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BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS CODE - BPC

DIVISION 9. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES [23000 - 25762] (Division 9 added by Stats. 1953, Ch. 152.)

CHAPTER 13. Labels and Containers [25170 - 25248] (Chapter 13 added by Stats. 1953, Ch. 152.)

ARTICLE 3. Wine [25235 - 25248] (Article 3 added by Stats. 1953, Ch. 152.)

25235. It is unlawful for any person to sell to any on- or off-sale licensee or to deliver to the premises of any on- or off-sale licensee, or for any on- or off-sale licensee to sell or to have upon his or her licensed premises, wine packaged or bottled in any pocket flask container of less than 750 milliliters, the face of which is substantially rectangular and the minimum thickness of which is less than two-thirds of its maximum width, the measurements to be made on the cross-sectional axes, excluding the neck portion of the container. This section does not apply to the possession of wine in such containers on the premises of a licensed wine grower or at the branch office or warehouse or United States bonded storeroom of the wine grower located away from his place of production or manufacture.

(Amended by Stats. 1989, Ch. 87, Sec. 1.)

25236. Only dry wine produced entirely from grapes grown within the Counties of Sonoma, Napa, Mendocino, Lake, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Alameda, San Benito, Solano, San Luis Obispo, Contra Costa, Monterey, and Marin may be labeled with the words "California central coast counties dry wine." It is unlawful to label any other wine with a label containing the words "California central coast counties dry wine."

The department may seize wine labeled in violation of this section, regardless of where found and may dispose of the wine pursuant to Section 25355.

(Amended by Stats. 1990, Ch. 135, Sec. 2.)

25237. It is unlawful to make any representation that a wine is produced entirely from grapes grown in the counties mentioned in Section 25236 unless the representation is true. This section applies to representations made on labels, advertising matter, letterheads, invoices, tags, signs, business cards, and all other representations of any kind whether oral, written, or printed.

(Added by Stats. 1953, Ch. 152.)

25238. Every winegrower or bottler of wine of any kind within the counties specified in Section 25236 shall keep a record of all wine not produced by him or her and obtained and used by him or her for any purpose. The record shall show the date the wine is obtained, the amount thereof, the source from which obtained, the kind or type of wine, and, in detail, the purpose or purposes for which it is used. Each winegrower or bottler of wine shall keep a complete record showing the total amount of wine produced by him or her, or bottled by him or her, made entirely from grapes grown within the counties mentioned in Section 25236.

(Amended by Stats. 2010, Ch. 276, Sec. 2. (SB 806) Effective January 1, 2011.)

25239. Every person who, with intent to defraud, either falsely makes, alters, forges, or counterfeits the label for any wine or uses the label or bottle of any wine belonging to another, without his or her consent, is guilty of a misdemeanor. The department may seize wine labeled in violation of this section, regardless of where found and may dispose of the wine pursuant to Section 25355.

(Amended by Stats. 1990, Ch. 135, Sec. 3.)

25240. (a) Any wine labeled with a viticultural area appellation of origin established pursuant to Part 9 (commencing with Section 9.1) of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations, other than the viticultural area "Napa Valley," and which is located entirely within a county of the 29th class, shall bear the designation "Napa Valley" on the label in direct conjunction therewith in a type size not smaller than 1mm less than that of the viticultural area designation provided neither designation is smaller than 2mm on containers

of more than 187ml or smaller than 1mm on containers of 187ml or less. This requirement shall apply to all wines bottled on or after January 1, 1990.

(b) The department may suspend or revoke the license of any person who violates this section.

(c) This section shall not apply to any wine labeled with a viticultural area appellation of origin established pursuant to Part 9 (commencing with Section 9.1) of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations when the name of the appellation includes the term "Napa Valley."

(Amended by Stats. 2007, Ch. 674, Sec. 2. Effective January 1, 2008.)

25241. (a) (1) The Legislature finds and declares that for more than a century, Napa Valley and Napa County have been widely recognized for producing grapes and wine of the highest quality. Both consumers and the wine industry understand the name Napa County and the viticultural area appellations of origin contained within Napa County (collectively "Napa appellations") as denoting that the wine was created with the distinctive grapes grown in Napa County.

(2) The Legislature finds, however, that certain producers are using Napa appellations on labels, on packaging materials, and in advertising for wines that are not made from grapes grown in Napa County, and that consumers are confused and deceived by these practices.

(3) The Legislature further finds that legislation is necessary to eliminate these misleading practices. It is the intent of the Legislature to assure consumers that the wines produced or sold in the state with brand names, packaging materials, or advertising referring to Napa appellations in fact qualify for the Napa County appellation of origin.

