



Membership Code | Responsibilities to our industry

Introduction

Grape growing and wine production in Great Britain is a rapidly expanding young industry with a fine reputation for both quality and integrity. WineGB members are all united in their quest to develop expertise, consistency, and high standards, building a commercially sustainable market for English and Welsh wines. With this in mind, the Board of WineGB together with the Chairs and Committees of the 7 Regional Associations of England and Wales have agreed this Membership Code to set out our core principles. It is not intended to be a set of rules which might stifle innovation but is a set of guidelines to steer our Industry forward for a successful and sustainable long-term future. The membership code will be renewed and updated by the Board, the Management Advisory Committee and Regional Association Chairs on an annual basis.

Consistent Quality in everything we do

English and Welsh wine can be judged by the worst wine released onto the market just as much as by the best. We therefore have a common goal to help one another strive for quality across everything we produce and how we present ourselves.

Labelling & Product Identification for Consumer Protection

Our wine labels must clearly identify the origin of the grapes, the production methods used, and the quality level achieved. This will enable the general public to increase awareness of the meaning of PDO and PGI standards, understand Traditional Method sparkling and other methods, and accept quality and value for money at differing price points. There are other requirements and guidance papers that set out precise labelling requirements for all wines produced from grapes grown in Great Britain. Members of Wine GB are expected to act fairly and honestly when dealing with consumers. We must be consistent and transparent.

Sharing of Information and Best Practice

A growing industry needs cooperation to provide information for meaningful research and the collection of data. Without this we cannot deliver guidance for best practice or ask for support from Government and other bodies. We will not request commercially confidential information about individual businesses or enable competitors to share commercially sensitive detail, but we do ask for participation in surveys, questionnaires and other information gathering activities from all members.

Environmental Responsibilities

As the fastest growing sector of agriculture, we have a shared responsibility to minimize our impact on the environment in which we operate and maximize our contribution to environmental sustainability and biodiversity. This should include both viticulture and winery activities incorporating:

- Responsible use of all pesticide and other chemical products
- Minimizing our Carbon footprint
- Use of Renewable energy wherever possible
- Protection of wildlife, flora and fauna
- Careful use of water and the discharge of waste water

Legal Responsibilities

All members are expected to be aware of the laws governing our industry and to adhere strictly to them. This will protect our integrity for the long term. WineGB can provide sign posting guidance only for:

- Food Standard Agency Regulations
- Health & Safety
- Duty
- Licensing
- Planning

- Use of Pesticides
- Product Labeling
- Employment
- Tax

Rural Economy and Employment Practices

Wine Production in Great Britain relies on a healthy rural economy with a good supply of agricultural as well as production labour. Our members agree to:

- Follow best practice in providing a healthy and safe working environment;
- Fair wages
- Non-discrimination
- Encouragement of new recruitment
- Respect the interests of other stakeholders

Research, Training & Education

WineGB members are committed to Research, Training and Education to enable the industry to grow in expertise, size and quality. Members are expected to promote these objectives and encourage others.

Conflicts of Interest & Complaints

We are a trade organization reliant on many volunteers and Committees. Members should be careful to avoid using the association to promote individual objectives if they are not consistent with the aims of the industry. There may be occasional conflicts of interest and we ask members or directors to exclude themselves from decisions where conflict of interest might exist. WineGB has a Complaint Handling Procedure which is intended to be fair to any complainant and fair to the industry. We ask any member wishing to raise a complaint to agree to do so under the terms of the Procedure, so that any issue can be privately and satisfactorily resolved.

Promoting and Protecting the Generic Brand

All members have a common interest in promoting the fine reputation of English and Welsh wines as a whole. Producers of course, have their own brands to market but as part of our Membership Code we agree to work together to develop our generic brand and market The Wines of Great Britain. This includes but is not limited to:

- National and international marketing campaigns
- Wine Tourism cooperation and initiatives
- Development of Export opportunities;
- Lobbying both central and local Government for support.

Working Together

Wine GB members should behave honorably amongst themselves, support one another and take care not to criticize other producers or products unless they are in breach of this code. Whilst the code has no legal authority or direct obligations, the board of WineGB reserves the right to review membership if the spirit and standards of this code are not being met.