

Ontario's Wine Authority Lays Charges Under VQA Act

Hamilton, ON - Vintners Quality Alliance Ontario (VQA Ontario) has charged a Winona winery with the unauthorized use of restricted terms on wine labels.

24 September 2008

Update

Following the conviction of Puddicombe Farms Winery on charges under the VQA Act, further violations resulted in the revocation of the winery's membership in VQA Ontario on June 20, 2008. An appeal of this decision to a tribunal panel of the Alcohol and Gaming Commission resulted in the revocation being upheld. The winery is no longer a member of VQA Ontario and may not apply to have any new wines certified as VQA appellation wines. The winery may reapply for membership after 12 months has elapsed from the date the membership was revoked.

Update - February 29, 2008

Puddicombe Farms Winery entered a guilty plea to two charges related to using VQA terms, designations or descriptions without the approval of the wine authority. A fine of \$5000 was levied by the Provincial Offenses court in Hamilton, Ontario.

September 28, 2007

The charges were laid under the authority of the Vintners Quality Alliance Act, 1999.

Puddicombe Farms Estate Winery was charged with six counts of using terms regulated under the VQA Act without the approval of the wine authority. The charges stem from allegations that the winery used the regulated terms "VQA", "Niagara Peninsula", "Ontario" and "Estate Bottled" on labels of wines that had not been approved by VQA Ontario. These charges are expected to be heard by the Provincial Offenses Court in mid-October 2007.

"VQA Ontario continues to take action to protect the integrity of regulated terms and ensure they are used only on wines that have met the standards enshrined in law" said Laurie Macdonald, Executive Director of VQA Ontario, "The VQA legislation applies strict standards for VQA wine quality and origin and enforcement is necessary so that consumers can be confident that what is on the label reflects those standards through an independent assessment of what is in the bottle."

The standards and legislation for protecting Ontario's wines of origin are similar to those in place in major wine producing regions.

Taken from: <http://www.vqaontario.com/AboutVQA/News#News>