



# INDUSTRY CIRCULAR

DEPARTMENT OF  
THE TREASURY

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms

Washington, D.C. 20226

Number: 82-9

Date: September 14, 1982

## BLENDING WHISKEY

Distilled Spirits Plants and Others Concerned:

Purpose. This Circular is issued to inform you of an ATF Ruling which will be published in the next issue of the ATF Quarterly Bulletin. This Ruling will read substantially as follows:

Background. The Bureau has been asked whether the standard of identity for blended whiskey which appears in 27 CFR section 5.22(b)(4) would permit the "straight whiskey" component of a blended whiskey to be satisfied by "a blend of straight whiskies" as defined by 27 CFR section 5.22(b)(5).

"Blended Whiskey" is defined in section 5.22(b)(4), in part, as:

"(a)... a mixture which contains at least 20 percent of straight whiskey on a proof-gallon basis and, separately or in combination, whiskey or neutral spirits..."

"A blend of straight whiskies" is defined by section 5.22(b)(5), in part, as:

"(a)... a mixture of straight whiskies. A blend of straight whiskies consisting entirely of one of the types of straight whiskey and not conforming to the standard for 'straight whiskey,' shall be further designated by that specific type of straight whiskey; for example, a 'blend of straight rye whiskies.'"

The definition of "straight whiskey" in section 5.22(b)(1)(iii) requires that such products be stored in oak containers of a prescribed type for 2 years or more.

In Press Release No. 3, dated October 16, 1935, the Administrator, Federal Alcohol Administration explained that the purpose for the 20 percent straight whiskey requirement in blended whiskey was to disclose to the consumer that the blended whiskey product "(c)ontains

in addition to neutral spirits at least 20% of whiskey which has been aged at least 2 years." Since a blend of straight whiskies is nothing more than a mixture composed exclusively of straight whiskies, utilizing a blend of straight whiskies to satisfy the straight whiskey component of a blended whiskey would insure that 20 percent of the blended whiskey has been aged at least 2 years. Also, 27 CFR section 5.40(a) recognizes the use of more than one straight whiskey in blended whiskey.

Held: The straight whiskey component of a blended whiskey may be satisfied by employing a blend of straight whiskies.

Inquiries: Inquiries concerning this circular should refer to its number and be addressed to the Assistant Director (Regulatory Enforcement), Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC. 20226.

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