

1. Goal and responsibility

The Pioneers of Wine award recognises high quality products made from new, robust grape varieties with high resistance to disease, pests and/or climatic stress factors, thereby promoting the quality, sales and competitiveness of producers.

The holder of the award is the DLG e.V. (German Agricultural Society), Eschborner Landstraße 122, 60489 Frankfurt am Main, Germany. The quality test is carried out by DLG TestService GmbH (organiser). The organiser's registered office is Competence Center Food & Beverage, Wöllsteiner Straße 16, 55599 Gau-Bickelheim, Germany. The quality test consists of a sensory test and, if necessary, a random chemical/physical test. The technical management of the test is the responsibility of the authorised testing representative.

2. Participants (applicants)

All natural and legal persons from production and trade are eligible to participate. The applicant bears the sole responsibility for compliance with the legal provisions of the registered products as well as the award regulations.

3. Eligibility

Quality ready-to-use wines, quality sparkling wines and quality semi-sparkling wines as well as wines with geographical origin are eligible.

The products must comply with the applicable national legal provisions of the country of origin as well as the German and European legal provisions necessary for placing on the market, in the respective current version.

3.1 Vintages

Products of all vintages and without vintage can participate.

3.2 Grape varieties

The registered products must consist of at least 85 % (without taking into account the sugar reserve) of new, robust grape varieties with high resistance to diseases, pests and/or climatic stress factors with seed authorisation from 1992 or later.

3.3 Bottle stocks

At least 250 bottles must be in stock at the time of registration.

3.4 Number of bottles

The entire filling quantity in bottles of a lot number must always be declared.

3.5 Partial bottlings

The provision of partial bottlings is permitted.

When registering the samples, the total homogeneous quantity available and the quantity of the first partial bottling must be reported.

For each partial bottling, chemical/physical analyses of an approved (as defined in Section 23 of the German Wine Ordinance (WeinVO)) or accredited laboratory must be available, which allow clear identification of the product (see Number 5 of Appendix 10 of the German Wine Ordinance).

The use of the award on subsequent partial bottlings is only permitted if these are bottled within three months of the award being presented.

Any partial bottling must be declared to the organiser.

3.6 Several products with the same designation

If several products with the same designation are registered by the applicant, the individual products must always have been manufactured and stored separately and must bear different lot markings. Wines with an identical analysis will only be admitted once.

3.7 Multiple entries

A product that has already received an award in the "Pioneers of Wine" competition can be entered again. The current result always applies to the application.

3.8 Number of products entered

A participant may enter as many products as desired.

4. Application procedure

A fully completed registration form with all required information must be provided for each sample and partial bottling. In case of incomplete information, DLG TestService GmbH reserves the right to exclude the sample from the competition. The information on the product registration form may be used on all publications, certificates and awards.

5. Test dates

The award shall be presented on four test dates. The test dates and the closing dates for registration will be announced by DLG TestService GmbH.

6. Sample shipment

Three fully decorated bottles of each registered product must be provided with the completed registration form. The participant has no claim to reimbursement or replacement for samples sent in, including empties and packaging. Only samples delivered duty paid and carriage paid to the organiser's address will be accepted.

Delivery address for samples:

DLG TestService GmbH

Pioneers of Wine
Competence Center Food & Beverage
Wöllsteiner Straße 16
55599 Gau-Bickelheim, Germany

7. Fees

A testing fee of € 89 will be charged for each registered product. In addition, the applicant may be charged for any laboratory tests required.

All fees for applicants from Germany are exclusive of the statutory value added tax applicable at the time the service is provided.

8. Sensory test

8.1 Testers

DLG TestService GmbH forms neutral, independent test commissions for the sensory evaluation of the quality of the samples submitted. These consist of at least 4 experts (testers). The testers must hold the DLG Sensory Certificate for Wine & Sparkling Wine or a comparable qualification. The experts come from the wine industry and related fields and are appointed and used by DLG TestService GmbH on the basis of their knowledge, skills and experience.

