

Member Bites: WFA Activities August 21, 2015

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WET Rebate Discussion Paper

The WET Rebate Discussion Paper has been released. WFA was in Canberra last week and again this week to promote the importance of keeping the WET rebate but with reforms: Removing eligibility for bulk and unbranded wine; creating a level playing field for by abolishing the preferential separate NZ scheme; and, introducing merger provisions that allow two merged entities to both claim the WET rebate in their first year and gradually stepping down over the remaining three years to a single claimant entitlement in year four. WFA continues to argue the need for additional marketing funds for Wine Australia to help grow the export demand. See [here](#) for the discussion paper and next steps.

Contact: Melissa Cheesman-Faull – 08 8133 4312, melissa@wfa.org.au

Have your say on AgVet chemicals

Officials from the Australian Government's Department of Agriculture briefed the WFA Wine Industry Technical Advisory Committee (WITAC) about the reform process underway into the regulatory framework around approval and use of AgVet chemicals. A further discussion paper will be released shortly and WITAC has committed to on-going engagement to ensure the wine sector is not disadvantaged. WFA welcomes comments from members on this issue. See background [here](#).

Contact: Tony Battaglione – 0413014807, tony@wfa.org.au

Warning over 'do nothing': Rabobank

Rabobank's Food & Agribusiness Research and Advisory division has released a guide on succession planning which includes case studies, help with asking the tough questions, looking after this generation & laying the foundations to keep the next gen interested in the business. The report says "doing something is better than doing nothing." Called *Farm Succession Planning: Navigating the Seas of Change* it is available [here](#).

Defending wine against potential tax hikes

WFA is currently preparing responses to a number of inquiries. The first is in response to an Issues Paper released by the ACT Government which seeks comments on possible measures to reduce alcohol-related harms. One of the proposed measures is to “limit the economic availability of alcohol through taxation and pricing policies”. WFA will highlight that pricing has been shown to be an ineffective driver of consumption behaviour especially for at-risk consumers; that increasing prices would penalise the industry and vast majority of responsible wine drinkers. Targeted intervention measures are a more effective tool for addressing harmful drinking. See [here](#).

Grape and Wine 2015 – A focus for Action

This wine industry leaders’ meeting is on in Adelaide next Friday, August 28. Members of industry can input by completing a survey which being conducted ahead of the meeting by facilitator *Intuitive Solutions*. If you haven’t yet had a chance to submit the online survey, there’s still time as the deadline has been extended to next Wednesday, August 26. See [here](#). A small group of national and state industry leaders including WFA has been working on the concept and details of *Grape & Wine 2015* since late 2014.

Personal choice and community impacts

WFA is also preparing a response to a Senate process by the Standing Committee on Economics References Committee which is examining “Personal choice and community impacts” and ways federal legislation possibly interferes with Australian’s ability to exercise personal choice, including legislation that may limit personal choice in regards to alcohol. See [here](#).

Contact: Melissa Cheesman-Faull – 08 8133 4312, melissa@wfa.org.au

October 28: Date change – lunch with Paul Evans

The Rural Media Association of South Australia is a non-political, not-for-profit organisation running since the 1970s to provide a forum to discuss topical issues with agricultural / rural journalists, government ministers and others passionate about primary industries and rural Australia. Details and bookings [here](#) soon.

Contact: Alexia Deegan – 08 8133 4303, alexia@wfa.org.au

Update on India, Indonesia

India and Indonesia have announced draft changes to their compositional requirements for wines. The proposed changes would effectively prevent the export of wines to these countries if they enter into law. WFA is preparing comments for the Australian Government to submit to seek amendments.

Contact: Tony Battaglione – 0413014807, tony@wfa.org.au

IR feedback needed

We are seeking feedback on the Productivity Commission’s *Workplace Relations Inquiry* draft report recommendations. Coordinating industry’s national response is the South Australian Wine Industry Association (SAWIA) with support from WFA. See the Productivity Commission draft [here](#). If there are specific recommendations and findings you think are problematic or undesirable, or you have other feedback, please contact Henrik.

Contact: Henrik Wallgren – 08 8222 9270 or henrik@winesa.asn.au

WFA membership

Please don’t delay ... your WFA membership is important. And you can easily renew simply by going online [here](#) and following the prompts.

