ABSTRACT

Argentina is the 9th largest exporter of wine, 3rd largest honey producer, and 10th world fruit exporter. Argentina’s infrastructure of wine and exportation make mead production a perfect fit. World wine production and viticulture are facing a shortage crisis with wine. In our discussion, we discover what mead is, its history, and the components of mead. We also look at US trending information and opportunities for Argentina to utilize its abundant resources.

What is mead?, and Why?

Mead is believed to be the oldest fermented beverage known to man. Since the honey bee took its first flight this naturally created beverage was born. Mead has a very unique flavor, unlike wine or beer. In history, many archaeological digs have discovered the ancient drink in clay pots with other natural ingredients. Throughout the world, mead has been found in Egyptian tombs and colder climates where grape and grain are hard to produce. This long forgotten beverage is being rediscovered by the world. Mead has many health benefits as well, its gluten free and made with 100% honey, natural sugar for the body.

Mead, The Components

To produce mead we start with natural ingredients, water, honey, and yeast. First, we use Andes mountain water for the base. Second, certified honey which can be from over 300 varieties of nectar. Fruits and spices can be the third component of mead. When adding fruits, we refer to the mead as a Melomel. Just as there are several varietals of wine, there are many varietals of mead. Pyment, another varietal of mead, is produced using grapes. Argentinian grapes such as Torrontes or Malbec grapes, among others, would add great value and flavor to the mead.

Argentinian Supplies from Existing Resources

Since mead is produced and packaged much like wine, the beverage can utilize existing supplies and resources such as bottles, closures/corks, capsules, labels, bottling equipment, fermentation vessels, skilled labor, and expertise in oenology. Mendoza honey and fruit suppliers can certify their products as organic, adding value to mead production. Existing Mendoza production equipment are readily available to setup a Meadery, the place mead is produced. Creating a Meadery does not require a vineyard, utilizing the producers of honey and fruit is all that is needed. Current Argentina agricultural resources can create the perfect value added beverage. Argentina has unlimited potential, known for its excellent quality wine, honey, climate, and fruit resources are the perfect marriage for mead production.

Growth & Projections, Mead Production in Argentina

Mead is a growing niche market. In the US, Mead sales increased 130% from 2012 to 2013, exceeding growth rates of beer, wine, distilled spirits, and hard cider. US Meadery reported an average gross sales of $48,624 in 2012, and $112,000 in 2013. In 2012 US meaderies reported selling an average of 404 cases per meadery. That number increased to 823 cases in 2013 [1]. Argentina currently has no commercial meadery production. Producing mead has great growth potential for Argentina.
References: The sources are listed in the order in which they are cited in the report, as in the following book and article.

