Control State News

IA: New Alcohol Law to be Signed Tuesday

License State News

SC: South Carolina Asks: Are Frozen 'Booze Pops' Food or Alcohol
WA: New Washington laws cover liquor samples, wine auctions, tasting rooms
GA: Governor Signs Booze Bill Into Law, Allowing Direct Sales at Breweries and Distilleries
CO: Kombucha brewers, liquor stores and others plea for Boulder soda tax exemptions
TX: Texas House Passes Taproom Bill

International News

Canada: Health Canada surveys drinkers in Yukon and N.W.T.

Industry News

Scotch whisky revival gathers pace globally

Is Wine Sustainable?

Daily News

Federal Government Introduces Cannabis Legislation
Minnesota liquor heir hopes to parlay business career into congressional bid
Internet vs booze: Brits reveal they would rather give up alcohol than go offline
‘Drunk driver’ sues the bars that served him
NABCA HIGHLIGHTS

- Updated! Alcohol-Infused Food/Beverage section in the NABCA Survey Database.
- The Control State Agency Info Sheets. Please view website for more information.
- NEW! A three-part webinar series regarding Communications Crisis Planning. Click to review webinar.
- NABCA Survey Database – now available for members on the website.

www.NABCA.org
IA: New Alcohol Law to be Signed Tuesday

WHO TV
By Staff Writer
May 8, 2017

DES MOINES, Iowa – Gov. Terry Branstad will sign into law a bill updating Iowa’s alcohol laws Tuesday.

House File 607 allows native distilleries to sell their products by the glass to customers at their facilities and to sell nine bottles per person. Right now, they are limited to two.

The bill also eliminates the requirement for brewpubs to route the beer they pour into growlers through a wholesale distributor.

Finally, the bill allows breweries to serve wine by the glass at their taprooms.

Branstad will sign the bill Tuesday afternoon at the Iowa Distilling Company in Cumming.

SC: South Carolina Asks: Are Frozen 'Booze Pops' Food or Alcohol

Charleston officials are asking South Carolina regulators to reconsider if frozen ice pops made with alcohol should be treated like beer and liquor instead of food.

U.S. News
By The Associated Press
May 8, 2017

FOLLY BEACH, S.C. (AP) — South Carolina regulators were wrong were they allowed a food truck to begin selling frozen ice pops made with alcohol without an alcohol permit, the city of Charleston is saying in a letter.

The Booze Pops van is making its way around the Lowcountry, selling frozen alcoholic treats on a stick. The Department of Revenue said the business is following the law the way it is written.

But the city of Charleston is asking the state to reconsider, saying by selling "booze pops" as food, it allows buyers to do dangerous things it typically couldn’t with alcohol, like walk around in public.

"Worse, this legislative loophole would appear to enable consumption of 'booze pops' by those behind the wheel of a motor vehicle, thus putting the driver, as well as others, at a serious safety risk," the city wrote in the letter obtained by The Post and Courier of Charleston (http://bit.ly/2qhkolT).

Booze Pops owner Woodrow Norris said he came up with the idea and put it together in about two weeks. He is retired and uses the profits from the business to help his daughter.

His big sellers are watermelon, lemonade and strawberry daiquiris and he has non-alcoholic treats for children.

"We're trying to make it super-nice," Norris said. "Mom can get her Martini pop and little Jimmy can get a SpongeBob."

By selling the treats as food, Norris can go anywhere. Recently, he parked his van in Folly Beach near a wedding party. Norris has kept his van mostly around Charleston, but wants to branch out to Columbia and Myrtle Beach.
If the rules change and the Booze Pops van is regulated like an alcohol seller, Norris could only work special events and not wherever he thought he could make money.

"I’m sure I would have to get some different licensing," he said. "I could still do a lot of the things I do now. I would just have to do it differently."

WA: New Washington laws cover liquor samples, wine auctions, tasting rooms

The Spokesman-Review
By Jim Camden
May 9, 2017

OLYMPIA – Customers sampling liquor at Washington craft distilleries can have their half shot with water or soda.

Charities can auction wine to raise money.

Craft distilleries can get a license to store their liquor in a warehouse.

Wineries can have twice as many tasting rooms, where they can sell growlers and kegs of their products as well as samples.

Mead is officially defined in state law.

These and other changes are being made to the state’s liquor laws, which undergo yearly revisions to meet growing demand, changing consumer tastes and the movement away from state control of key aspects of the sale of and distribution of alcohol.

“The system is a legacy of prohibition,” said Sen. Mike Baumgartner, R-Spokane. “The big jolt was the privatization of liquor in 2012. That has created an ongoing series of legislation as the state transitions.”

Washington enacted prohibition before the nation did, and when the national amendment was repealed, the state kept tight control of alcohol sales. Washington voters did away with that in 2012 by passing Initiative 1183, but the state still licenses businesses that make, distribute and sell alcoholic products through its Liquor and Cannabis Board.

