

DLG Product-Certificate



Testing Regulations Quality Seal

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1. Goal and jurisdiction

The DLG Product-Certificate "EXCELLENT" is a quality seal for wine batches according to the Wine Law and labels premium quality wines, sparkling wines and semi-sparkling wines. Thus it promotes the quality and sales of the products, the competitive ability of the producers and the protection of the consumer.

Quality testing is carried out by the certifying body of the DLG TestService GmbH (hereafter referred to as DLG TestService). The address of the company's headquarter is Competence Center Food & Beverage, Wöllsteiner Straße 16, D-55599 Gau-Bickelheim. Approval of the producers is granted by DLG TestService.

Quality testing consists of an organoleptic evaluation and chemical analysis. It includes a preliminary reference test (testing of the tank sample), a conclusive identity test (testing of the final bottled product) and the final awarding of the product-certificate.

2. Participants (applicants)

All natural and legal persons in production and trade may participate. The applicant is responsible for compliance of the registered products regarding wine legislation and testing provisions.

3. Admission

Quality wines, quality sparkling wines and quality semi-sparkling wines, wines indicating country of origin and variety and/or vintage information (Article 55(1)(a i) EG regulation number 607/2009) as well as all wines with protected geographical indication and protected designation of origin plus third-country products without and with stricter geographic designation are allowed, if produced in compliance with the regulations of the standard DLG process-wine in the current version and the producers have been admitted by DLG TestService and own a valid process-certificate. Ready-to-consume products from all domestic and international wine-growing regions may be admitted.

Legal provisions

The product has to comply with the applicable legislation of its country of origin. The containers used for bottling (final bottled samples) have to be labelled in compliance with rules of the legal acts of the European Union, the Law on Wine and the ordinances enacted on the basis of the Law on Wine. In addition, they have to bear the name of the geographic unit where the wine was cultivated as well as give an indication of the vintage of the grapes used in its production. The containers have to be sealed with a non-reusable cap.

Vintages

Only products of vintages produced during the time of validity of the DLG Process-Certificate as well as one year before may be submitted for admission (in accordance with the standard DLG process-wine – operational processes).

Grape varieties

Based on the actual OIV-grape variety list (international list of varieties and their synonyms) all products must be produced out these varieties and their synonyms classified for wine production (wine-grape varieties).

In the German states are just classified grape varieties or grape varieties from cultivation trials permitted for the wine production and application.

Multiple products with the same designation

If the applicant registers multiple products with the same designation, the individual products must be produced and stored separately and must have different lot numbers. In compliance with the Regulation on Prepackaged Goods in its actual version, participation is limited to products already filled into bottles or other containers.

Batch Size

The batch size (one batch with the same DLG Control Number) in litres should not exceed the capacity of the largest available tank unit.

Reference sample (tank sample)

The reference sample (tank sample) is an authentic sample of the entire batch before bottling.

In order to apply for testing of the tank sample, applicants need to submit the filled-in registration form and 6 clearly marked sample bottles. The DLG TestService carries out an organoleptic evaluation and analytical test of the product. The evaluation is performed according to the DLG 5-point-scheme ®.

In the event of a positive test result (= quality score of at least 3,80)

The DLG TestService assigns a preliminary positive test report with a unique DLG Control Number and the opportunity to use the quality seal "EXCELLENT" (quality score of at least 3,80) for advertising purposes on the bottle.

Within a 3 months period, the applicant may now bottle the product and submit it in the shape of a bottled sample for the final awarding of the product-certificate (= testing of the identity).

In the event of a negative test result (= quality score of under 3.80)

The DLG TestService assigns a rejected test report. No DLG Control Number is assigned.

Bottled sample (identity sample)

A bottled sample is a filled bottle readily equipped and labelled for distribution (with a lot number). The labelling and contents are identical with the product that will be marketed.

To apply for the identity testing a completely filled out registration form and six signed samples. The DLG TestService tests the identity of the product with a sample from the same batch sharing the same control number (when an initial identity sample is submitted, its conformity with the reference sample will be tested). The lot bottled has to be identical with the batch sharing the same control number (the decisive criterion is the analytical identity in accordance with the tolerance limits in appendix 3).

In addition, every bottled sample undergoes organoleptic testing. If the identity sample is sensorial perfectly (quality number: greater or equal 3,30 points) the wine is not rejected.

In the event of a positive test result: confirmation of identity

If identity has been established (in accordance with tolerance limits, see appendix 3) and there is no sensorial deviation, the quality seal is finally granted and the wine may be marketed with the DLG Product-Certificate and the accompanying DLG Control Number.

In the event of a negative test result: no confirmation of identity

If identity has not been established (in accordance with tolerance limits, see appendix 3) and/or there is a sensorial deviation, the product may not be marketed with the DLG Product-Certificate. The negative test report also contains a justification of the rejection.

