

Date: Thu, Jun 20, 2013 at 11:37 AM

Subject: .wine and .vin

Dear Mr. Crocker, I write to express Wine Institute's deep concern regarding recommendations made by the Governmental Advisory Committee of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, which suggest that certain nations or regions have special rights over how the word "wine" is used globally.

Wine Institute is the advocacy and public policy association for the California wine industry, representing U.S. wine producers at the International level. In 2012, U.S. wine exports grew to \$1.4 billion in value, of which 90% came from California. Our industry exports more than 50 million cases to 125 countries worldwide.

We have learned that at ICANN's most recent meeting in Beijing, the GAC proposed a list of proposed generic top-level domains that should be accorded special "geographic" protection; and that both .wine and .vin (the French spelling of wine) were included on that list. While Wine Institute takes no position on the disposition of a .wine or .vin gTLD, we strongly object to any policy that would lend official support to the idea that specific countries or regions should have special authority over how the word "wine" is used in the Internet's addressing system.

Wine is global word that defines a global beverage. Wine is produced on every continent on earth with the exception of Antarctica, and is beloved by people of many diverse cultures worldwide. We urge ICANN to reject any advice and/or recommendation that would even give the appearance of awarding a specific government or governments special authority over the words wine and vin.

As mentioned above, our members export their products around the world, and many use the Internet, and by extension, the Domain Name System to market and publicize their brands in a wide range of markets. Our members are constantly seeking out new tools and channels to discuss their products, and should not be obstructed from doing so based on the overreaching behavior of individual regulators.

We respectfully urge you to reject any aspect of GAC advice designating .wine or .vin as "geographic" names. I am pleased to discuss this with you at your convenience.

Best regards, Tom

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