The Commerce, Labor and Sports Committee, which Baumgartner chairs, has jurisdiction over most alcohol legislation in the Senate. For several years, the panel has held hearings on proposed changes to licenses and regulations in an evolving market.

“Craft beer, craft liquor, craft cider ... anything craft, people are getting into,” Baumgartner said.

One way for the small wineries, craft distilleries and cider manufacturers to showcase their products is with tastings. The state initially limited where and how those tastings could take place, and is slowly relaxing the regulations.

For example, several years ago the state allowed distilleries to offer samples – whether they charge is up to them – but only with certain conditions. The sample couldn’t be more than a half ounce, with a 2-ounce limit per customer. The customers had to take their half-shots straight.

A bill Gov. Jay Inslee signed Monday allows the distillery tasting rooms to add nonalcoholic mixes or water to their samples, if a customer requests.

Washington winemakers were limited to two tasting rooms away from their main winery or vineyard. Another bill Inslee signed Monday expands that to four tasting rooms. Those tasting rooms can sell wine by the glass, by the keg or in sanitized containers known as growlers.

Taverns were also granted approval to cater an event at another location, using their own supplies of alcohol, if they get an endorsement to their liquor license. Restaurants already had that ability.

Stores that want to sell beer, wine and liquor can get a single “combination” license, instead of multiple license for the different types of alcohol.
Nonprofits that want to auction wine to raise some money can now get a special license from the Liquor and Cannabis Board to do that. They can even allow tastings at the auction, provided the tastings are for wine that’s going to be auctioned.

The state’s growing number of craft distillers can get a license from the board to store their liquor in a warehouse that’s separate from the distillery. Baumgartner said that grew out of a situation he considered “Kafka-esque.” A craft distiller got a citation for not storing his liquor in a licensed warehouse, but the board didn’t have such a license to issue. Now it will.

Mead, a fermented beverage made from honey, was officially added to Washington’s list of approved alcoholic products. A bill signed last week gives the beverage – which has been around for thousands of years – a definition in state law. It also says the agricultural commodity assessment for wine production can’t be collected on mead and allows the beverage to be sold by anyone with a license to sell beer or cider, including tap rooms that sell growlers for takeout.

Most bills passed the House and Senate with large bipartisan majorities. Opposition is often bipartisan, too, with some lawmakers opposed to increasing the availability of alcohol without corresponding increases in programs to fight alcohol abuse, drunk driving and underage drinking.

**GA: Governor Signs Booze Bill Into Law, Allowing Direct Sales at Breweries and Distilleries**

*The law takes effect September 1*

EATER
By Chris Fuhrmeister
May 8, 2017

Georgia Governor Nathan Deal just made sweeping changes to the state’s alcohol regulations official, signing Senate Bill 85 into law on Monday. The legislation allows breweries and distilleries sell directly to consumers, and it will go into effect September 1.

“Our state leaders have been committed to ensuring Georgia remains a great state in which to brew beer and that local economies benefit from the industry’s steady growth,” Martin Smith, executive director of the Georgia Beer Wholesalers Association, said in a prepared statement. “We are excited to have worked alongside our brewer partners and retailers in supporting the bill and look forward to the positive impact the new law will have on the industry.”

“This will change the brewing and beer culture of the whole state”

The bill passed both houses of the state legislature and was sent to Governor Deal’s desk in March. First introduced in the Georgia Senate in January, it updates state law to allow breweries to sell 3,000 barrels of their beer per year directly to customers. Upon Senate passage, the House took up a substitute that added language to allow local distilleries to directly sell 500 barrels of spirits per year. For off-site consumption, thirsty Georgians will be able to purchase up to a case of beer and three 750 ml bottles of liquor at a time from brewers and distillers, respectively.

The new law loosens regulations that required the state’s breweries and distilleries to distribute their products through wholesalers.

“First and foremost, [the new law] will create a better experience for distillery guests, allowing them to sample whichever of our world-class spirits they would like.” says Chad Ralston, certified specialist of spirits for American Spirit Whiskey. “Second, like our distillery brethren, we’re excited about the implications to better engage with guests who have at times been perplexed about the tour process in the current environment.”
Effects of the bill have been seen in Atlanta even before Governor Deal signed it into law. Last year, Second Self renovated and expanded its Westside tasting room “under the assumption that a bill like this would pass,” according to Santamaria. Mitch Steele, lauded brewmaster who was the brains behind the beer at California’s Stone Brewing for a decade, is planning a brewpub along the Atlanta BeltLine’s Eastside Trail in Poncey-Highland. Monday Night Brewing and Wild Heaven Beer are both opening new facilities at a forthcoming development adjacent to the BeltLine’s soon-to-open Westside Trail.

“We plan to create an incredible beer and food destination in an area of Atlanta whose time has come,” Wild Heaven president Nick Purdy said when he announced the brewery’s new location. “Thanks to the leadership and vision of Lieutenant Governor Casey Cagle, Senator Rick Jeffares, Representative Howard Maxwell and the efforts of our wholesale partners and persistence of the Georgia Craft Brewers Guild, it makes sense to double down on our home state.”

