



Mead Labeling

MEADCON EAST 2023

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TTB Disclaimer

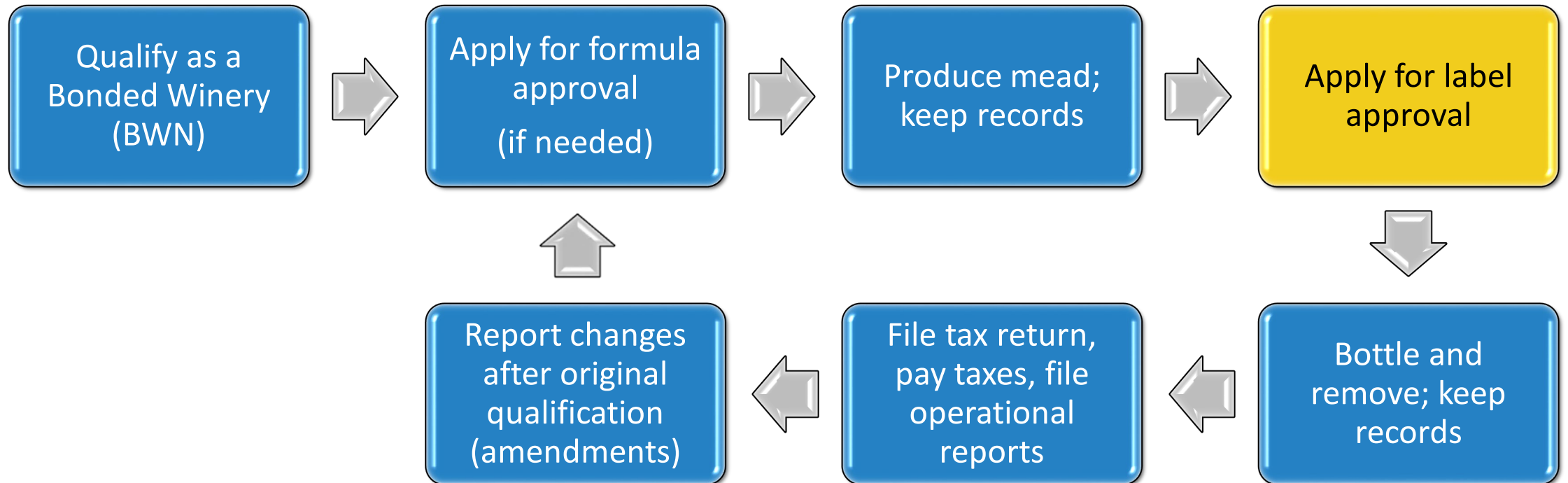
Notice:

This information is being presented to help the public to understand and comply with the laws and regulations that the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau administers. It is not intended to establish any new, or change any existing, definitions, interpretations, standards, or procedures regarding those laws and regulations. In addition, this presentation may be made obsolete by changes in laws and regulations. Please consult the regulations for the most current regulatory requirements.

Sample documents (such as records, returns, and labels) are for illustrative purposes only and contain fictitious data.



Typical TTB Touchpoints for Meaderies





Agenda: You'll learn which labeling rules to follow and how to create compliant labels

- 1 Determining which labeling rules apply to your product
- 2 Information that is required to be on the label
- 3 Information you may choose to include on the label
- 4 Certificate of Label Approval (COLA) requirements



Labeling Laws and Regulations



Federal Labeling Laws

Internal Revenue Code (IRC) (27 CFR part 24)

- Product is taxed as “Wine” if 0.5-24% ABV

Federal Alcohol Administration Act (FAA Act) (27 CFR part 4)

- “Wine” is 7-24% ABV; and is subject to labeling regulations if introduced into interstate/foreign commerce

Alcohol Beverage Labeling Act (27 CFR part 16)

- The warning statement applies to all alcohol beverages containing at least 0.5% ABV and intended for human consumption



Federal Labeling Laws

Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (21 CFR part 101)

- FDA labeling regulations generally apply to mead/honey wine products under 7% ABV

Customs Labeling (19 CFR part 11, part 12, and part 134)

- CBP labeling regulations generally apply to imported mead/honey wine products



Which Labeling Laws and Regulations Apply?