Technological advancement – send in comments

Key R&D policy issues raised at this month’s WFA Innovation Policy Committee meeting included the AGWA 5-year plan, Agriculture Competitiveness White Paper and the Report of the Senate Inquiry into levies. The Australian Government has also announced an inquiry by the House of Representatives Agriculture and Industry Committee into technological advancement in agriculture. Once again WFA welcomes input from our members for our submission to this inquiry. Background is available [here](#).

Contact: Tony Battaglione – 0413014807, tony@wfa.org.au

Work progress on MRL guidelines

WFA will be attending the APEC Harmonisation of Pesticide Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for Imported foods workshop in Cebu from August 23-26. WFA chairs the APEC Wine Regulatory Forum MRL Working Group. Next week's workshop aims to finalise guidelines for APEC member economies to develop import MRLs for the pilot commodities of wine and mangoes. The project's implementation phase will then commence with a scheduled completion date at the end of 2018.

Contact: Tony Battaglione – 0413014807, tony@wfa.org.au

Watch this space ...

As members would know, there are many things wineries do to demonstrate their commitment to being good corporate citizens. This includes work in the vineyard and winery, with staff and cellar door visitors as well as involvement in the wider community. For a range of ideas and tools, see the WFA website [here](#). Over the coming months, WFA will be asking members to share your good work in this area, from how you promote responsible consumption, engage tourists and mail order buyers to why and how you give to scholarships, community groups/clubs and good causes. This initiative aims to shine a light on the important wineries do in their communities. Details are coming shortly.

Contact: Alexia Deegan – 08 8133 4303, alexia@wfa.org.au

Future leaders on the move

Wine Australia, WFA and Wine Grape Growers Australia senior executives addressed the *Future Leaders 15* class which met in Yarra Valley earlier this month. See a summary of the session [here](#). Also sharing their experiences with the group were Nuffield Scholar Andrew Clarke, Parliamentarian Christine Fyffe and Australian Rural Leadership Fellow Lisa Wilson. The next meeting in September will give course participants an opportunity to put what they have learned into practice and develop their personal skills.

Get your entries in ...

WineState magazine has again teamed up with *From The Producer* and will feature FTP wines at a special wine show judging and subscriber tasting on September 4. Hurry – there's still time to get your entries in (just \$66 each). All awarded wines will be featured in the magazine. See [here](#). The September 4 show is being held at the National Wine Show and attracts a crowd.

Captan MRL alert

WFA is working with the Australian Wine Research Institute and the Australian Government to resolve a potential trade barrier being posed by a proposed European Union (EU) regulation change over the maximum residue level (MRL) and definition for captan. Scheduled to come into force as early as January 2016, this regulation will halt, in effect, the use of captan on grapes for export wines. AWRI reports alternative chemicals to control black spot, botrytis bunch rot, downy mildew and phomopsis cane and leaf spot are available. See details [here](#).

Contact: Tony Battaglione – 0413014807, tony@wfa.org.au

Stand up, women of wine...

Entries are being called for the inaugural Australian Women in Wine Awards which are being run by the Fabulous Ladies Wine Society and supported by WFA. The awards acknowledge and reward the work of women in the industry and industry leaders who champion equality and fairness for all in the workplace. Categories are: Winemaker of the Year; Viticulturist of the Year; Owner/Operator of the Year; and, Workplace Champion of Change (and businesses are eligible). See details [here](#), including how you can "tap someone on the shoulder". A virtual awards night will be held on November 17.

Contact: Alexia Deegan – 08 8133 4303, alexia@wfa.org.au

Getting Lean

Wine Australia is keen to hear from winemakers who are interested in taking part in a "Lean Production for Wineries" workshop. Dates and venues are yet to be finalized (depending on interest). The cost will be \$10 for Australian grapegrowers and winemakers (\$55 for non-winegrape levy payers). Details [here](#).

Are there issues you need an update on? Email wfa@wfa.org.au or contact staff above.

2. Upcoming events

August 21: Finlaysons 23rd Wine Roadshow – Coonawarra ([details](#))

August 25: AWRI Grape and Wine Roadshow – Clare ([bookings](#)).

