

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Canada Announces Consultations on Standards of Identity for Beer

Report Categories:

Agriculture in the News

Beverages

Policy and Program Announcements

Trade Policy Monitoring

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Report Highlights:

On October 3, 2014 the [Government of Canada announced](#) the start of a 45-day consultation period regarding the country's set standards of identity for beer. Consultations will run until November 17, 2014.

Background

On October 3, 2014 the [Government of Canada announced](#) the start of a 45-day consultation period regarding the country's set standards of identity for beer. Consultations will run until November 17, 2014.

Currently, Canada's [Food and Drug Regulations](#) define beer, ale, stout, porter and malt liquor as "the product of the alcoholic fermentation by yeast of an infusion of barley or wheat malt and hops or hop extract in potable water and shall be brewed in such a manner as to possess the aroma, taste and character commonly attributed to" each respective beverage type. This definition does not allow for the addition of non-traditional ingredients such as spices and fruit, which the Canadian Government recognizes is no longer in line with current market realities.

Economic Impact

The move is aimed at decreasing the barriers to the introduction of new products and will lead to more choice for consumers. The modernization was [first pledged](#) in the Canadian Government's Economic Action Plan under their 2014 budget. The brewing industry accounts for \$14 billion in economic activity or 0.9 percent of Canada's total GDP. In addition, the production, distribution and sale of beer in support 163,000 jobs in the market.

Beer remains the alcoholic beverage of choice in Canada, with wine gaining steadily. Craft beers specifically show the most promise, with a 33 percent increase in sales from 2011 to 2012. In 2012, sales of beer in Canada totaled \$9.1 billion. However, 85 percent of the beer consumed in Canada was produced domestically. In 2013 the U.S. exported approximately \$162 million of beer to Canada, a 13 percent increase over 2012. As of August 2014, the U.S. is on pace for an annual increase of 16 percent. More information on this sector, including labelling and provincial liquor boards, can be found in FAS Canada's [Overview of the Wine and Spirits Sector in Canada](#).

The Consultations

Beer, and the related consultations, falls under the portfolio of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. Its [website](#) states that the purpose of the consultations is to:

- clarify the definition of beer,
- define the ingredients that can be added to beer,
- repeal the standard for ale, stout, porter or malt liquor ; and,
- remove the food additives from the beer standard, as they already appear on Health Canada's List of Permitted Food Additives.

The consultation is split into two parts. The first is a questionnaire on detailed explanations of each element of the proposed regulations. The second is a set of more detailed questions on the cost and benefit to businesses and will require a general idea of payroll, advertising budget and current label stock.

How to Participate

The online questionnaires may be completed by **November 17, 2014** online at:

<http://inspection.gc.ca/about-the-cfia/accountability/consultations/beer-standards/eng/1412279715152/1412279765320>.

Additional comments may be provided by **November 17, 2014** by email, fax or mail to:
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Correspondence should clearly indicate "Beer Standards Consultation October-November 2014" in the subject line.