1

If the alcohol content by volume is:	
0.5 to < 7%	7 to 24%
Interstate commerce?	
Yes Covered by COLA	No Covered by Cert. of Exemp.

2

3

Then the following wine labeling laws and regulations apply:

Law	Regulations			
Alcoholic Beverage Labeling Act of 1988 (ABLA) 27 U.S.C. 213 et seq.	27 CFR part 16 - Alcoholic Beverage Health Warning Statement	X	X	X
Internal Revenue Code (IRC) 26 U.S.C. Chapter 51	27 CFR part 24 - Wine 27 CFR part 27 - Importation of Distilled Spirits, Wines, and Beer	X	X	X
Federal Alcohol Administration (FAA) Act 27 U.S.C. 201 et. seq.	27 CFR part 4 - Labeling and Advertising of Wine		X	
Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FD&C Act) 21 U.S.C. 341-350	21 CFR part 101 – Food Labeling	X		



Mandatory Label Information



Type Size Requirements

For all mandatory label information

(except alcohol content and government health warning statement)

If the container size is:	Then the <u>minimum</u> type size is:
187 milliliters or less	1 millimeter
More than 187 milliliters	2 millimeters

27 CFR 4.38(b) and 27 CFR 24.257(a)



Type Size Requirements

For alcohol content:

If the container size is:	Then the <u>minimum</u> type size is:
5 liters or less	1 millimeter
More than 5 liters	No minimum

If the container size is:	Then the <u>maximum</u> type size is:
5 liters or less	3 millimeters
More than 5 liters	No maximum



TTB Mandatory Label Information

Under 7% ABV

The following statements must appear:

- Name and address of the bottler
- Brand name
- Alcohol content
- Net contents
- Kind of wine
- Health Warning Statement

27 CFR 24.257 & 27 CFR part 16



FDA Labeling Requirements

Under 7%

The labels of honey wine/mead products with **under 7% ABV** must comply with applicable [FDA food labeling requirements](#), including:

- Ingredient labeling
- Nutrition labeling*
- Allergen labeling requirements

*Certain small businesses can be exempt from FDA Nutrition Facts Labeling (See [Small Business Nutrition Labeling Exemption](#))



Customs Labeling Requirements

Containers of all **imported** honey wine/mead products are required to be marked, branded and labeled (for example a Country of Origin statement) in accordance with CBP regulations

19 CFR part 11, part 12 and part 134



TTB Mandatory Label Information

7% or More – Not Sold Interstate

The labeling requirements are similar to those that apply to under 7% ABV:

- Name and address of the bottler
- Brand name
- Alcohol content
- Net contents
- Kind of wine
- Health Warning Statement

27 CFR 24.257, 27 CFR part 16



Mandatory Label Information

7% or More – Sold Interstate

The labeling rules for mead products with 7% or more ABV and that are sold interstate (covered by a COLA) are more robust:

- more direction about how and where mandatory info must appear
- standards of identity, i.e., labeling designations
- parameters for using many optional labeling claims, e.g., appellations of origin
- prohibited labeling practices intended to prevent consumer deception

27 CFR part 4



Mandatory Label Information

7% or More – Sold Interstate

The following statements must appear:

- Brand name
- Class, type or other designation
- Name and address of the bottler (or importer, as applicable)
- Net contents
- Alcohol content
- Government Health Warning Statement

27 CFR 4.32, 27 CFR part 16



Mandatory Label Information

7% or More – Sold Interstate

Brand Name

- The name under which the product is sold; usually the most prominent piece of information on the label
- Must appear on the brand label*
- If there is no brand name, the name of the bottler/importer as shown on the brand label is considered the brand name
- May not create a misleading impression

