

# HOW ARE CERTIFIED ORGANIC WINES LABELED?

## Made With Organic Grapes

- Grapes have been grown in accordance to the organic standards established by the USDA's National Organic Program.
- The wine has been produced and bottled in a certified organic facility.
- No synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, fungicides, or herbicides are used in the vineyards.
- Sulfite content must not exceed 100 ppm.

## Organic Wine

- Grown, produced and bottled as above.
- No sulfites have been *added* during the winemaking process.
- Must contain under 20 ppm sulfites.
- Naturally occurring sulfites may be produced during the fermentation process so although wines labeled 'organic wine' have no added sulfites, sulfites may still be detected.

## 99.99 % ORGANIC

- Because wines made with organic grapes must contain less than 100 ppm sulfites (translating to 0.01 percent), the final product has to be and actually is **99.99 % (or more)** organic grapes and 0.01% (or less) sulfites.
- Wines made with organic grapes are required to be virtually 100% organic and can't use the USDA organic seal.
- More information available from Code of Federal Regulations, Title 7-Agriculture, **Part 205-National Organic Program**, Subpart D-Labels, Labeling, and Market Information, § 205.301-Product Composition, (f) (5) and (7), and § 205.605. Code of Federal Regulations available at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html> and more specifically at [http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx\\_07/7cfr205\\_07.html](http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_07/7cfr205_07.html)

## SULFITES:

### WHAT ARE THEY AND WHAT DO THEY DO?

- **What are sulfites?**  
Sulfites, or sulfur dioxide ( $SO_2$ ), are the salts of sulfurous acids. They are a commonly used preservative found in foods, alcoholic drinks and even medications. Sulfites occur naturally in table and wine grapes, as well as in all fermented foods and beverages. Sulfites have both fungicidal and antioxidant properties.
- **Why are they used in the making of wine?**  
Winemakers have historically added sulfur dioxide to wine to help protect against damage to the wine by oxygen. It has been part of the craft of winemaking, much like yeast is used for bread. After the grapes are harvested and crushed, sulfur dioxide is used to inhibit the growth of bacteria, mold and wild yeasts... as well as to prevent spoilage or oxidation in the final wine. Sulfites are also naturally-produced during the fermentation process of winemaking.
- **How do wines made with organic grapes differ from conventional wines?**  
Conventional wines in the United States are permitted to contain sulfite levels up to 350 parts per million (ppm). Wines made with certified organic grapes are required by the USDA's National Organic Program to contain no more than 100 ppm.