(b) No wine produced, bottled, labeled, offered for sale or sold in California shall use, in a brand name or otherwise, on any label, packaging material, or advertising, any of the names of viticultural significance listed in subdivision (c), unless that wine qualifies under Section 4.25a of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations for the appellation of origin Napa County and includes on the label, packaging material, and advertising that appellation or a viticultural area appellation of origin that is located entirely within Napa County, subject to compliance with Section 25240.

Notwithstanding the above, this subdivision shall not grant any labeling, packaging, or advertising rights that are prohibited under federal law or regulations.

(c) The following are names of viticultural significance for purposes of this section:

(1) Napa.

(2) Any viticultural area appellation of origin established pursuant to Part 9 (commencing with Section 9.1) of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations that is located entirely within Napa County.

(3) Any similar name to those in paragraph (1) or (2) that is likely to cause confusion as to the origin of the wine.

(d) The appellation of origin required by this section shall meet the legibility and size-of-type requirements set forth in either Section 4.38 or Section 4.63 of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations, whichever is applicable.

(e) Notwithstanding subdivision (b), any name of viticultural significance may appear either as part of the address required by Sections 4.35 and 4.62 of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations, if it is also the post office address of the bottling or producing winery or of the permittee responsible for the advertising, or as part of any factual, nonmisleading statement as to the history or location of the winery.

(f) The department may suspend or revoke the license of any person who produces or bottles wine who violates this section. Following notice of violation to the person in possession of the wine and a hearing to be held within 15 days thereafter, if requested by any interested party within five days following the notice, the department may seize wine labeled or packaged in violation of this section regardless of where found, and may dispose of the wine upon order of the department. From the time of notice until the departmental determination, the wine shall not be sold or transferred.

(g) This section applies only to wine which is produced, bottled, or labeled after January 1, 2001.

(Added by Stats. 2000, Ch. 831, Sec. 1. Effective January 1, 2001.)

25242. (a) (1) The Legislature finds and declares that for more than a century, certain California counties have been widely recognized for producing grapes and wine of the highest quality. Both consumers and the wine industry associate the names of those counties with the distinctive wine produced from grapes grown within those counties. If producers were to use the names of these counties on labels, for packaging materials, and in advertising for wines that are not made from grapes grown in the designated counties, consumers may be confused or deceived by these practices.

(2) It is the intent of the Legislature to assure consumers that the wines produced or sold in the state with brand names, packaging materials, or advertising that mention or refer to these California counties, in fact accurately reflect the origin of the grapes used to make the referenced wine.

(b) (1) No wine produced, bottled, labeled, offered for sale or sold in California shall use, in a brand name or otherwise, on any label, packaging material, or advertising, the name of viticultural significance listed in subdivision (c), unless that wine qualifies under Section 4.25 of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations for an appellation of origin that is either Sonoma County or a viticultural area lying entirely within Sonoma County and includes that appellation of origin on the label, packaging material, and advertising for the wine.

(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), this subdivision shall not grant any labeling, packaging, or advertising rights that are prohibited under federal law or regulations.

(c) The following name is of viticultural significance for purposes of this section:

(1) Sonoma.

(2) Any similar name to that in paragraph (1) that is likely to cause confusion as to the origin of the wine.

(d) The appellation of origin required by this section shall meet the legibility and size-of-type requirements set forth in either Section 4.38 or Section 4.63 of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations, whichever is applicable.

(e) Notwithstanding subdivision (b), any name of viticultural significance may appear either as part of the address required by Sections 4.35 and 4.62 of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations, if it is also the post office address of the bottling or producing winery or of the permittee responsible for the advertising, or as part of any factual, nonmisleading statement as to the history or location of the winery.

(f) The department may suspend or revoke the license of any person who produces or bottles wine who violates this section. Following notice of violation to the person in possession of the wine and a hearing to be held within 15 days thereafter, if requested by any interested party within five days following the notice, the department may seize wine labeled or packaged in violation of this section regardless of where found, and may dispose of the wine upon order of the department. From the time of notice until the departmental determination, the wine shall not be sold or transferred.

(g) This section applies only to wine which is produced, bottled, or labeled after December 31, 2008.

(h) This section does not pertain to the use of a brand name, or otherwise, which was the name of the winery owner as established prior to 1950.

(Added by Stats. 2006, Ch. 879, Sec. 1. Effective January 1, 2007.)

25243. No provision of this article shall preclude a wine from using, on any label, packaging material, or advertising, either (a) a truthful, nonmisleading appellation of origin that complies with Section 4.25(c) of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations governing multicounty appellations, or (b) a truthful, nonmisleading statement as to the geographic location of the wine's stated appellation or appellations of origin which is located in not more than two counties, for which the wine qualifies under applicable federal law, or both the appellation of origin and the statement of geographic location; provided that the label, packaging material, or advertising contains no other use of a name of viticultural significance, in a brand name or otherwise, that is prohibited by Section 25241 or 25242.