Definition of a partial bottling
(lot)

A partial quantity (lot) is defined as the number of containers (bottles or packages) with the same nominal content and the same design/labelling, produced in the same way and bottled or packaged in the same place in an uninterrupted production run, without a break due to basic cleaning and/or the bottling of other products.

Partial bottling

If the first partial quantity (first bottled sample) of a batch has been awarded the product-certificate "EXCELLENT" (according to the above-mentioned procedure), all further partial quantities (lots) have to be identical with the batch of the first control number awarded. The decisive criterion is the analytical identity (in accordance with tolerance limits, see appendix 3). In addition, every partial quantity undergoes organoleptic testing. If a sensorial deviation is, the partial quantity is rejected. Any clearance for a partial quantity is only granted after testing of the bottled sample.

It is prohibited to bring partial quantities to market which have not been tested and released for identity.

Maximum number of
registered products

A participant may register any number of products.

Exemptions

Under certain conditions, it is up to the DLG TestService to grant exemptions. The cases must be justified and understandable. Exceptions just can be made, if the sensorial result has got an average minimum score of 2,50 points.

4. Application procedure

A participant needs to fill out a registration form for each product, paying heed to instructions.

Registration forms are available from DLG TestService GmbH, Competence Center Food & Beverage, Wöllsteiner Straße 16, D-55599 Gau-Bickelheim, Germany (e-mail info@dlgts.com).

The applicant has to faithfully submit any information required by the registration form. The statements made by the applicant are binding. The applicant has to sign the registration form. Hereby the testing provisions for the "DLG product-certificate" are accepted by the applicant.

Several dates are offered for testing. The application is made by sending 6 sample bottles together with the completed registration form to the above-mentioned address.

5. Fees

A nominal charge is levied for the use of the "DLG product-certificate EXCELLENT" on the label. For applications from Germany, fees have to be paid plus legal VAT. The fees only have to be paid after an invoice has been received.

6. Shipping of samples

In order to be eligible for testing, the applicant has to supply 6 free bottles of every product to be registered. Applicants have to send these samples together with the completed registration form directly to the DLG TestService. In exceptional cases, a representative of the DLG TestService might directly take these samples in the applicant's production facility. The applicant has no rights to a refund and cannot claim compensation for samples shipped or taken, including empties and packaging. Samples are only accepted if they are delivered to the address of the organiser free domicile and duty paid.

7. Sequence of testing and evaluation

The sequence of testing are among others the following parameters: type of product, flavour, quality grade (in case of wine), grape variety, vintage and analytical values (alcohol, residual sugar, acidity). Special types of products (such as barrique wines) may be tested by a special group of testers. Samples are evaluated in a blind tasting, meaning that the producer's identity is unknown. The evaluation is conducted according to the DLG 5-point-scheme ®. The final result is disclosed to the applicant in a test report.

8. Testers

DLG TestService creates neutral, independent testing panels for the organoleptic evaluation of the quality of registered samples. These are comprised of 3 experts (testers). In the individual case the testing is also possible with 3 testers. The testers have to hold a DLG sensory-certificate for wine and sparkling wine or a comparable qualification. The experts are recruited from the wine industry and related business areas. They are appointed and employed by DLG TestService on the basis of their knowledge, abilities and experience.

9. Chemical analyses/ particular oenological / requirements

The physico - chemical investigations are carried out by an accredited and by DLG TestService approved laboratory. On request, the customer will be given the current "List of approved subcontractors". For every lot, a small physico-chemical analysis (see appendix 2) is carried out in compliance with accredited testing methods.

In order to disqualify adulterated wines or wines produced using unfair practices, additional analyses of the consignments are carried out by accredited laboratories. The nature and extent of these analyses are at the discretion of the organiser.

The use of sorbic acid is explicitly prohibited.

The following allergens must not be traceable: casein, ovalbumin and lysozyme (tolerance limit 0.25 mg/l according to ELISA-testing).

The content of free SO₂ is regularly established by way of direct iodometric titration, deducting reductones (see appendix 2).

10. Awarding

Preliminary awarding is done on the basis of the reference sample (tank sample). Final awarding of the "DLG Product-Certificate EXCELLENT" is based on the bottled sample (identity). It is a prerequisite that the bottled sample and the tank sample have to be identical on an analytical basis (see appendix 3). The applicant receives for each awarded product a test report with a DLG Control Number and the right to use the DLG Product-Certificate on the label for a nominal fee.

When disclosure to third parties, the DLG test report must be complete.

The DLG TestService publishes a list of certified products and their producers.

Complaints to award-winners

Participants are obliged to investigate complaints and/or non-conformities. The following reporting regarding the conformity of the certified products including the criterias of the certification and subsequently measures must be kept, stored and be made available on request of the DLG TestService.