CO: Kombucha brewers, liquor stores and others plea for Boulder soda tax exemptions

_Council members: Exempting any product — even ostensibly healthy alternatives to sugary drinks — could present slippery slope_

_Daily Camera Boulder News_
By Alex Burness, Staff Writer
May 6, 2017

It was the voters of Boulder who approved the nation's steepest sugary drink tax in November, but only the city has the power to implement it.

Advertisement

Now, with the tax set to go into effect July 1, some local businesses are making appeals for clemency from the City Council, which in turn must decide whether to exempt certain drinks not typically associated with diabetes, childhood obesity and other health outcomes the tax aims to mitigate.

Among these products are kombucha, drinks designed to enhance athletic performance, coconut water and non-alcoholic mixers — all of which fall above, in many cases, the tax's threshold of 5 grams of added sugar per 12 fluid ounces.

Ann Coppinger, who owns Pettyjohn's Liquor and Wine in south Boulder, is one of the dozens of concerned businesspeople who've been joining weekly conference calls with the city staff members tasked to lead the tax implementation.

"The thing I don't think is correct is that under that umbrella of sugary drinks are mixers," Coppinger said. "These are not 'beverages.' They're not. Nobody sits down and pours themselves a glass of margarita mix."

She's concerned that when one of her $6.99 mixes jumps in price by a dollar, customers will take note and take their business elsewhere.

Michelle Birchfield of Blume Honey Water is also concerned about a loss of sales in Boulder. Like the kombucha brewers who sounded the alarm before the tax passed, her argument for exemption centers around the idea that her product is a healthy alternative to soda and other sugary drinks with considerable health costs.

"Honey is not a sugar. It’s really an un-sugar, and our bodies process it totally differently than refined sugar or high-fructose corn syrup," she told the City Council last week, in a plea for exemption.

The council will hold a May 16 public hearing and second reading of an ordinance concerning the tax's implementation, but an informal discussion of the matter last month suggested the council's leaning against exemptions — except, possibly, for drink mixers.

"My concern," Mayor Suzanne Jones said, "is that once you start trying to decide between this and other things, once you open that door to consider exemptions, it's hard to know where to stop."

The ballot measure, brought by the citizen advocacy group Healthy Boulder Kids, drew specific lines on where to step.
Exempted products include alcoholic and medical beverages, milk products and 100-percent juice drinks. Diet drinks with artificial sweeteners are also exempt, which frustrates people like Jamba Dunn of Rowdy Mermaid Kombucha, which fancies its drinks much healthier than the untaxed Diet Coke.

"If we win an exemption, it’ll be because we’re a local business and Boulder’s trying to protect us from being hindered by this tax," Dunn said. "But they'll be opening themselves up to (exempting) honey water and maple water and coconut water if they do that."

Though mixers may be the only product seriously considered for an exemption, the council appears interested in at least discussing exemptions for food carts and other mobile vendors who bring in less than $100,000 per year.

But even that could be a slippery slope, Mayor Pro Tem Andrew Shoemaker said.

"The tax was to stop use, and to generate revenue off use," Mayor Pro Tem Andrew Shoemaker said. "And if we say, 'All you've got to do is go to a food cart and get all the Coke you want, we haven't really done much."

Jamie Harkins, sustainability coordinator for the city and the lead staffer on the tax's implementation, said she's spoken with counterparts in other cities with similar taxes, like Philadelphia and Berkeley, Calif., and found that none of them supported exemptions.

"No other city that's implemented one of these taxes has exempted any of these products," Harkins said, "because it makes it more complicated to implement as you exempt certain things.

"That said, we understand the argument, so that's why were still discussing it."

This same debate ramped up in the weeks just ahead of the election, centering around the question of what, exactly, the tax intends to accomplish.

The campaign for the tax focused on the health of children, and particularly poor children, to whom soda companies market disproportionately. Kids were brought in to speak to the City Council ahead of the election, images of kids graced official campaign materials and the word "kids" was literally in the name of the issue committee pushing the tax.

"We feel that (the tax) does have many unintended consequences and local business impacts that voters did not know they were approving, while the campaign kept the focus on children," Andrea Meneghel, director of public affairs for the Boulder Chamber, said this week.

Healthy Boulder Kids is sticking to its position, though, that products not already exempted by the tax — healthy, or healthier, as they may be — should be taxed when the policy begins in seven weeks.

"Though the funds were targeted towards families, the health issues are population-wide," Kevin Gilbert, representing Healthy Boulder Kids, told the council last week. "And the tax affects all sugary drinks — not just those targeting children."

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**TX: Texas House Passes Taproom Bill**

*Brewbound*
*By Justin Kendall*
*May 8, 2017*

The Texas House of Representatives voted Saturday in favor of House Bill 3287, which requires breweries making more than 175,000 collective barrels annually to buy back beer from a wholesaler in order to continue direct-to-consumer sales, according to the Houston Chronicle.

