

GRAPE WINE



1.0 INTRODUCTION

Grape wine making is gradually picking up especially in Maharashtra. Realising the potential of this industry, the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) has established two wine parks under the "Food Park" scheme of the Ministry of Food Processing Industry of the Govt. of India viz. one at Palus near Miraj known as "Krishna Grape Wine Park" and the second one at Vinchur near Nasik christened as "Godavari Valley Wine Park". Apart from providing basic infrastructure facilities, these parks would have other innovative features like wine festival ground, exhibition centre, wine therapy centre, a three star hotel etc. DGFT has declared both districts as "Agri Export Zones". The Govt. of Maharashtra has also declared a special incentive package for the grape processing industry. Thus, a number of promotional schemes are available. There are around 20 grape wine producing units in the state and many are likely to come up. Market for grape wine is continuously growing in India and abroad. This is a good product especially for some progressive farmers who are already in grape farming. A small winery can be started with an investment of around Rs. 20 lacs. Required know-how (wine makers) and machinery are available locally. The industry has good future prospects.

2.0 PRODUCT

2.1 Application

There are various types of wines available in the world like white wine, red wine, dessert wine etc. Red wine is popular in India. It is increasingly being promoted as health drink as against other hard liquors like whisky or rum.

2.2 Compliances

Certification under PFA Act and FPO is necessary. Requisite permission from the state and Central Govt. is also required.

3.0 MARKET POTENTIAL

3.1 Demand and Supply

India is a large market for wine. As against per capita consumption of European countries of 55-60 ltrs. every year, the per capita consumption in India is few spoons. It has been proved that Indian grapes (wine quality) are very good and some wineries are already catering to the quality-conscious USA and European markets.

3.2 Marketing Strategy:

Apart from world market, India is a very good market. Wine consumption in the country is still at nascent stage. Wine is now accepted as a health or social drink and its consumption is increasing gradually. Quality wines were mainly imported till couple of years back and hence they were very expensive. Availability of good quality Indian wine at half the price has resulted in continuous increase in demand. Gradual awareness about basic difference between wines and hard drinks is also helping the wine industry. Thus, India provides a large virgin market for wine.

4.0 MANUFACTURING PROCESS

Wine making is a specialised line in India till now unlike in countries like France, Italy, Australia or Argentina where even the farmers have their small wineries. Hence, it is advisable to consult a wine maker. The process is as under:

- Selection of grapes, destemming and pressing.
- In case of white wine, fermentation without skin whereas for red wine, the fermentation is undertaken with skin and then skin is removed.
- Further process involves cold treatment and filtration.
- Finally, bottling, corking, foiling and labelling is undertaken.

Fermentation is the most critical stage which decides the ultimate quality.

5.0 TECHNICAL FEASIBILITY

Few years back, wine making machinery was imported but now-a-days they are available indigenously and machinery suppliers also offer technical know-how. Small winery of about 5000 ltrs. capacity, can be started with an investment of around Rs. 20.00 lacs and grape farm of around 10 acres. Concept of a group winery (3-4 farmers with smaller cultivation joining hands) is also picking up. On the other hand, there are wineries of 1.00 lac ltrs. or more capacity around Nasik. Some machinery suppliers are also providing some costly and crucial facilities including laboratory testing on rental basis with the help of truck mounted mobile machines.

Some of them are:

- 1) Wintech Engineers, MIDC Estate, Ambad, Nasik 422 010
- 2) United Heat Transfer Pvt. Ltd, MIDC Estate, Ambad, Nasik 422 010
- 3) SSR Wine Engineers & Consultants Pvt. Ltd, MIDC Estate, Ambad, Nasik 422 010

Yet another critical feature of this industry is services of a qualified and experienced wine maker. There was a dearth of such specialists in the country and services of foreign consultants were engaged by paying hefty fees. But this expertise is now available in the country and they should be engaged.

Thus, now-a-days it is possible to set up a grape wine making plant of appropriate capacity depending upon the financial strength of the promoters.

6.0 FINANCIAL VIABILITY

Depending upon the quality and maturity (age), prices of wine range from Rs.350/- to few thousand rupees for a bottle of 750 ml. Due to higher import duty, imported wines are very costly. Consumption of wine is reportedly increasing @ 25% to 30% in the country. Availability of wine quality grapes in Nasik and Miraj districts is also not difficult as more and more farmers are switching over to these varieties on account of better price realisation, less farm maintenance costs compared to table varieties and assured market. Good quality and fancy bottles and corks are also available within the country. Thus, apart from various incentives from the state & central governments, other conditions are also very positive. Hence, financial viability would not be a problem. Many of the existing wineries in the region have proved this aspect.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

Wine making industry has very good prospects especially in Maharashtra. Nasik and Sangli districts are famous all over the country for quality grapes and off late many farmers are cultivating grapes of wine variety. Consumption of wine is gradually increasing in the country. Reportedly, the world wine market is growing @ 12% annually whereas the Indian market at more than 20%. The government has also realised potential of this industry and state as well as central governments have announced number of financial incentives and administrative reforms.

Some first generation entrepreneurs or progressive grape farmers may like to plunge into this sunrise industry. Before taking a final decision it is imperative to discuss several aspects with MIDC officials, certain machinery suppliers and technical consultants and promoters of some of the existing wineries. Concepts like farm or group wineries are also worth exploring. This is the most appropriate time to venture into this technically feasible and financially viable industry.