



Updated May 9, 2018

FACT SHEET

Unfounded litigation about the safety of some California wines was dismissed by the Los Angeles Superior Court on March 13, 2016. The court found no legal basis for any claim. Attorneys for the plaintiff filed a Notice of Appeal on May 26, 2016, which was dismissed by the California Court of Appeal on May 9, 2018.

- The lawsuit claimed that certain wines contain unsafe levels of arsenic based on the limit set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for drinking water – 10 parts per billion (ppb). However, there is no scientific basis for applying the EPA drinking water standard to wine.
- According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the EPA standard for arsenic in drinking water:

“...is of limited use when considering any potential health risks related to arsenic in wine... People drink far more water than they do wine over their lifetimes, and they start drinking water earlier in life. Thus, both the amount and period of exposure are different and would require separate analyses.” – FDA Spokeswoman Lauren Sucher
- If wine had the same arsenic limit as the EPA standard for drinking water, which is based on the daily recommended intake for water of 2 liters per person, one would need to consume 13.5 glasses of wine or nearly 3 bottles per day to reach the limit the EPA considers safe for water. This amount would far exceed the U.S. Dietary Guidelines definition for moderate alcohol consumption of not more than 1-2 glasses of wine per day.
- Except for drinking water, the U.S. government has not published a limit for arsenic in any food or beverage. Several countries including Canada and the OIV, an intergovernmental organization of 46 wine-producing countries, have set limits for wine ranging from 100 to 200 ppb – 10 to 20 times the level the EPA determined to be safe for drinking water. California wines fall well below these established limits, which these countries have determined are safe for wine.
- Arsenic is prevalent in the natural environment in air, soil and water and food. As an agricultural product, wines from throughout the world contain trace amounts of arsenic as do juices, vegetables, grains and other alcohol beverages. See: [Arsenic in Various Foods](#).
- The U.S. government, both TTB and FDA as part of its [Total Diet Study](#), regularly tests wines for harmful compounds, including arsenic, to ensure that wine is safe to consume.
- This issue is not just about California wine. All wine, regardless of where produced, contains trace amounts of arsenic. In 2014, the Liquor Control Board of Ontario Quality Assurance

Laboratory tested 17,537 wines from around the world, including 2,247 wines from California. The data shows that there is no difference in the trace levels in wines from around the world and wines from California. The LCBO also reviewed results from 200,000 wines tested over the last 12 years and found that the trace levels have remained consistent over time.

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Wine Institute is the association of 1,000 California wineries. The health and safety of consumers is of the greatest importance to our wineries. Visit www.arsenicwinefacts.com for additional information