An amendment to the bill, which would have given craft breweries the right to sell to-go beer, something Texas brewers such as Deep Ellum have long fought for, was also rejected.
“Now we prepare for the Senate battle,” Texas Craft Brewers Guild executive director Charles Vallhonrat told the outlet.

State Rep. Craig Goldman (R-Fort Worth), the bill’s sponsor, claimed the legislation offers protection for craft breweries from multinational companies who might acquire Texas breweries.

“This bill hurts no one,” Goldman reportedly said.

As Brewbound reported last week, the Texas Craft Brewers Guild started a petition opposing the bill. Anheuser-Busch InBev (ABI) has also come out against the bill.

In the bill’s current form, large brewers such as ABI-owned Karbach Brewing (which is penalized because of its affiliation with the global brewing conglomerate) would be required to repurchase beer that never leaves the brewery premises but is “sold” to a distributor, in order to then sell and serve that beer via their taprooms.

The Chronicle also reported that two other amendments directed at the middle tier failed, including one that would have required distributors to take beer sold to wholesalers back to a warehouse before returning it to a brewery for taproom sales (come to rest). A second amendment would have prohibited wholesalers from charging more than administrative fees for beer that the distributor collected a payment for without handling.

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**INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

**Canada: Health Canada surveys drinkers in Yukon and N.W.T.**

*A new multi-year study in Yukon, N.W.T., will analyze attitudes, opinions and behaviours of drinkers*

CBC News
May 8, 2017

Health Canada is funding a new study that will attempt to shed light on drinking habits in the North, and what people know and believe about booze.

"There really is very little or limited evidence in the territories related to alcohol — opinions, knowledge, behaviours related to alcohol. So that's the real purpose of this study, is to try to fill that gap," said lead scientist Erin Hobin of Public Health Ontario.

"The evidence that is available — albeit limited — does indicate that [for] people living in Yukon and N.W.T., or visiting either of the territories, overall alcohol consumption rates are higher than in other parts of Canada."

The $700,000 multi-year study will initially focus on people in Whitehorse and Yellowknife. The first phase of the research involves a voluntary survey of liquor store customers in each city.

"We want to recruit people who are currently consuming alcohol," Hobin said.

The research data could be used to develop better public policy and 'support people in making more informed and safer alcohol choices,' said Erin Hobin of Public Health Ontario. (CBC)

Participants are asked general questions about themselves, and also "about alcohol consumption, where they get information about alcohol, what sort of conditions are associated with consuming alcohol," Hobin said.

The researchers are also working with the two territorial governments to collect data on liquor sales.

Hobin says the goal is to provide more and better information to governments and health practitioners, so they can develop harm reduction policies that "can best support people in making more informed and safer alcohol choices," Hobin said.

She says alcohol is the leading cause of death and disease in Canada, so it's important for officials to understand drinking behaviour and attitudes.
Surveys will be conducted between now and June 3, then again next year.

Hobin says researchers also hope to eventually expand the study to rural communities in Yukon and N.W.T.

**INDUSTRY NEWS**

**Scotch whisky revival gathers pace globally**

The Drinks Report  
Felicity Murrah, editor in chief  
May 9, 2017

The booming Scotch whisky business will show continued growth for the next five years at least, according to research commissioned by Vinexpo, the world’s leading wine and spirits exhibition. The Vinexpo forecast complements encouraging news from the Scotch Whisky Association, which reveals that exports rose by both value and volume in 2016.

Based on its own data commissioned from IWSR, the international trade show reveals that global Scotch whisky exports will growth year-on-year, reaching 93.8 million 9l cases by 2020. This year Vinexpo forecasts world sales will hit 87.7 million cases.

With world sales rising, Scotch whisky businesses exhibiting at the show explained why the Bordeaux-based exhibition – June 18 to June 21 - is so important.

While growth is forecast to not be uniform due to slow downs in North America, Russia and Australasia, strong sales in Asia and Latin America will more than compensate. The Asia Pacific region will see sales rise from 14.6 million cases this year to 15.2 million cases in 2018 while combined Latin and North American sales will hit 25.5 million cases in 2018, up from 25.1 million.

Europe is, and will remain, the world’s biggest market for Scotch whisky. Sales are forecast to climb to 35.8 million cases this year and to reach 36.2 million cases in 2018.

Meanwhile, the growing popularity of higher-priced malt Scotch whisky over blended Scotch, albeit from a smaller base, is helping to boost Scotch whisky globally.

The trend to malt whisky will continue to take market share from blended premium Scotch over the five year period to 2020, the report forecasts.

Scotch Whisky and US Whiskey are forecast to be the best performing international spirits categories between 2016 and 2020.

Guillaume Deglise, CEO of Vinexpo, says: “Spirits brands have always been an integral part of Vinexpo because of the international character of the exhibition. With global spirits sales growing at 1.4% a year we foresee increased buyer interest from Asia and Latin America in Bordeaux this June”.