27 CFR 4.32(a)(1), 27 CFR 4.33

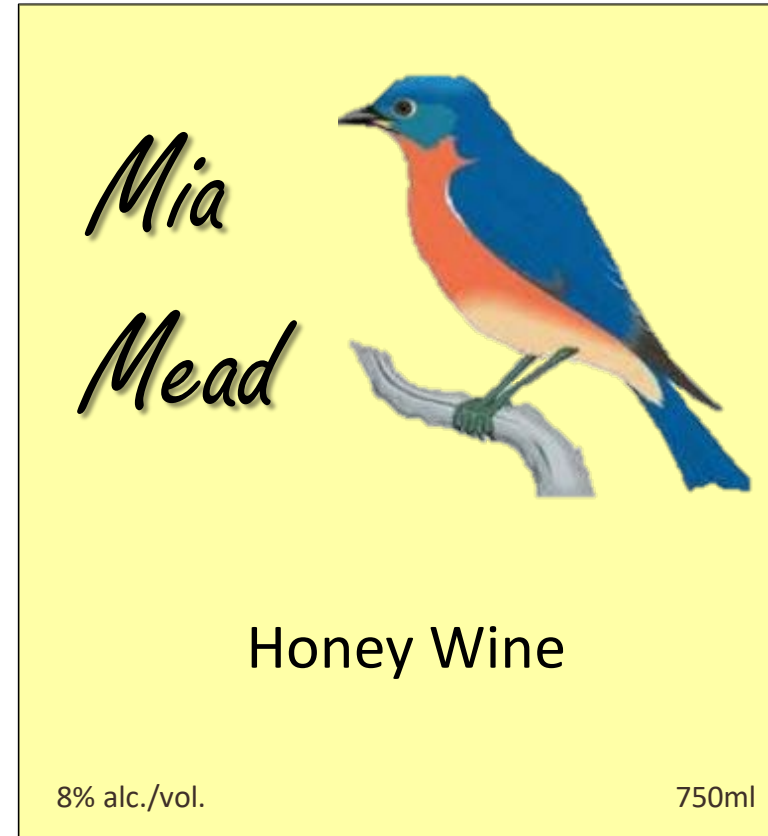
*Brand label = label on which brand name and class/type appears



“Mead” in the Brand Name

7% or More – Sold Interstate

“**Mead**” may be used in a brand name on wines that meet the standard of identity for honey wine/mead





“Mead” in the Brand Name

7% or More – Sold Interstate

“**Mead**” must be modified when used in the brand name of wines that do not meet the standard of identity for mead





Mandatory Label Information

7% or More – Sold Interstate

Name and Address of the Bottler/Importer

- May appear on any label
- Name or trade name of the bottler/importer as listed on the TTB permit
- Address (city and state) of the bottler/importer as listed on the permit
- Must be preceded by the words “Bottled/Packed by” or “Imported by”
- May optionally add “Produced” or “Made”, “Blended”, etc. to statement (see part 4 for rules)

27 CFR 4.32(b)(1) and 27 CFR 4.35



Mandatory Label Information

7% or More – Sold Interstate

Net Contents

- May appear on any label; or
- May be etched/blown into the container
- Must generally use the authorized metric standards of fill (27 CFR 4.72)
- May use the following abbreviations:
 - milliliters – ml, ML, mL
 - Liters - L

27 CFR 4.32(b)(2), 27 CFR 4.37



Mandatory Label Information

7% or More – Sold Interstate

Authorized Standards of Fill 27 CFR 4.72

- Must use these container sizes – including kegs
- Between 3 and 18 liters - must be whole liters (4 liters, 12 liters, etc.)
- No size restrictions over 18 liters

3 liters	500 milliliters	200 milliliters*
1.5 liters	375 milliliters	187 milliliters
1 liter	355 milliliters*	100 milliliters
750 milliliters	250 milliliters*	50 milliliters

*Authorized December 2020



Mandatory Label Information

7% or More – Sold Interstate

Alcohol Content

- May appear on any label
- “Honey Table Wine” may be used for honey wine up to 14% alcohol by volume
- Specific statements:
 - Alcohol __% by volume
 - Alcohol __% to __% by volume (see part 4 for rules)
 - May use “Alc.” and “Vol.” or “Alc” and “Vol”
 - May replace “by” with “/”
 - May NOT use “ABV”

27 CFR 4.32(b)(3), 27 CFR 4.36



Mandatory Label Information

7% or More – Sold Interstate

Alcohol Content – Labeling Tolerances*

- **7- 14%**
 - Actual alcohol content may be +/- 1.5% (by volume) from the alcohol content statement on the label
27 CFR 4.36(b)(1)
- **Above 14%**
 - Actual alcohol content may be +/- 1% (by volume) from the alcohol content statement on the label
27 CFR 4.36(b)(1)

*Regardless of tolerances, alcohol content statements must accurately reflect class/type and tax class



Government Health Warning Statement Sold Interstate or Intrastate

All domestic and imported alcohol beverages with 0.5% alcohol by volume or more must bear the government health warning statement

- May appear on any label (front, back, neck, etc.)
- Must be separate and apart from all other information
- See 27 CFR part 16 for complete rules (type size, etc.)

