

Wine tasting now allowed in California grocery stores

By Jim Sanders, Sacramento Bee

Want a free nip of booze before you lug those grocery bags home?

Happy New Year!

Cookies, crackers and other food tastings have been common at supermarkets for years, but a new state law expands the concept to wine, beer and hard liquor began Saturday.

Alcohol samples are expected to be offered sporadically, at best, but manufacturers hope that Californians will be more likely to buy their product if they can try it.

“There are some great Scotches out there that maybe cost \$20 or \$30 a bottle, or great tequilas, and you’re reluctant to spend that kind of money, it’s only human, until you’ve had the chance to taste it,” said Mike Falasco of the Wine Institute.

Opponents of the new law contend that adult consumption of alcohol in grocery stores will send a message to kids that drinking is no big deal, and that communities will be hurt by increased alcohol sales spawned by the new marketing tool.

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