

# newsworthy trends

## Keeping Wine Labels Accurate

(NAPSA)—Would you buy Wisconsin cheese from Florida? Or Florida oranges from Idaho? Chances are you would not, especially if you knew they were masquerading as something they are not.

Indeed, the place where agricultural products come from means something. It tells you a lot about quality and the process used to grow them. And experts say that perhaps the best example of this is wine.

Yet in the United States, there is an abundance of so-called “Champagne,” “Sherry” and “Port,” even though true Champagne only comes from France, Sherry only comes from Spain and Port only comes from Portugal.

For instance, 47 percent of all sparkling wines sold in America are mislabeled “Champagne,” and four out of every five bottles of “Sherry” are not produced in Spain.

A loophole in U.S. law allows the use of 17 place names on wine bottles that are not produced in those locations. Opponents say the labels are misleading and that while they might be legal, “they aren’t right.”

It’s a sentiment with which consumers agree. A national survey of U.S. wine purchasers, conducted by Peter D. Hart Research Associates, reveals that 79 percent agree consumers deserve protection from deceptive claims on food and beverage labels, and 63 percent support a law prohibiting misleading labels.

“Consumers have a right to know that a bottle’s label accurately reflects the origin of the wine they are purchasing,” said Center for Wine Origins Director Shannon Hunt.

Misleading wine labels are a



**A national survey reveals that a vast majority of U.S. wine purchasers strongly support truth in labeling.**

global issue also affecting U.S. products. For example, advocates of label accuracy say a wine bearing the Sonoma name should only be produced with grapes from Sonoma County. In fact, many American regions have worked to tighten protections for their names. Napa Valley took its case all the way to the Supreme Court. State laws have been passed to protect others in California and Oregon. And now, there’s a battle to protect the Calistoga name in California.

Experts say the geographical conditions of a region make its wine unique. Because the attributes of a place are impossible to duplicate, no two wines can be the same. They argue it’s time U.S. laws match this reality.

For more information on wine origins, visit [www.wineorigins.com](http://www.wineorigins.com).