

## Imported Wines: Identifying and Removing Wines Contaminated with Diethylene Glycol: Rced-86-112



Imported Wines: Identifying and  
Removing Wines Contaminated With  
Diethylene Glycol: RCED-86-112

U.S. Government  
Accountability Office (GAO)

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*(Camille Greenholt)*

## IMPORTED WINES: IDENTIFYING AND REMOVING WINES CONTAMINATED WITH DIETHYLENE GLYCOL: RCED-86-112

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BiblioGov. Paperback. Book Condition: New. This item is printed on demand. Paperback. 26 pages. Dimensions: 9.7in. x 7.4in. x 0.1in. In response to a congressional request, GAO reviewed federal agency actions in dealing with the contamination of imported wines with the industrial chemical diethylene glycol (DEG), particularly with Austrian wines where the contamination was more significant. GAO found that both the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) may regulate and prohibit the marketing of contaminated or mislabeled imported wines; however, neither BATF nor FDA routinely test imported wines for the presence of toxic substances or contaminates. In an effort to have all Austrian wines currently being marketed in the United States tested for DEG, BATF required that importers and wholesalers have samples of all Austrian wines under their control tested in private laboratories, but the success of the testing is unknown since BATF did not identify which importers and wholesalers sold and distributed Austrian wines, or which Austrian wines were currently being marketed in the United States. BATF tests of wines from 70 countries indicated that DEG was only found in Austrian, West German, and Italian wines and in varying amounts. However, unlike the Austrian wines, BATF did not stop the German and Italian wines at entry ports or properly test them for DEG. Although BATF was authorized to halt any sales of wines containing DEG, it relied on importers and wholesalers to remove contaminated wines from the market, but did not verify that the wines were removed or require reports on removal actions. In addition, it did not seek an FDA assessment to determine what amount of DEG would represent a significant health risk. GAO believes that the government needs to provide an appropriate degree of assurance that wines with DEG in...

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