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Blind Taste Panel Procedures

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Overview

Vendors register products through the Vendor Website and the Vendor Relations Analyst (VRA) team reviews each registration for approval. Vendors select a product category (wine, spirit, beer, or refreshment beverage) from a drop down list as part of the registration.

Beer vs Refreshment Beverage

Registrations are reviewed for products where the product name and/or other attributes (such as ingredients or method of production) suggest that the product may be a malt-based refreshment, and not a beer. VRA team will research the product to see how it is categorized in other Canadian Liquor Jurisdictions. The VRA team may request a sample from the vendor to determine the appropriate LDB product category through a blind taste panel.

Blind Taste Panel

The blind taste panel is comprised of no less than 5 VRAs and/or Supply Chain team members. The sample is tasted alongside no less than 2 benchmark products. Benchmark products are well known beers that meet all the LDB criteria for beer. Benchmark beers have included Budweiser, Heineken, and Parallel 49's Jerkface.

One member of the panel will pour one product at a time for the panel. The panel does not know which product being tasted until the tasting is concluded. The panel members will complete the form below based on how the product pours, smells, and tastes. (red box below)

After each product has been tasted and the portion in red box completed, the products are shown to the panel to complete the rest of the form. The registration for the product in question is also provided for the panel for additional information.

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The alcohol is wholly derivied from a malt base and there is a limited amount of sugar							
The product is marketed as a beer and/or named a beer							

Product Determination

For a product to be classified as beer, there must be a majority that have indicated that the product meets all 5 of the criteria on the form. If a majority is not reached, the product is then deemed to not fit the LDB beer profile and is classified as a malt-based refreshment beverage.

The registration and all panel sheets are scanned and saved onto the Wholesale Supply Chain drive.

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