Mark Newton, commercial director of Whyte and Mackay Private Label says: “We first exhibited at Vinexpo in 2015 as part of a series of trade show activations. The show offered us excellent exposure and opportunities to connect with an international audience of buyers. In particularly, we established some good leads from markets such as Russia, Africa, China and Australasia, as well as Europe and the Middle East.

During the four-day exhibition new single malt whiskies from Angus Dundee’s Tomintoul distillery in Speyside and Glencadam distillery in the Eastern Highlands will be launched. Laura Laden, events and projects manager for Angus Dundee says: “We export to 80 countries so Vinexpo offers a great opportunity to meet old and new customers, it is such an international show of great important to us. It is also a great opportunity to see what is happening in the spirits business around the world. After all, Vinexpo represents the world spirits industry with every continent present and something like 135 countries accounted for.”
There is also a vibrant social and contact-making side to Vinexpo which Graham Taylor, MD of Glasgow whisky, relishes: “It’s a great place to meet folk in a pleasant and informal setting, and that includes competitors, whom we haven’t seen in the course of the year. Bordeaux is a beautiful city; a great place to do business.”

Graham says that among the range of blends displayed, Glasgow Whisky will be showing a single malt called Speymhor, which is offered in a wide range of ages. He adds: “We always make good contacts. Both Vinexpo Bordeaux and Vinexpo Hong Kong are very worthwhile.” As for business, his company has just started shipping Scotch whisky to China from a contact made at Vinexpo Hong Kong last May.

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**Is Wine Sustainable?**

*Hospitality & Catering News*  
May 8, 2017

Now there is a grey topic if ever there was one. It has been prompted by the very lively debate created around our supply chain roundtable recently.

Cyrus Todiwala led the discussion with the inspiring story of his young existence. Water was so scarce that he learnt to hang onto the water-bowser, so that as it went up a hill or tilted, he angled underneath the exit pipe to catch a little water. When one bucket of water has to last 3 days, then you realise what value on a few drips really has.

Cyrus’ point was that waste is part of western society. It seems that we accept it as part of consumerism. Whereas basic economics says that resources are always finite and we should therefore treat them all with respect restricting our usage to as close as possible exactly what we need.

Our survey results released at the roundtable highlighted the importance of sustainability to the respondents. This leads us straight to the question what is sustainability? In Cyrus’ recounting of his story, it simply means ‘a better world’ which can be enjoyed for generations’. However this is a possibly too loose a definition because there are many pliable judgements within.

According to the 1987 UN World Commission sustainable development is “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.

The CBI Market Intelligence (a Dutch body that promotes Imports to EU from developing countries) takes about Wine sustainability as primarily about Organic Wine, which is a statement of current fact. However it does point out that a wider view of sustainability may refer to many aspects of the supply chain – the container that it is served in, how it is transported there, reduced energy and water use in its production.

Wine in UK hospitality businesses often is relegated to either the unimportant or elevated to the fiefdom of the elite. In the former case it not a significant enough part of our business to take notice of or in the latter a cover up for the decision makers in an organisation to take control of an area they regard as their personal right to make judgement on.

Wine is just as important a part of our industry if not more important than many others.

According to the Wine & Spirit Trade Association (WSTA) it is worth £10.9bn in UK sales of which £4.2bn to the Hospitality trade.

It employs 170,000 people, 100,000 in supply chain. In some quality restaurants wine can make up to 20% of the takings. Wine has been produced for around 8,000 years and is a part of our diet at least in Europe and increasingly so in other parts of the world. Further recent studies show that a small amount of wine per day reduces dementia and that wine stimulates the brain more than maths!

And just so as we are clear – wine belongs to the majority not the minority. The WSTA report that 71% of consumers enjoy wine. So let’s acknowledge immediately that wine is important from the sustainability of life and its enjoyment standpoints, if not longer-term health.
As to the sustainability, it is a complex subject. Whereas the above reporting body focuses on Organic as the sustainable practice, there are wineries across the worlds that have sustainable water practices. Wineries use a lot of water, often in climates that are often water poor, so ensuring that water is used sparingly is important. There are wineries in Australia, which have over 10 years of sustainable water practice.

An organic, biodynamic, natural or Fairtrade wine does not necessarily mean a sustainable wine. Reducing the environmental impact of the whole supply chain and improving working conditions is the aim. So that includes, but is not limited to, packaging, distance to market, chemicals used in production, energy use, water use, recycling amongst others.

The different terminology and many symbols don’t help clarify matters for consumers. Organic Wine is legally defined as wines produced from Organically Grown Grapes and is produced with limited amounts of sulphur additions. Most consumers and even some trade don’t understand that Sulphur is not counted as a ‘chemical’ per se. As Sulphur is naturally occurring then it becomes allowable as a natural preservative in winemaking. It has been used since Roman times as such. Organic wine sells around 360M bottles in Europe and the UK is one of the bigger markets. Planted vineyard area is also increasing significantly in the EU since 2010.

Biodynamic wine is aligned to Organic Wine but sees itself as part of the Earth system using Lunar and spiritual guidance. There are 150-200 registered Biodynamic producers in Europe, so it is not big.