GOVERNMENT WARNING: (1) According to the Surgeon General, women should not drink alcoholic beverages during pregnancy because of the risk of birth defects. (2) Consumption of alcoholic beverages impairs your ability to drive a car or operate machinery, and may cause health problems.



Mandatory Label Information

7% or More – Sold Interstate

Class and Type

- Must appear on brand label*
- Must use the class, type or other designations found in the standards of identity (SOI) 27 CFR part 4 Subpart C
- If no SOI applies, must use a truthful and adequate statement of composition (wine specialty products)

27 CFR 4.32(a)(2), 27 CFR 4.34(a)

*Brand label = label on which brand name and class/type appears



Mandatory Label Information

7% or More – Sold Interstate

Class

- In the standards of identity, the broad category **wine** is divided into 9 classes, including **Class 6: Wine from other agricultural products**
27 CFR 4.21(f)(1)

Type

- Most of the classes include specifically defined types of wine
- **Honey wine** is an example of a specific type defined under Class 6 (TTB allows the designation 'mead' to be used in lieu of 'honey wine')
27 CFR 4.21(f)(6)



To be Labeled “Mead” or “Honey Wine” 7% or More – Sold Interstate

The product must be:

- Produced by the normal alcoholic fermentation of honey
- Derived wholly from honey (except sugar, water, or, if imported, added alcohol)
 - Hops may be used for flavoring

27 CFR 4.21(f)(6)



Effervescent Designations

Mead that is made effervescent by carbon dioxide at a level of over 0.392 gram per 100mL must be labeled as “sparkling” or “carbonated,” depending on the method used to produce effervescence

- **Sparkling Mead:** CO₂ results solely from secondary fermentation within a closed container, tank, or bottle
- **Carbonated Mead:** Obtains its effervescence through the artificial injection of CO₂

27 CFR 4.21(f)(6) or 4.34(a)



What Can't be Designated Simply "Mead"?

7% or More – Sold Interstate

Any wine that does not meet standard of identity for honey wine, including:

- Any wine that is not derived wholly from honey
- Any mead product to which fruit, spices, flavoring or coloring materials have been added (except allowable limits of hops)
- Any mead product to which excess sugar or water have been added

These are classified as **OTS/wine specialties**, and must be labeled with a truthful and adequate **statement of composition**



Statements of Composition 7% or More – Sold Interstate

Statements of composition generally include:

- Source(s) of alcohol
- Flavors
- Colors
- Artificial sweeteners

E.g., “Carbonated honey wine with artificial flavors, and cochineal extract”

- They may optionally be labeled with a fanciful name
 - If a fanciful name is used, it must be in direct conjunction with the statement of composition on the brand label