August 27: Opportunities in a new climate – Langhorne Creek workshop ([details](#))

August 28: Grape and Wine 2015 – a Focus for Action wine industry leaders' meeting

August 30: National Wine Centre Wineter Food & Wine Festival ([details](#))

September 1: Opportunities in a new climate – Launceston ([details](#))

September 2: Wine Australia Grand Tastings in Tokyo, Japan

September 4: Winestate Magazine's Wine of the Year, National Wine Centre

September 4: Wine Australia Grand Tastings Seoul, South Korea

September 8: AWRI Grape and Wine Roadshow – Barossa Valley ([bookings](#))

September 16: AWRI Adapting to difficult vintages Orange Workshop ([bookings](#))

September 18: AWRI Adapting to difficult vintages Canberra Workshop ([bookings](#))

September 18-20: Shanghai Wine & Dine Festival – visit Wine Australia stand.

October 28: WFA to address the Rural Media Association of South Australia ([bookings](#))

November 19: Earlier, Shorter, Hotter: Managing Compressed Vintages ASVO Adelaide [Seminar](#)

November 20: Crush 2015 Grape and Wine Science Symposium ([details](#))

July 23-28, 2016: Australian Wine Industry Technical Conference & Trade Exhibition:

<http://www.awitc.com.au/> & <http://www.awite.com.au/>

3. Media Update & Links

Government's probe to stop wine industry tax kickbacks (AFR, August 21)

Assistant Treasurer Josh Frydenberg outlines the discussion paper options for the WET rebate and his appointment of a senior industry panel to work through solutions before the end of the year. Read the full article [here](#). AFR's Simon Evans has a page 1 article on the paper and WET Rebate Consultative Group to be chaired by Russell Campbell of federal Treasury.

Wine tax rebate rorts distorting industry, discussion paper says (The Australian, August 21)

This article notes Treasurer Joe Hockey rejected industry calls to reform the WET rebate ahead of the federal budget back in May, however, the new Treasury discussion paper out for consultation until September 11 actually supports industry's position. Read [here](#).

Cancer in the family? Stop drinking alcohol (The Australian, Aug 20); **One drink a day increase a woman's risk of breast cancer: study** (SMH, Aug 19); **One-drink cancer risk** (Herald Sun, Aug 19)

A number of stories published around a British Medical Journal report into two US studies of health professionals and their cancer, alcohol and smoking experiences going back approx. 30 years. The researchers concluded there was no cause to revise national guidelines on responsible alcohol consumption such as those issued by Australia's NHMRC.

Greens motion demanding legislated producer-owned meat industry body passes Senate (ABC, Aug 20)

This story touches on this week's Parliamentary debate over a new beef producer-owned organisation and its powers to receive and direct levies. The Senate passed a Greens motion which called on Ag Minister Joyce to act on Senate recommendations to legislate the new entity. Tasmanian Greens Senator Peter Whish-Wilson was critical of the AG Minister whom he called "all fare and no responsibility". The Minister's response: "This tofu tiger from Tasmania is a 'Johnny-come-lately' into this space, and what you will see here in this motion today is just an attempt at what's called a wedge motion...a waste of people's time in the Senate." Audio [here](#).

Grape wine leftovers converted to ethanol (9 MSN, August 20, 2015)

University of Adelaide researchers have found grape marc is not only readily available and cheap but is rich in easily fermented carbs suitable for biofuel. Full [story](#).

Wine industry expert expects falling Australian dollar will attract foreign investors (ABC, August 18)

ABC reports comments from winemaker, Finlaysons lawyer Will Taylor that foreign investment in SA vineyards will increase as growers exit the industry after a tough decade. Full story & audio [here](#).

Big, loud, cheap and too many critters: Australian wine has an image problem (7 News, August 13)

Andreas Clark outlines how challenging it has been to sell wine into the US, what might be holding us back and how Australia can rise above it. Wine Australia is commissioning new research to find out how to make Americans reopen their hearts and wallets to Australian wines. Read [story](#).

Associations to keep highlighting wine industry IR issues (TheShout, August 12)

Details how the wine industry is preparing for the upcoming public hearings and second submission round for the Productivity Commission review into workplace relations reform. [More](#).