Natural wine has no legal definition but is widely used as a term. It generally means that the producer seeks to use minimal chemical and technological intervention in vineyard and wine development.

Fairtrade wine, which has been widely used in South Africa to demarcate itself from the previous Apartheid regime, delivers less than 10% of the Organic wine market.

However therein lies a problem – four terms, four different meanings, added to which sustainability has no fully agreed understanding. Wine is just one part of life and being able to engage consumers across all of these is a tough if not impossible challenge.

Furthermore the technology exists to deliver wine in much more satisfactory containers. The problem is we just don’t like them as much as the familiar glass bottle. Bag-in-Box 2 & 3 litre, Tetra Pak, Pouches, cans are all very acceptable and more sustainable for wine packaging, but somehow just don’t cut it in quality recognition or size and opportunity occasion.

There are one or two awards for Sustainability, which exist, but many are sponsored and have a distinct bias.

In the new business world two things stick out. One is that wine is as much a part of business and the world as any other hedonistic product – beer, spirits, coffee, tea, show business, restaurant food. The industry needs to contribute on that level.

Secondly that Business today is not just about shareholders and profit. It is about the wider context and the wider world. Corporate Social Responsibility is for all businesses, not just big ones to create and ignore nor small ones to avoid on the basis that they are too small and all people who take part.

Sustainability has to take its place led by industry and government to make a difference. Sustainability has to be measured and create ‘a better world’ and keep providing Cyrus’ and our next generations with reasonable measures of wine.
Federal Government Introduces Cannabis Legislation

On April 13, 2017, the federal government introduced the Cannabis Act (Act), the much-anticipated legislation to legalize and regulate the use of cannabis for recreational purposes. The Act received first reading on April 13, 2017 and, if passed, is expected to take effect on or before July 2018. The two main policy objectives cited by the federal government in enacting the legislation are to restrict access to cannabis by children and youth and keep profits away from organized crime.

The Act largely conforms to the recommendations of the Task Force on Cannabis Legalization and Regulation (Task Force), creating a highly regulated landscape for businesses looking to produce, distribute or deal in cannabis products. However, the Act does not address in detail a number of key issues, including relating to labelling, transition, licensing requirements and taxes. These will need to be addressed by the federal government in regulations and rules over the next year or more, and the federal government will also need to work out issues with the provinces and municipalities.

Until the Act passes the House of Commons and the Senate and is declared in force, existing laws (including criminal sanctions) will continue to apply.

REGULATION OF PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

Production will continue to be regulated federally, with a safety licensing regime to be imposed on those seeking to produce cannabis for the recreational market. The licensing regime will be overseen by the federal department of health. The businesses already licensed to produce cannabis products under the medical regime (as of today, 42 such businesses) have a head-start, but since the federal government recognizes the importance of having craft producers, Health Canada has added staff and resources to accelerate the approval process for new producers.

A licensing regime will be put in place to govern the licensing of production, testing, packaging, transportation, sale, possession (above 30 grams, which is permitted for personal use) or disposal of cannabis products for the recreational market. Licence applications may be refused by the minister for a variety of reasons, including previous breaches of narcotics laws, or failure to obtain a security clearance. As under the medical regime, foreign businesses and persons appear to be excluded from the licensing regime.

Production of alternatives to smoked cannabis (e.g., oils) will be permitted, but additional labelling and regulatory requirements are expected and restrictions are imposed on products deemed to be particularly appealing to children, such as products that look like candy. Edibles and more creative alternatives will likely not be permitted until a later date. Once permitted, those in the edibles business will need to ensure compliance not just with cannabis specific laws, but any applicable general food laws too.

Producers will be subject to a rigorous inspection, testing and disclosure regime, with strict quality standards. The regulations will detail the information required to be provided to the public and to regulators.

RETAIL DISTRIBUTION

As anticipated, provinces and territories will regulate the retail distribution of recreational cannabis. A minimum age of 18 is set federally, with the provinces able to set a higher age if they so choose. Machine dispensation will be prohibited, as will be the sale of cannabis produced other than through a licensed producer (e.g., the sale of homegrown, illegal or imported cannabis).

Under the medical regime, licensed producers can only ship product to patients (storefront sales are prohibited). With the recreational regime, the provinces and territories will determine whether storefront sales or mail-order or both are allowed. In provinces that have not implemented a regulated retail framework, individuals will be able to purchase cannabis online from a federally licensed producer with mail delivery.
Serious criminal penalties will be imposed on those who sell illicit cannabis, or sell cannabis to youth.

IMPACT ON MEDICAL CANNABIS

The current program for access to cannabis for medical purposes under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and the Access to Cannabis for Medical Purposes Regulations will be continued under the new Act. This will alleviate the concerns of some advocates who voiced concerns about difficulty accessing medical cannabis by those under the recreational use age limit, or access in the event of a shortage, were a separate system for medical cannabis not maintained.