Mead Designations Used in the Industry

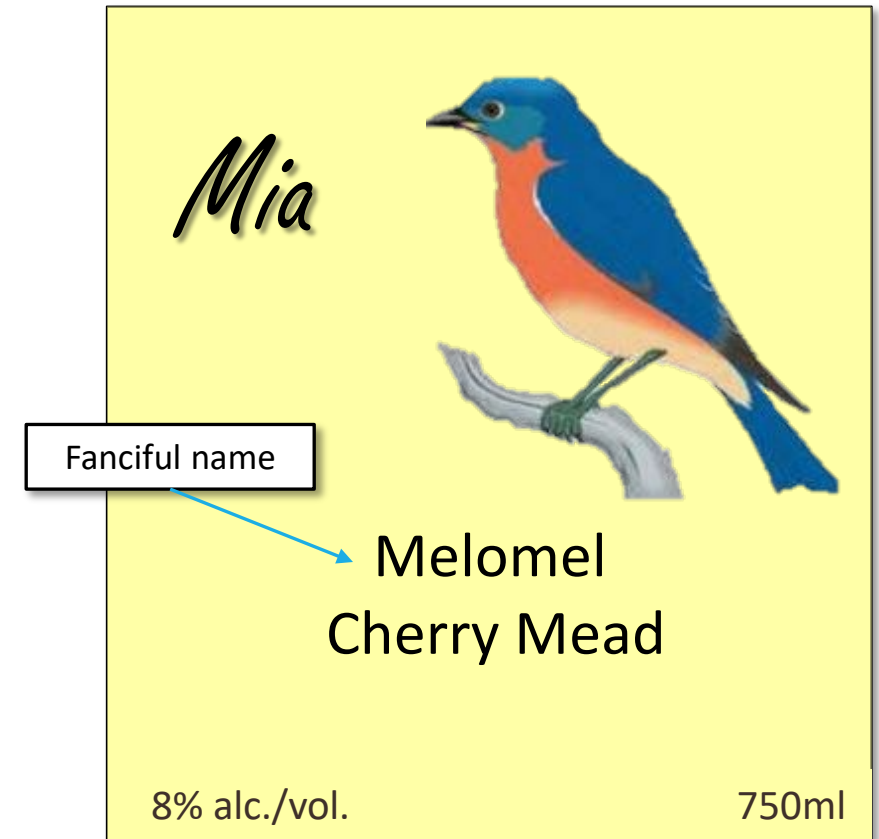
7% or More – Sold Interstate

Terms such as **melomel**, **braggot**, or **cyser**, are not recognized by TTB as either a class or type of wine, and thus may not be used as the class/type statement on the label

They may be used in addition to the class/type statement on meads classified as **OTS/wine specialties**

- Fanciful name
- Additional information

Requires formula approval





“Mead” in a Fanciful Name

7% or More – Sold Interstate

“Mead” may be used in a fanciful name in conjunction with the word “flavored” when flavors are added to honey wine

Requires formula approval





Fermenting Honey with Fruit 7% or More – Sold Interstate

This is an **OTS/wine specialty** and it must be designated with a truthful and adequate **statement of composition** such as "*honey-blueberry wine*" or "*blueberry mead*"



Requires formula approval

27 CFR 4.21(e)(5)



Blending Honey Wine with Fruit Wine

7% or More – Sold Interstate

This is an **OTS/wine specialty** and it must be designated with a **statement of composition**, such as "*honey wine - blueberry wine*" or "*mead – blueberry wine*"

May also optionally be labeled with a fanciful name such as "*Blueberry Honey Delight*"

- If a fanciful name is used, it must be in direct conjunction with the statement of composition on the brand label



Requires formula approval

27 CFR 4.34(a)



Added Spices or Flavors (Except Hops) 7% or More – Sold Interstate

This is an **OTS/wine specialty** and it must be designated with a **statement of composition**, such as "*mead with blueberries and spices*"



Requires formula approval

27 CFR 4.34(a)



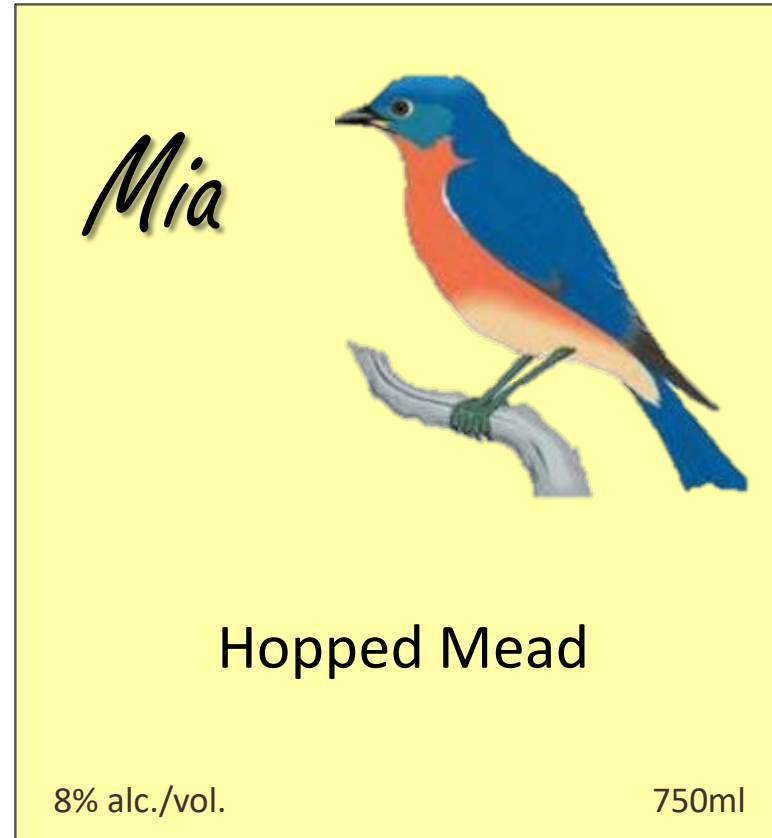
Honey Wine/Mead flavored with Hops 7% or More – Sold Interstate

