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MEDIA STATEMENT

Wine Tasmania joins national campaign

Wine Tasmania has joined forces with the Winemakers' Federation of Australia to keep but reform the WET rebate and resist any moves to increase wine taxes.

Wine Tasmania joins the Wolf Blass Foundation and a growing number of leading winemakers and wine organisations who are taking a stand with the Federation on these important issues.

Federation Chief Executive Paul Evans welcomed the support from Tasmania.

"We want the rebate kept for those wine businesses who support regional communities but abolish the separate New Zealand producer rebate and remove the rebate from bulk and unbranded wine to ensure it continues to deliver its original policy intent," Mr Evans said.

"The support from Tasmania will also reinforce our arguments that the differentiated tax rate for wine is more than justified," he said.

Wine Tasmania Chief Executive Sheralee Davies said Tasmanian wine represented less than 1% of Australia's total wine grape production, with the vast majority of producers focused on cellar door operations in regional areas around Tasmania.

"These producers are contributing to regional communities, the economy, employment, trade and the reputation of both Tasmania and the Australian wine sectors," she said.

"Already the costs associated with producing wine, particularly for smaller producers in a cool climate like Tasmania, are very high," she said.

"The WET rebate was always intended to support small wine producers making a significant contribution to Australia's regional communities, such as in Tasmania. Increasing net taxes paid by Tasmanian wine producers would severely impact on this high quality and value sector which is increasingly being recognised around the world."

Donations from businesses and individuals are being used to help fund the Federation's analysis of wine taxation and a supporting campaign ahead of an expected national review of the tax system and the 2015 Federal Budget. Mr Evans said this work was well underway.

Wine Tasmania is the peak representative body for Tasmanian grape growers and winemakers, working together to assist them to be recognised as world leaders in the sustainable production of premium cool climate wine. It represents in excess of 98% of the Tasmanian winegrape production, with more than 90 statewide industry members and 42 associated member businesses.

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