One of the key factors impacting the success of the medical versus recreational regimes will depend on the extent to which public and private insurers reimburse cannabis for medical use. Although inclusion of cannabis as an insured medical benefit is not yet common, changes are afoot.

Another key point to watch in the coming months will be whether the medical and recreational products are taxed similarly. These details are not yet available.

MARKETING, ADVERTISING AND LABELLING

The extent to which the new legislation will restrict the marketing and branding of cannabis was one of the key unknowns. Industry’s position is cannabis should be regulated more like alcohol than tobacco, as the ability to brand products is essential to properly compete with the black market and make it harder to have counterfeit product. In contrast, many public health and youth experts believe strict controls (including plain packaging) are necessary to minimize the risks of cannabis promotion to youth, given the challenges with partial restrictions (e.g., only prohibiting advertising that targets youth). The latter position was recommended by the Task Force.

The Act’s restrictions on advertising, marketing and labelling presently fall in between that advocated by industry and that advocated by public health experts. The Act prohibits advertising and packaging directed at youth, which has testimonials or endorsements, which depicts a person, character or animal, as well as lifestyle advertising. Whether plain packaging will be required once regulations are introduced remains to be seen.

PERSONAL CONSUMPTION AND POSSESSION

The federal limits on smoking (e.g., in workplaces) will be extended to cover cannabis, but each province will be able to permit usage in designated places, such as lounges. Personal possession of cannabis will be limited to 30 grams and four cannabis plants per household. Illegal trafficking of cannabis, including possession above these limits, will continue to be subject to criminal sanctions.

EXPORT AND IMPORT

The Act restricts international export and import of otherwise legal cannabis except for medical and scientific purposes, and then only when a licence to import or export has been granted under the Act.

TAX

It is anticipated that amendments will be made to the Excise Tax Act to impose taxation on cannabis products. The Task Force recommended that taxation be based on the level of tetrahydrocannabinol (known as THC — the chemical responsible for most psychological effects of cannabis) in the product, in an effort to discourage high rates of THC in products. The details of taxation measures are not yet available. Setting the right tax level will be a balancing act — when set too high, the black market becomes appealing; when set too low, consumption may increase.
Minnesota liquor heir hopes to parlay business career into congressional bid

Star Tribune
By J. Patrick Coolican, Star Tribune
May 9, 2017

Dean Phillips, an heir to a Minnesota liquor fortune who later helped launch a successful gelato brand, said Monday he’s preparing to run for Congress as a DFLer next year against U.S. Rep. Erik Paulsen.

Phillips of Deephaven said he’d officially launch a campaign in the coming days. “I’m concerned about the direction in which our country is headed,” he said in an interview.

Paulsen is a fifth-term Republican from Eden Prairie and a member of the powerful House Ways and Means Committee. He declined through a spokesman to comment on Phillips’ candidacy.

Phillips, 48, said he started to think about a political career after the last election. In December, he finalized the sale of Talenti, a gelato beloved by connoisseurs and notable for its glamour pricing, to Unilever. His family for decades built Phillips Distilling Co., founded in 1912 by his great-great-grandfather, into a major spirits company.

“I think that experience building businesses and taking care of employees and enriching communities where we do business are principles the district and the country can put to use,” he said.

His timeline for running accelerated, Phillips said, after Paulsen voted with the GOP majority last week to approve a major health care overhaul. Republicans including Paulsen called it a necessary first step to repealing provisions of the Affordable Care Act, but critics called it a tax cut for the wealthy financed by slashing health care for the poor.

“I would not argue that existing law doesn’t require modification. But the bill just passed by the House is woefully misguided and not the answer to the challenge,” Phillips said.

The Third Congressional District is largely made up of western Hennepin County suburbs. Paulsen has comfortably won re-election in recent years, most recently over former state Sen. Terri Bonoff. But national Democrats see him as vulnerable — his district voted for Barack Obama in 2008 and 2012, and last year Donald Trump lost there to Hillary Clinton by more than 35,000 votes.

Luke Hellier is a Lakeville City Council member who formerly worked as Paulsen’s district outreach coordinator. He questioned whether Phillips, with his business background, would appeal to DFL activists newly energized by President Trump. Another name in the DFL mix in the third is Andy Slavitt, a top aide to Obama who lives in Edina and in recent weeks has been relentlessly, publicly critical of Republicans over health care.

Hellier said the 2016 election showed Paulsen’s ability to connect with the district. Brooklyn Park lies in the northern part of the district, which stretches west to Maple Plain and south to Bloomington. Eden Prairie, Minnetonka and parts of Edina are also in the district.

Paulsen has staked out a relatively moderate political profile for the changing suburban district: He refused to endorse Trump, and said he wrote in Florida Sen. Marco Rubio in the general election. But his voting record is conservative. He made repealing the medical device tax a signature issue; nearly 30,000 Minnesotans work in the industry, which has fought hard for repeal since passage of the ACA in 2010.

The medical device repeal was included in the health care bill House Republicans passed last week.