This is a **standard honey wine** and it may be labeled “*mead*” or “*honey wine*”

May also optionally mention the presence of hops, e.g., “*mead with hops*” or “*hopped mead*”

*If the hops added goes over the allotted amount allowed to still be labeled as a mead, then the product will require a formula and become an OTS wine.

Does not require formula approval



27 CFR 4.34(a) and 24.203



Any Other Mandatory Information? 7% or More – Sold Interstate

If applicable the following information must appear:

- On blends consisting of American and foreign wines, if any reference is made to the presence of foreign wine, the exact percentage by volume
- Declarations of the presence of:
 - FD&C Yellow No. 5
 - Cochineal extract or carmine
 - Sulfites

27 CFR 4.32



Sulfite Declaration

7% or More – Sold Interstate

- Label must contain a sulfite declaration if the honey wine/mead product contains 10 ppm or more sulfur dioxide
 - “Contains Sulfites” or “Contains Sulphites”
- No statement is required if honey wine/mead product contains less than 10 ppm
 - Obtain Lab Analysis (unless standard honey wine)
 - Submit analysis with COLA

27 CFR 4.32(e)



Any Other Mandatory Information?

7% or More – Sold Interstate

Containers of all imported Mead products are required to be marked, branded and labeled (for example, a Country of Origin statement) in accordance with CBP regulations

- 19 CFR part 11, part 12 and part 134



Optional Label Claims



Appellation Of Origin

7% or More – Sold Interstate

Mead/honey wine labels may bear an appellation of origin (for example, a country, state or county) if the wine complies with the requirement for use of that appellation

- American Viticultural Areas, which are defined as grape growing regions, may NOT be used as appellations on honey wine/mead products

27 CFR 4.25



Orchard/Farm/Ranch Name

7% or More – Sold Interstate

95 percent of the mead product in the container was produced from honey sourced from the named orchard, farm or ranch

or

May be used in the brand name if the company name or trade name shown in the mandatory name and address statement on the label is identical to the brand name that includes a vineyard, orchard, farm, or ranch name

27 CFR 4.39(m)



Gluten Free

7% or More – Sold Interstate

Alcohol beverages that are made from ingredients that do not contain gluten (such as honey wine with spices) may bear "gluten-free" claims in the same way allowed in the FDA regulations for inherently gluten-free products.

- Wineries making such a claim are expected to verify that the producer has taken appropriate measures to ensure that its raw materials, ingredients, production facilities, storage materials, and finished products are not subject to cross-contact with gluten.

[TTB Ruling 2014-2 - Revised Interim Policy on Gluten Content Statements](#)
[Gluten-Free Labeling of Foods on \[www.FDA.gov\]\(http://www.FDA.gov\)](#)



Organic



Any use of the term “organic” on any honey wine/mead product label must comply with the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Organic Program rules (7 CFR part 205) as interpreted by the USDA



What Cannot
Appear on the
Label?



