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Austria Drafts a Wine Law That Would Create an Origin Label for Spritzers

Winegrowers welcomed the proposal as a first step toward stronger protection for Austrian provenance in the spritzer market

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Austria has begun work on a new wine law for 2027 that would change how wine spritzers are labeled and defined, including a proposed voluntary origin mark for products made only with Austrian wine and looser composition rules for lower-alcohol

versions.

The Austrian Winegrowers Association said Tuesday, November 24, that Agriculture Minister Norbert Totschnig had sent the draft law into coordination, an early stage of the legislative process in which ministries review a proposal before it moves forward. The group welcomed the move and said it had pressed for clearer origin labeling for spritzers, a common Austrian drink made with wine and soda water.

According to the association, the draft would create a single voluntary origin label for spritzers produced exclusively from Austrian wine. The idea is to make it easier for shoppers to see whether a spritzer contains domestic wine. The association described that as an important first step for local wine producers, who have been seeking stronger protection for Austrian origin claims in the category.

Johannes Schmuckenschlager, the association’s president, said the measure would send a positive signal to domestic wine businesses and strengthen the visibility of Austrian origin in the market.

The group also said it wants stricter safeguards than the current draft appears to provide. It pointed to the Austrian Food Code as a possible route for a more binding rule on origin and called on the Social Ministry, which handles consumer protection, to examine additional options together with the wine sector.

Beyond origin labeling, the draft would update the production rules for spritzers in ways that could have wider effects across the beverage business. According to the association, the proposal would remove the current minimum wine content of 50% and lower the minimum alcohol level from 4.5% ABV to 4.0% ABV.

That change would allow producers to market lighter versions, including the so-called Sommerg’spritzer, with alcohol content between 4.0% and 5.0% ABV under the spritzer name. For wine-based drinks, the proposal could open the door to more low-alcohol products and new label claims while also changing the composition standards for an established category.

The association argued that the revisions reflect shifting consumer demand in Austria, where lighter drinks with less alcohol are becoming more important. It said the draft would give producers more flexibility to respond to those preferences and could improve the competitiveness of the Austrian wine industry.

If adopted, the changes would matter not only for vineyards and wineries but also for retailers, bars and beverage companies that sell ready-to-drink wine mixes or develop lower-alcohol products. The proposed removal of the 50% wine minimum would give producers more room to formulate spritzers, while the lower alcohol threshold could help companies position lighter drinks for consumers looking for reduced-strength options.

At the same time, the draft appears to draw a distinction between product flexibility and origin messaging. A spritzer could still qualify for the proposed voluntary origin mark only if it were made exclusively from Austrian wine, according to the association’s description of the bill. That means producers seeking to use Austrian provenance as a selling point may face one set of commercial incentives, while those focused on broader product innovation may find another in the relaxed composition rules.

The association framed the start of coordination as a significant step toward the 2027 law and said it would continue to push during the legislative process for rules it considers practical for businesses and supportive of Austrian wine producers. The ministry’s draft still has to move through the rest of Austria’s lawmaking process before any of the proposed labeling and production changes can take effect.