



## CQA Program Overview

The basis of this program is to reward and promote wines that best showcase Virginia-grown wine that can garner acclaim both locally and abroad. There will be a grading system in place to ensure that all wines branded with CQA will best showcase the brand of the CQA and the participating wineries. With successful completion of the CQA grading system, a wine will be rewarded with the ability to use the CQA seal to promote their wine as quality approved and a guarantee of being produced in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The following rules apply to the content of the wine.

- 1) All fruit for CQA wines are made from 100% grape.
- 2) Wines entered will adhere to TTB label regulations.
- 3) All grapes that are used must be 100% Virginia grown.
- 4) Commercial concentrates are prohibited in the CQA. Concentrates are not possible to audit for their origin or varietal content. Chaptalization should be performed by products that show neutral flavors post fermentation such as sucrose.
- 5) Enological additives are permitted such as per TTB approved products.

The chemical analysis will be performed by Virginia Tech. The following will be tested:

- a. Alcohol
- b. pH
- c. Total Acidity
- d. Malic Acid
- e. Residual Sugar
- f. Volatile Acidity
- g. Free SO<sub>2</sub>
- h. Total SO<sub>2</sub>
- i. Residual Copper
- j. Protein Stability – white wines only
- k. Tartrate Stability – white wines only – falling outside this parameter does not mean failure, but must be labeled with “May Contain Tartrates”.

The sensory panel evaluation will be performed by the Art Institute of Washington using the Davis tasting system. The wine must receive 12 out of 20 points to pass. A majority of the panel with a minimum of 5 accredited or professional tasters must agree to pass a wine in order to grant the CQA seal. The wine will receive a pass/fail grade and, if the wine fails, the winery will receive the reason for failure. The juice analysis can be performed by the winery and have the results submitted to the CQA administration. The winery will be responsible for conducting and submitting initial harvest Brix, CQA staff will match the Brix to the end alcohol to ensure the max chaptalization has not been exceeded. All results will be held in complete confidence except from the CQA staff.

There will be three payments required for wines included in the CQA.

- 1) Membership dues per winery to become a member of the CQA. All wineries producing at least one wine from grapes grown solely in the state of Virginia are eligible to become members. The annual membership dues are \$300. Dues are 88% tax deductible as a necessary business expense. All members of the CQA will be posted on the website, [www.CommonwealthQualityAlliance.org](http://www.CommonwealthQualityAlliance.org). Dues will be waived for 2011-2012 for wineries who join the CQA program & submit at least one wine by March 31, 2011.
- 2) The fee for a final wine analysis per wine including the laboratory analysis and sensory panel evaluation is \$170.
- 3) After a wine receives the CQA seal, a per-bottle fee of \$.05 will be assessed for marketing and associated administrative costs.

Once a wine has been accepted into the Commonwealth Quality Alliance program, the winery will be permitted to use the CQA seal on their wine. There are multiple formats that the CQA seal can be used in. The wine will also be posted on the CQA website.

Wineries have begun submitting wine to the program. Results are returned within one week to the wineries and to CQA staff.