

THE TEQUILA PRODUCING PLANT

WHICH FROM A DOZEN BECAME JUST ONE

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In The process of making tequila a controlled spirit restricted to a well defined portion of Mexico, production rules were established in the second half of the 20th Century. A significant regulation was enforced banning the use of all but one of a dozen varieties of agave formerly used to make Tequila. The cost-benefit logic was argued as the reason, but it is not clear if there was a further political implication. Never the less, the varieties of agave not chosen went to near extinction, even though some of them could make a spirit comparable with the one made from the approved blue tequilana weber plant. Our paper will recover the story.

THE THEORY

THE PRACTICE

Agave (mezcal) varieties in tequila production in Jalisco

	1600	1621	1700	1768	1800	1887	1888	1900	1901	1902	1949	1964
SOURCE AUTHOR	Domingo Lázaro de Arregui		Francisco Antonio de Lorenzana		Lázaro Pérez		Mariano Bárcena	José C. Segura		León Diguét	Secretaría de Economía	Secretaría de Industria y Comercio
SOURCE	<i>Descripción de la Nueva Galicia</i>		"Relación sobre las bebidas que se usan en el país"		<i>Estudio sobre el maguey llamado mezcal en el Estado de Jalisco</i>		<i>Ensayo estadístico del Estado de Jalisco</i>	<i>El maguey: Memoria sobre el cultivo y beneficio de sus productos</i>		"Estudios sobre el maguey de Tequila"	Official Mexican Norm (NOM) of Quality	Official Mexican Norm (NOM) of Quality
VARIETY	MEZCAL				1.-CHINO 2.-AZUL 3.-BERMEJO 4.-SIGÜIN 5.-MORANEÑO 6.-CHATO 7.-MANOLARGA 8.-ZOPILOTE 9.-PIE DE MULA		1.-CHINO 2.-AZUL 3.-BERMEJO 4.-SIGÜIN CHATO 5.-MORALOTE 6.-MANOLARGA 7.-ZOPILOTE 8.-PIE DE MULA	1.-CHINO 2.-AZUL 3.-BERMEJO 4.-SIGÜIN 5.-MORANEÑO 6.-CHATO 7.-MANOLARGA 8.-ZOPILOTE 9.-PIE DE MULA		1.-AZUL 2.-BERMEJO 3.-SIGÜIN 4.-CHATO 5.-MANOLARGA 6.-ZOPILOTE 7.-PIE DE MULA	AGAVE AZUL TEQUILANA WEBER Amarilidáceas and other species of the same gender grown in the State of Jalisco	Blue variety of AGAVE TEQUILANA WEBER
OBSERVATIONS	Not Data		Defined as maguey Silvestre, smaller than the one for pulque		Nine varieties registered		Eight varieties registered, because Sihuin and Chato are reported as one. The Moraneño in Pérez seems to be Moralete in Bárcena	The nine varieties reported by Pérez are repeated by Segura		Varieties 1 and 5 in the list of Pérez not reported. Chino and Azul considered the same, as well as Singüin and Chato suggesting a total of seven varieties	Authorizes making tequila without restriction of agave varieties	Authorizes only the blue variety to make tequila
SCIENTIFIC CLASSIFICATION							Common name: Maguey del Tequila (Gives the plant a generic name)			A. Weber "Notes sur quelques agaves du Mexique Occidental et de la Basse Californie" Classified the plant as if he had discovered it: AGAVE TEQUILANA		

THE NORM

	1778	1785	1793	1801	1812	1812	1814	1815	1820	1823	1846	1871	1886
Location	Ranch of "Santiago" Amatitan/Arenal	Sitio of "Santiago" Amatitan/Arenal	Amatitan	Amatitan	Tostincha Amatitan	Tequila	Tostincha Amatitan	Tequila	Amatitan	Amatitan	Teuchitlán	Amatitan	Amatitan
Variety	Chinos	Chinos	Chinos	Bermejoes, manos largas, azules	Azul	● Chino Azul ● Manolarga ● Chino	Chino y Bermejo	● Chino Azul ● Chatos Bermejo Chino	Manos largas	● Azules ● Manos largas	Mano larga	Manos largas	Manos largas
Age/price	sazones 2 heads for 1 1/2 reales	2 heads per 1/2 real	Sazones big ones 3 reales small 3 cuartillas		years of age / cost 3/ 22 reales* 5/ 7 pesos* 6/ 8 pesos* 7/ 11 pesos* *per 100	years of age / cost 1/ 12 reales* 3 / 4 pesos* 4 / 26 pesos* 3 / 3 pesos* 4 / 20 pesos* *per 100	6 years of age 18 pesos y 6 reales* *per 100	● 8 years of age 20 pesos* ● 10 years of age 25 pesos* *per 100		5-6years 50 pesos per 100 ● 4 reales each plant	years of age / cost 4 / 40 pesos* 5 / 45 pesos* 6 / 50 pesos* *per 1000	40 pesos per 1000	40 pesos per 1000
Observations	Observations (In the plantations in which varieties are mentioned). Very few plantations reported of the variety. It seems that when variety is not named it implies the blue one. It must be noted that the occurrence of the blue variety was always far higher than the others											After 1886 documents do not specify the variety	