The use of received awards in advertising

Advertising for award-winning products is voluntary and permissible by

- 1.) placing the quality seal (DLG Product-Certificate) on the product or
- 2.) giving textual indications regarding the quality seal.

The quality seal may be used on the bottles of the certified lot. The quality seal is limited to the number of bottles stated on the registration form and in the test report.

Permissible ways of using the seal

The "DLG Product-Certificate" (sample see cover sheet) is produced using a binding design template, which the applicant receives together with the confirmation of testing. The seal always contains a DLG Control Number, which ensures the unambiguous identification of the lot. Any representation of the quality seal has to be at least 45 mm wide. The height/width-ratio must not be amended. The colour specifications are binding. Textual indications regarding the quality seal are permissible on the packaging of the product, on lists of beverages, in special price offers, in advertisements, supplements and on letterheads. The use of the quality seal is not permissible in any other way but those stated above.

Prohibition of deception

In advertising, care has to be taken to avoid all actions that might result in the misleading of consumers. All statements have to comply with competition law. Responsibility for this rests solely with the participant or his legal successor.

11. Claims for damages

Claims for damages due to negligence are excluded.

12. Exclusion

At registration

False statements lead to the exclusion of the product for the testing procedures.

After awarding

The quality seal is granted with reservation. The quality seal can be revoked if the participant violates these testing provisions.

If the result of the identity testing of a bottled sample of a product is negative, the organiser may deny the quality seal for the partial quantity in question and every subsequent one. This measure will also be taken if partial quantities (lots) are marketed without testing and clearance.

With regard to the cases mentioned under the headlines "at registration" and "after awarding", the organiser or his representatives have the right to verify the statements made by the applicant at registration by way of being granted access to cellar records or other business records.

Monitoring

For re-testing purposes, DLG TestService may also show up unannounced and take up to 6 further sample bottles of a sealed lot free of charge from the participant's operation or buy them from the producer's customers. Re-testing may comprise an organoleptic evaluation and/or a chemical inspection. If any violation of these testing regulations is established in the course of re-testing, the participant forfeits the right to carry the seal. The participant has to cover the cost of testing.

Complaints/appeals

Appeals and complaints submitted in writing or over the phone are processed according to the internal rules of DLG TestService. The final decision is given to the complainant in writing.

13. Final clause

The participant has to inform about any changes that could affect the certification requirements of the DLG TestService immediately.

With his signature on the registration form, the applicant accepts the regulations as legally binding. Redress through the courts is excluded.

Appendix 1:

Short description of the certification concept for wine batches under the DLG Product-Certificate

1. Tank sample (reference)

Organoleptic evaluation and analytical inspection

= test report (if requirements are fulfilled = preliminary awarding of the quality seal together with the granted DLG Control Number and bottling release)

2. Bottled sample (identity)

Testing of the identity of the accompanying reference sample and the bottled sample (same DLG Control Number)

= test report (if identity is confirmed = final awarding of the quality seal and release to market using the "DLG Product-Certificate" under the accompanying DLG Control Number)

3. Further bottled sample (identity test of further partial quantities/bottled, ready-to-market sample)

Testing of the identity of the batch bearing the same control number

= test report (if identity is confirmed and the requirements are fulfilled = release to market using the "DLG Product-Certificate" under the accompanying DLG Control Number)

Appendix 2:

Parameters for analysis

| Parameters for analysis | Method(s) |
|--|--|
| Small standard analysis | |
| Actual alcohol content [g/l] | Distillation, NIR |
| Actual alcohol content [vol%] | Calculated |
| Total alcohol content [g/l] | Calculated |
| Total alcohol content [vol%] | Calculated |
| Total extract [g/l] | Tabarié |
| Fermented sugar [g/l] | HPLC |
| Glucose [g/l] | HPLC |
| Fructose [g/l] | HPLC |
| Sucrose [g/l] | HPLC |
| Total acidity, calculated as tartaric acid [g/l] | Potentiometric |
| pH-value | Potentiometric |
| Free SO ₂ [mg/l] | Iodometric (see OIV-MA-AS323-04B) |
| Total SO ₂ [mg/l] | Iodometric, hydrolysis or distillation |
| Reductones [mg/l] | Iodometric |
| Relative density d _{20/20} | Flexural resonator |
| Additional parameters (Extract) | |
| Sorbic acid [mg/l] | HPLC |
| Allergens | |
| Histamine & co. | ELISA |
| Albumin | ELISA |
| Casein | ELISA |

Appendix 3:

Tolerance limits for identity testing

The comparability of analytical values is ensured by the ongoing employment of the same analytical methods.

Density:

- For products with a residual sugar content of less than 45.0 g/l, deviation of density values may amount to 0.0005.
- For products with a residual sugar content of at least 45.0 g/l, deviation of density values may amount to 0.0006.