(Added by Stats. 2006, Ch. 879, Sec. 2. Effective January 1, 2007.)

25244. (a) Any wine labeled with a viticultural area appellation of origin established pursuant to Part 9 (commencing with Section 9.1) of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations that is located entirely within the "Paso Robles" viticultural area shall bear the designation "Paso Robles" on the label in direct conjunction therewith in a type size not smaller than 1mm less than that of said viticultural area designation, provided neither designation is smaller than 2mm on containers of more than 187ml or smaller than 1mm on containers of 187ml or less.

(b) The department may suspend or revoke the license of any person who violates this section.

(c) This section shall not apply to any wine labeled with a viticultural area appellation of origin established pursuant to Part 9 (commencing with Section 9.1) of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations when the name of the appellation includes the term "Paso Robles."

(d) This section applies only to wine that is bottled on or after January 1, 2008.

(Added by Stats. 2007, Ch. 674, Sec. 3. Effective January 1, 2008.)

25245. (a) Any wine labeled with a viticultural area appellation of origin established pursuant to Part 9 (commencing with Section 9.1) of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations that is located entirely within the "Lodi" viticultural area shall bear the designation

"Lodi" on the label in direct conjunction therewith in a type size not smaller than 1mm less than that of said viticultural area designation, provided neither designation is smaller than 2mm on containers of more than 187ml or smaller than 1mm on containers of 187ml or less.

(b) The department may suspend or revoke the license of any person who violates this section.

(c) This section shall not apply to any wine labeled with a viticultural area appellation of origin established pursuant to Part 9 (commencing with Section 9.1) of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations when the name of the appellation includes the term "Lodi."

(d) This section applies only to wine that is bottled on or after January 1, 2009.

(Added by Stats. 2008, Ch. 75, Sec. 2. Effective January 1, 2009.)

25246. (a) Any wine labeled with an American Viticultural Area established pursuant to Part 9 (commencing with Section 9.1) of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations, that is located entirely within a county of the 19th class, shall bear the designation "Sonoma County" on the label in a type size not smaller than two millimeters on containers of more than 187 milliliters or smaller than one millimeter on containers of 187 milliliters or less.

(b) The department may suspend or revoke the license of any person who violates this section.

(c) This section shall not apply to any wine labeled with a viticultural area appellation of origin established pursuant to Part 9 (commencing with Section 9.1) of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations when the name of the appellation includes the term "Sonoma County."

(d) This section shall apply to wines bottled on or after January 1, 2014.

(Added by Stats. 2010, Ch. 242, Sec. 1. (AB 1798) Effective January 1, 2011.)

25247. (a) Any wine labeled with an American Viticultural Area established pursuant to Part 9 (commencing with Section 9.1) of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations that is located entirely within the County of Monterey shall bear the designation "Monterey County" on the label in a type size not smaller than two millimeters on containers of more than 187 milliliters or smaller than one millimeter on containers of 187 milliliters or less.

(b) The department may suspend or revoke the license of any person who violates this section.

(c) This section shall not apply to any wine labeled with a viticultural area appellation of origin established pursuant to Part 9 (commencing with Section 9.1) of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations when the name of the appellation is "Monterey."

(d) This section shall apply to wines bottled on or after January 1, 2019.

(e) Except as provided in subdivision (b), a violation of this section shall not subject a person to any civil or criminal penalties pursuant to this division.

(Added by Stats. 2015, Ch. 167, Sec. 1. (AB 394) Effective January 1, 2016.)

25248. (a) Any wine labeled with an American Viticultural Area established pursuant to Part 9 (commencing with Section 9.1) of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations that is located entirely within the County of Mendocino shall bear the designation "Mendocino County" on the label in a type size not smaller than two millimeters on containers of more than 187 milliliters or not smaller than one millimeter on containers of 187 milliliters or less.

(b) The department may suspend or revoke the license of any person who violates this section.

(c) This section shall not apply to any wine labeled with a viticultural area appellation of origin established pursuant to Part 9 (commencing with Section 9.1) of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations when the name of the appellation includes "Mendocino."

(d) This section shall apply to wines bottled on or after January 1, 2023.

(e) Except as provided in subdivision (b), a violation of this section shall not subject a person to any civil or criminal penalties pursuant to this division.

(Added by Stats. 2020, Ch. 362, Sec. 2. (SB 918) Effective January 1, 2021.)