

Distilled Spirits Aotearoa (NZ) Inc

NEWSLETTER



March 2022

- **Membership:** - Our current number of members stands at: 93 Members and 67 Associate Members (includes 11 pre-commercial distilleries).

A very warm welcome to our newest Member:

Akaroa Distillery

And our new Associate Member:

Linkeight Ltd

- **DSA Chair**

We are now putting the call out for any Full Members who would be interested in the role of Chair, starting from the AGM on 10th June in Auckland. I will step down as Chair/Treasurer to just Treasurer, but I will be there to support the new Chair as they learn the position. Anyone wishing to put their name down, or wanting more details about what the role involves, please email me.

- **NZ-UK Free Trade Agreement**

The FTA has been signed, and historically it includes a specific Wine and Spirits Annex to address details of 'Technical Barriers to Trade'. DSA, NZWA and Spirits NZ worked on the Annex together with our hardworking NZ MPI negotiators. The text includes the agreement to introduce a standard for whisky in the Australia New Zealand Joint Food Standards Code. Once the work on the FSANZ standard begins we will work closely with our Australian Distilling colleagues, since a specification for whisky will impact both countries. [NZ-UK-Free-Trade-Agreement.pdf](#) (mfat.govt.nz) Annex 7A pg 1082.

- **2022 New Zealand Spirits Awards**

The 4th [2022 New Zealand Spirits Awards](#) is now open for entries.

Our Awards get bigger and brighter every year and presents a perfect opportunity for NZ distillers to benchmark their products against other local and international distilled spirits available on the NZ market. DSA Members receive 50% discount for every entry.



Our Associate Members also have an opportunity to increase their exposure to a key market. We have 6 trophy categories for sponsorship still available. View the [Prospectus](#) for more information.

Key dates: • 24 Feb – entries open • 1 April – 31st May – tickets for Gala dinner available • 15 April – entries close • 22 April – deadline for samples to be received • 3-6 May - Judging, with an afternoon of WSET judge training beforehand (alignment of scoring process) • 12 May – Medal winners announced • 10 June - Awards Dinner

- **Excise**

The DSA Excise Working Group is continuing to work on raising the excise issue with Government. Labour's Stuart Nash has now agreed that NZ distilleries are a feature of his Economic and Regional Development, Small Business and Tourism portfolio, rather than just a Customs/Excise problem, which is a great breakthrough. The Act Party is also interested in finding out more about our situation. The Working Group is creating a Spirits Tax Campaign Member Handbook which will provide clear facts for our Members, so that we give out consistent themes and messages.



Across the alcohol industry, all representative associations (including Winegrowers, Brewers Assoc, Brewers Guild, Spirits NZ, Hospitality Assoc, Restaurants Assoc and DSA) are coordinating together to send an overarching letter to key MPs regarding the upcoming CPI adjustment for excise. CPI is expected to hit 7% this year, so it could be yet another massive financial hit to the industry.

- **Label changes**

A reminder that the deadline to include the new Pregnancy Warning label (PWL) on your packaging is coming up relatively fast (end of July 2023).



Here are some useful links from the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code*:

[Q & A on the Code requirements for pregnancy](#)
[Pregnancy warning labels downloadable files](#)

Unfortunately, it is most likely that the next label changes - energy content, carbohydrate and added sugar claims - will not be completed in time to meet the PWL deadline, so there will be another mandatory label change in future. This time FSANZ is working closely with industry, so the process should be less painful than the PWL. At this stage we understand there will be a 3-year phase in of any label change. The proposal should be out shortly for Energy, while FSANZ is still unsure whether Carbs/Sugar (including Added Sugar) will be a "do nothing/ voluntary/mandatory" scenario. If needed, a truncated Nutritional Information Panel would be allowed – a quarter size of the current NIP. FSANZ expects any changes to labels will be accompanied by a consumer education program.

- **New DSA Policy**

We know many of our members support charities and fundraisers, but we are also aware of the delicate ethical issue of alcohol promotion, especially around health. We have debated as a Committee and adopted a new policy that: *DSA as an Association won't endorse support for any particular charities or fundraising due to sensitivities of promotion of alcohol, however if individual distilleries want to get involved then they should do so, with their own due diligence.*

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Cheers
Sue



Dr Sue James – Chairperson
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