8.2 Sample set-up and evaluation

The evaluation shall be carried out according to the DLG 5-point scheme® for wine and sparkling wine. The products are classified according to their product type, product category, quality level and flavour in a tasting and tasted in a concealed manner. Special product groups (e.g. sweet wines) can be tasted by a separate tasting group. Analysis data can be disclosed to the testers during testing. The evaluation result of a test group for a sample consists of the overall mark and, if applicable (in case of rejection), the associated property description or justification.

9. Chemical/physical analyses

Laboratory analyses (chemical, physical) are usually carried out to validate the sensory properties and/or to check the truth of the declaration.

Risk-based analyses

The identity of the samples with respect to the details of the analysis parameters on the registration form shall be verified by density measurements.

If necessary, the analyses can be extended on a risk-based, random basis.

10. Awards

An award shall be presented according to the quality score (QS) achieved: From 3.50 points, the product receives the "Pioneers of Wine" award.

11. Honorary awards

Particularly good overall performances of the participants can be presented with an honorary award. Honorary awards shall be awarded in three classes to the entrant with the highest average score.

For each participant, all products tested in the current year, but at least four, will be taken into account for the calculation of the honorary award. The current year is defined as the period of 12 months from the closing date for registration of the first test in the calendar year.

The overall performance of the participant must be at least 4.0 points on average according to the DLG 5-point scheme®.

Products rejected on the grounds of a "cork-like note" will not be taken into account in the calculation for the Honorary Award.

If several participants achieve the same number of points in the calculation for the honorary award, further honorary awards may be presented.

11.1 Honorary award classes

- Winegrowers' cooperatives, wineries and other applicants
- Producer wineries with a production area greater than 10 ha
- Producer wineries with a production area of 10 ha and less

A producer winery shall be deemed to be a winery as defined in Section 38 Paragraph 4 No. 1 of the German Wine Ordinance (WeinVO).

12. Advertising with awards received

Advertising is possible immediately after receipt of the award certificate on the registered lot.

Advertising is voluntary and permissible with:

1. The award symbol on the product
2. The award symbol and textual references in advertising and texts directly related to the product.

The symbol may not be used outside of the possibilities mentioned.

12.1 Affixing of the award symbols

The award symbols can be used as

1. Labels glued onto the bottle or
2. Imprinted directly on the bottle decoration (self-imprinting).

The organiser shall provide the participant with a binding repro template electronically for the self-imprinting of the award symbol. The image of the award must have a minimum height of 12.5 mm (23.1 x 12.5 mm) in all representations. Deviation from the colour specifications is not possible.

Self-adhesive labels can be ordered from the Vollherbst print shop.

12.2 Publications

Products receiving the "Pioneers of Wine" award will be published on the Internet platform www.dlg-testservice.com. In addition, press releases may be issued.

12.3 Ban on misleading information

In advertising measures, care must be taken to avoid anything that could be misleading. The responsibility for this lies solely with the participant.

13. Claims for damages

Claims for damages arising from the presentation of the award are excluded.

14. Exclusion or withdrawal of the award

Incorrect or missing information shall exclude the product concerned from the process.

The award can be withdrawn if the participant violates these test regulations.

The organiser has the right to check the accuracy of the information provided by the participant during registration by inspecting the cellar books and other business documents.

15. Monitoring

In order to check the quality and the use of the award on the product decoration, the organiser of award-winning lots may take or request up to six additional sample bottles from the applicant unannounced. The test may consist of a sensory, chemical/physical and/or designation examination. If the subsequent inspection reveals a violation of these test regulations or legal regulations, the costs for this shall be borne by the participant.

16 Complaints to award winners

Participants are obliged to keep records of complaints regarding the conformity of certified products with the criteria of the respective certification and the resulting measures and to make them available to DLG TestService GmbH upon request.

17. Complaints procedure

Appeals against decisions of DLG TestService GmbH must be made in writing. Processing is carried out according to the internal rules of DLG TestService GmbH.

DLG TestService GmbH shall notify the complainant of the final decision in writing.

18. Final provision

By sending in the samples, the applicant accepts the award and test regulations as well as test results of DLG TestService GmbH. The right to take legal action is excluded.