Phillips is the grandson of Pauline Friedman Phillips, who for decades was known to millions of newspaper readers as the advice columnist “Dear Abby.” The Jay and Rose Phillips Family Foundation is a major philanthropic force in Minnesota. Phillips continues to own Penny’s Coffee in downtown Minneapolis, with plans to open a second and possibly a third location.

The company has voluntarily adopted a $15 minimum wage.
“Business is a means to an end — a chance to reward those who make it possible, including the communities in which we do business,” he said.

Phillips said he felt fated to public service. Born on the day Richard Nixon was inaugurated, Phillips was adopted by his family after his father died in combat in Vietnam.

Internet vs booze: Brits reveal they would rather give up alcohol than go offline

What would you sacrifice in order to stay connected?

International Business Times.
By James Billington
May 8, 2017

Would you chop off a finger or forgo a daily wash if it meant you still had access to the internet? As being online is increasingly seen by some as a modern necessity to rival running water a recent survey has revealed the staggering amount people would give up in order to stay connected.

Of the 2000 Brits surveyed, many said they are willing to ditch daily essentials and luxuries in an instant if it meant not being without internet access according to Cable.co.uk – an Ofcom-accredited broadband advice site.

The biggest sacrifice was, surprisingly, alcohol with 68% of people willing to stay sober in order to stay online. 18 to 24-year-olds were more prepared to cut out alcohol in order to stay online than those in their parents' age group with 73% giving it up, compared to 65% of 45 to 54-year-olds. Alcohol was followed by chocolate (65%) and exercise (64%) being waived in favour of the web.

However, of the 10 options the majority of Brits opted to keep most lifestyle luxuries such as central heating and holidays – but that still wouldn't stop 34% claiming they would be happy to cut off a finger or 14% preferring to go without mains water supply.

‘Drunk driver’ sues the bars that served him

New York Post
By Nick Fugallo and Amanda Woods
May 8, 2017

A New Jersey man who says he drank too much tequila before crashing his motorcycle and seriously injuring his leg, is suing not one, but two bars that served him — even though cops determined he wasn’t legally drunk.

Antonio Salomon-Merlino, 28, was boozing it up at two establishments — Oh! Calamares in Kearny, where he had 13 drinks, mostly Patron shots and pisco sours — and then rode his motorcycle to Hector’s Sports Bar in Clifton, where he guzzled even more alcohol, he told The Post of the July 2015 incident that sparked his lawsuit.

He said he doesn’t remember his bill at the second joint, but he spent over $300 at Oh! Calamares.

“I was intoxicated around midway through my drinks at Calamares,” Salomon-Merlino said. “[The bartenders] never cut me off or told me ‘you had enough.’”

Still, he got back on his 2009 Suzuki motorcycle and started heading home. Around 3:15 a.m., he crashed the bike into a concrete barricade on Outwater Lane in Lodi and flipped into a ditch.

“I was told if I had went just five more feet, I would have been killed by a pipe or broken my neck,” he said Monday.
While responding cops initially charged Salomon-Merlino with drunken driving, they didn’t test his blood-alcohol level until five hours after the accident, his lawyer said.

It was just below the legal threshold for driving drunk, around 0.078, according to a toxicology report from the State Police — so the charge was dismissed.

“I was way more intoxicated than that,” Salomon-Merlino insisted.

Now he and his lawyer, Natalie Zammiti Shaw, of Fort Lee, are pushing that claim — so they can make the case that the bars over-served.

Both establishments “knew or should have reasonably foreseen” that their “failure to use reasonable care in the service of alcoholic beverages to [Salomon-Merlino]” could cause him to inflict “bodily injury to himself or others,” according to the lawsuit, filed on April 25.

They also “had a duty to exercise reasonable care” when serving alcohol to Lodi and other patrons, the suit said.

“We haven’t been formally served by a court in regards to the suit this person is trying to pass along,” said a manager for Oh! Calamares. “We haven’t been contacted by his lawyers or our own lawyers, and if and when we do, we’ll look into the matter as efficiently as possible to resolve the issue.”

Hector’s Sports Bar could not be reached for comment Monday.

The suit was issued under New Jersey’s Dram Shop Law, which allows anyone injured by a drunken driver to seek damages from the vendor who served the alcohol if the driver was visibly intoxicated.

Salomon-Merlino is also suing the borough of Lodi for failing to keep Outerwater Lane free from dangerous conditions.

The suit also claims that “confusing, damaged and/or missing signs,” as well as a lack of traffic lights, contributed to the accident.

Salomon-Merlino was unemployed prior to the accident. He’d hoped to become a police officer — but now that dream is ruined, he said.

He has had three surgeries on his leg and consulted seven doctors about his injuries, he said. He also had skin graphing and a knee reconstruction done — and anticipates another surgery on the veins in his leg.

“Walking, even driving is a challenge and my leg still gets swollen,” he said. “I needed a CPM machine daily to help bend my leg.”

When asked if he would ever drink and drive again:

“l’m lucky to be alive, let alone have my leg still,” he said. “Now, there’s Uber.”

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