Vintage Dates

7% or More – Sold Interstate

Vintage dates (year of harvest) may only be used on wines made from grapes

- 27 CFR 4.27

Bottling date is allowed

- “Bottled in ___” (insert the year in which bottled)
- 27 CFR 4.39(c)



Misleading Impressions

7% or More – Sold Interstate

Labels may not contain statements/images/etc. that TTB finds are likely to mislead the consumer

See 27 CFR 4.39 for the full list of prohibited labeling practices



COLA Requirements



When is a COLA Required?

7% or More – Sold Interstate

- Applies only to mead products that contain **7% or more** alcohol by volume
- Only required if the mead product will be shipped in or otherwise introduced into **interstate or foreign commerce** 27 CFR 4.50(a)
- The bottler/packer must get a COLA before bottling/packing the product



Certificate of Exemption

7% or More – Sold Interstate

- Applies only to Mead products that contain **7% or more** alcohol by volume
- Signifies that the associated product is exempt from the labeling rules in part 4
- Issued under the condition that the product **is not to be introduced into interstate or foreign commerce** 27 CFR 4.50(b)
 - The label must bear the statement, “For sale in (name of state where bottled) only”

Please take few minutes to
provide feedback on this session:

<https://www.ttb.gov/survey>





TTB Resources



TTB Wine Contacts

National Revenue Center (NRC) – Permits, Taxes, Reports	
Telephone	Toll-free at 877-TTB-FAQS (877-882-3277)
Address	National Revenue Center 550 Main Street, Suite 8002 Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
Email	National Revenue Center Contact Form



TTB Wine Contacts

Alcohol Labeling and Formulation Division	
Telephone	(202) 453-2250 or Toll-Free at (866) 927-ALFD (2533)
Email	Alcohol Labeling and Formulation Division (ALFD) Contact Form
Regulations and Rulings Division	
Telephone	(202) 453-2265
Email	Regulations and Rulings Contact Form
Address	1310 G Street NW Box 12 Washington, DC 20005



Resources on TTB.gov

Mead FAQs

<https://www.ttb.gov/resources/faqs/alcohol#hw>

Wine Labeling Guidance

<https://www.ttb.gov/wine/labeling>

Subscribe to automatically receive the weekly TTB Newsletter (via email)

<https://service.govdelivery.com/accounts/USTTB/subscriber/new>

Secure Email Communication with TTB

<https://www.ttb.gov/about-ttb/email-security>



Resources on TTB.gov

Due Dates for Operational Reports

<https://www.ttb.gov/tax-audit/due-dates-for-operational-reports>

Automated Reminders for Filing Tax Returns and Operational Reports

<https://www.ttb.gov/news/automated-reminders-for-filing>



Resources on TTB.gov

Labeling (7% and more alcohol by volume)

- Gluten Content Statements
 - <https://www.ttb.gov/images/pdfs/rulings/2014-2.pdf>
- Allowable Revisions to previously approved labels
 - <https://www.ttb.gov/labeling/allowable-revisions>
- Alcohol Beverages Labeled with Organic Claims
 - <https://www.ttb.gov/afd/alcohol-beverages-labeled-with-organic-claims>
- Current Processing Times for Label Applications
 - <https://www.ttb.gov/labeling/processing-times>



Resources

Permits Online

- Permits Online Customer Homepage <https://www.ttb.gov/ponl/customer-support>
- Logon page <https://www.ttbonline.gov/permitsonline/Default.aspx>
- Current permit processing times <https://www.ttb.gov/nrc/statistics-original-applications-to-operate>





Resources

Formulas

- Alcohol Beverage Formula Approval home page
 - <https://www.ttb.gov/formulation>
- Formulas Online Customer Homepage
 - <https://www.ttb.gov/formulation/customer-support>
- Current Formula Processing Times
 - <https://www.ttb.gov/formulation/fonl-processing-times>





Resources

COLAs Online Customer Homepage

<https://www.ttb.gov/labeling/colas>

COLAs Online login page

<https://www.ttbonline.gov/ttbonline/>

Current Label Processing Times

<https://www.ttb.gov/labeling/processing-times>





Resources

FDA Labeling

- Under FDA's laws and regulations, FDA does not pre-approve labels for food products

FDA Food Labeling Guide

<https://www.fda.gov/regulatory-information/search-fda-guidance-documents/guidance-industry-food-labeling-guide>