economy is not currently represented) and continue engagement in other intersessional efforts, including regulator and industry teleconference calls.

Presentations and other related documents from the 2016 Ottawa Technical Meeting will remain available via the [APEC WRF website](http://wineregulatoryforum.blogspot.com/) and on the [APEC Meeting Document Database](http://mddb.apec.org/Pages/default.aspx).

The 2017 WRF meeting will be held on the margins of the APEC FSCF meeting, during the SOM2 meetings in Hanoi, Viet Nam in May 2017. WRF members are strongly encouraged to participate and to propose agenda items that will further assist economies in the regulation of wine.

The Enhanced Risk Controls Working Group will consider options for a second technical workshop in 2017 following upon the successful workshop held at the 2016 IWTS.

The Project Overseers appreciate the efforts of our Canadian hosts as well as the active engagement and positive contributions made by all WRF members participating in the successful 2016 Ottawa Technical Meeting and in intersessional discussions throughout the year.

Ottawa, Canada

October 7, 2016

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1. The Ottawa meeting was the fourth of six annual technical conferences scheduled under the WRF multi‐year project entitled "*Good Regulatory Practices Action Plan*" sponsored by Australia, Canada, Chile, Chinese Taipei, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Russia, United States and Viet Nam (M CTI 01 2013A). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. JECFA- Codex Alimentarius Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Coming soon at [www.fivs-apace.com](http://www.fivs-apace.com) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Report of the Forty-Eighth Session of the Codex Committee on Food Additives [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. See <http://www.apec.org/Press/News-Releases/2016/0707_wine.aspx>. The Model Certificate is available on the APEC WRF website and in FIVS-Abridge. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The International Wine Technical Summit (Summit) is a collaborative group of government and industry representatives who have an understanding of the technical issues surrounding wine production and trade. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The papers are available on the APEC WRF website. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. http://apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Sectoral-Ministerial-Meetings/Trade/2016\_trade.aspx [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. http://mddb.apec.org/Documents/2016/MM/AMM/16\_amm\_jms.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-9)