



# Maryland Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary

Wes Moore, Governor

Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor

Kevin M. Atticks, Acting Secretary

Steven A. Connelly, Deputy Secretary

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Industry

The Wayne A. Cawley, Jr. Building  
50 Harry S Truman Parkway  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
mda.maryland.gov

410.841.5885 Baltimore/Washington  
410.841.5846 Fax

## Maryland Department of Agriculture

### Legislative Comment

**Date: February 19, 2024**

**BILL NUMBER:** HB 1083/SB 1001

**SHORT TITLE:** Alcoholic Beverages – Class 4 Limited Winery License – Requirements and Authorizations

**MDA POSITION:** SUPPORT

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HB1083 seeks to allow the holder of a Class 4 Limited Winery License to do three things: (1) Own or have under contract at least 20 acres of “Maryland Agricultural Products” instead of “grapes or other fruit “grown in the State; or (2) Allow the licensee to use up to 51% ingredients used for the production of wine to come from “Maryland Grown Agricultural Products;” and (3) Allow a license holder to purchase finished wine made entirely of “Maryland Agricultural Products” and sell that wine as his or her own.

HB1083 would broaden the ability of Class 4 Limited Winery license holders to grow, produce, and/or purchase “Maryland Agricultural Products” to use for winemaking, instead of relying on just “grapes and fruit” grown in the State. In addition, this bill would allow a Class 4 Limited Winery license holder to purchase finished wine from another Maryland manufacturer if the wine or pomace brandy is made from “Maryland Agricultural Products.”

The MDA supports the expansion of the license holder’s ability to grow products beyond grapes and fruit. This would include products like honey, dandelions, onions, and other non-grain products. Allowing for the production and sale of honey wine, etc. The bill would more deeply root on-farm alcohol producers in Maryland Agriculture and boost the economic viability of the industry.

The MDA in conjunction with the Maryland Alcohol, Tobacco, and Cannabis Commission (ATCC) are in agreement with clarifying the bill language to be consistent in the use of “Maryland Grown Agricultural Products” as opposed to “Maryland Agricultural Products.” Additionally, The MDA concurs with the Maryland ATCC on the proposed amendment to require the MDA to establish a definition for the term “Maryland Grown Agricultural Product”.

The Maryland Department of Agriculture supports this legislation and respectfully requests the Committee's consideration of a favorable report.

If you have additional questions, please contact Rachel Jones, Director of Government Relations at [Rachel.Jones2@maryland.gov](mailto:Rachel.Jones2@maryland.gov) or (410) 841-5886.