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GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Canada

Post: Ottawa

Canada Revises Beer Standards to Promote Innovation

Report Categories:

Beverages

Trade Policy Monitoring

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Report Highlights:

Canada revised prescriptive beer compositional standards to better reflect and support a diversifying beer industry, while providing beer drinkers greater information about allergenic content. The revisions implemented changes proposed in a [2018 consultation](#). Brewers will have until December 2022 to comply with new regulatory and labeling changes.

Keywords: Canada, CA19024, Beer, Labeling

Canada Updates Beer Compositional Standards

On May 1, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) issued a [news release](#) and [notice to industry](#) announcing new [compositional standards](#) for beer. Domestic and imported products will need to comply with new regulatory requirements and labeling changes by December 14, 2022.

The new beer compositional standards include the following changes:

- standards for ale, stout, porter and malt liquor are replaced by one standard for all beer styles and types;
- food allergens, gluten sources or added sulphites are required to be declared on the label;
- residual sugar is limited to four percent in the final product to distinguish standardized beer from sweeter malt-based beverages;
- flavoring preparations are allowed to be used along with mandatory labelling (for example, "beer with blueberry flavor");
- references to specific food additives are replaced with a general reference to additives permitted in beer under Health Canada's [Lists of Permitted Food Additives](#);
- processing aids no longer have to be listed;
- the use of herbs and spices is now allowed;
- the use of mixtures of yeast and other micro-organisms for fermentation is allowed.

For additional information, please refer to the [CFIA website](#).

Beer sales in Canada reached \$9.2 billion CAD in 2018, with volume topping 2.2 billion liters. Of the total volume of beer sold in Canada in 2018, about 25 percent was imported – nearly 560 million liters. The United States was the second largest supplier of imported beer, shipping approximately 110 million liters for a 20 percent share of total imports. The number one supplier of imported beer in 2018 was the Netherlands (Heineken) with 21 percent of the import market. Mexico was the number three supplier with a 17 percent market share.