



MEDIA RELEASE

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The wine industry gets behind efforts to reduce alcohol related harm

The Winemakers' Federation of Australia (WFA) recognises the decision of the Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation's to recommend that mandatory pregnancy warning labels be required on alcoholic beverage packaging.

In its communiqué of 11 October, Ministers requested that Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) develop a mandatory labelling standard, including a pictogram and warning statement, as soon as possible.

"The wine industry has made a significant effort to encourage its members to voluntarily adopt pregnancy warning labels and we have been very pleased with our progress to date. However, although we were surprised that the Forum did not continue to support the voluntary initiatives and recognise our efforts in this area, we are committed to working with FSANZ to develop a labelling standard that is workable for Australian winemakers" said WFA CEO Tony Battaglène.

"The majority of Australian wine that consumers buy already carries the voluntary DrinkWise Australia pregnancy warning label. This message is well recognised by consumers and widely used by Australian winemakers" said Mr Battaglène.

WFA is committed to promoting a safe drinking culture in Australia, and strongly supports the Australian Government's recommendation that for women who are pregnant or breastfeeding, it is safest not to drink alcohol.

"The vast majority of Australians enjoy alcohol in a safe and responsible manner, but recognise that for some people and communities, alcohol is a problem".

"We encourage federal, state and territory governments to work with the wine industry to develop targeted, evidence-based approaches to decrease dangerous and harmful drinking in Australia" said Mr Battaglène. "This is why I so strongly support the DrinkWise Australia *Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Awareness Program*, launched by the Minister for Health, the Hon. Greg Hunt MP, in September this year".

"FASD is 100 per cent preventable and WFA is committed to promoting the message that women who are pregnant, breastfeeding or trying to conceive should not drink alcohol" said Mr Battaglène.

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