



KAUTZ FARMS

Diversified Farming

August 9, 2005

Comment 81

Mr. John Manfreda
Administrator
Alcohol & Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau
U. S. Treasury
1310 G Street, NW Washington, D.C. 20220

RE: TTB Notice 49 – Petition to amend 27 CFR, sec. 4.27 (vintage date regulations)

Dear Administrator Manfreda,

John Kautz Farms has been in the wine-grape growing business since 1960. We currently farm nearly 4,500 acres of wine grapes near Lodi, California.

We are also actively involved in the wine business, marketing both domestic and exported finished goods and bulk wine.

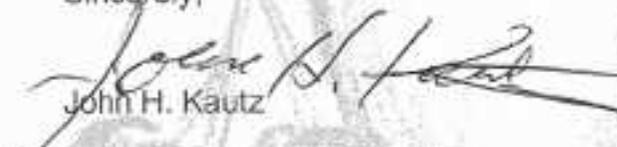
Currently most countries we are competing with allow 15% to 25% from another vintage to be blended into a wine and still use the vintage of the remaining 75% to 85% on the label.

As most people will admit, the ability to blend up to 25% of different varietals into a varietal labeled wine increases the quality and marketability of wine; the same is so with vintage blending. Older wines can be made to taste younger and fresher, younger wines can be blended to add some aged characteristics.

Foreign wine producers are allowed this tool and are getting an uneven quality advantage over us. Global competitors are continuing to take our market share.

We need the ability to compete on a level playing field. We urge the TTB to support changing the vintage date requirements to 85% as petitioned for by the Wine Institute.

Sincerely,


John H. Kautz

