



Australian Government

Australian Wine and Brandy Corporation

# Media Release

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## **AUSTRALIA – EU WINE AGREEMENT TO BENEFIT AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRY**

A new era of cooperation between Australia and the European Union (EU) begins tomorrow (September 1) when the Australia–European Community Agreement on Trade in Wine comes into force.

The agreement negotiated by the Australian Government guarantees and improves access for Australian wine producers to the highly competitive European market. The Australian wine sector was represented during negotiations by the Australian Wine & Brandy Corporation (AWBC) and the Winemakers' Federation of Australia (WFA).

The new agreement protects Australian winemakers' access to the EU – our largest export market. The relationship is worth \$863 million to the Australian wine industry, with more than 380,000 million litres exported in 2009/10.

Australian wine producers and exporters will see significant advantages as a result of the agreement, with nearly all Australian winemaking techniques now accepted by the EU, as well as a range of simpler requirements covering everything from labelling and blending to alcohol levels and the display of Australian awards on labels.

AWBC General Manager Compliance and Trade, Steve Guy, said Australian wine producers would soon experience the benefits of the agreement, as they would be required to make fewer changes and concessions to sell their wine in the EU.

“It will also ensure Australia’s international wine reputation is protected as it will reassure consumers, trade and international regulatory authorities that they can rely on the provenance claims made on behalf of Australian wine,” he said.

“The changes will come into place via amendments to the AWBC Act and are the final chapter in the long-standing negotiations between the Australian wine industry and the EU, which date back to 1993.”

As a result of the changes, Australian wine producers and winemakers will have better access to European markets through:

- European recognition of an additional 16 winemaking techniques
- The introduction of simpler arrangements for the approval of winemaking techniques that may be developed in the future
- Simplified labelling requirements for Australian wine sold in European markets
- Protection within Europe for Australia’s registered geographical indications (GI)
- European agreement to Australian use of a number of grape vine variety names that contain or consist of a GI
- European agreement for Australian producers to display wine show medals on their bottles
- The definition of a number of quality terms used in the presentation and description of wine.

## Australia–EU Wine Agreement to benefit Australian industry

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The agreement also will provide significant benefits to the EU, with Australia agreeing to a number of legislative changes, including:

- Protection of more than 2,500 registered European GIs, including those from member states which have joined the European Community since 1994
- Protection of 11 sensitive European GIs that have previously been used to describe Australian wines (from September 1, 2011)
- Prevention of Australian producers from using a range of European traditional expressions (TEs) in the language specified in the agreement
- Phasing out of the term “Tokay” to describe Australian fortified wines within 10 years.

The 11 sensitive GIs that will not be permitted to describe Australian wine are Burgundy, Chablis, Champagne, Graves, Manzanilla, Marsala, Moselle, Port, Sauterne, Sherry and White Burgundy. Wholesalers will have three years to sell stock labelled with these GIs.

Mr Guy said the AWBC and WFA had worked closely with the Australian Government’s Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry during negotiation of the agreement.

“One of our primary objectives is to facilitate the free trade of Australian wine and this agreement is vital in achieving this,” he said.

“There have been significant concessions from both sides and we are confident the Australian wine industry can only benefit from these changes, which come into effect tomorrow.”

To find out more about the changes visit [www.wineaustralia.com](http://www.wineaustralia.com)

#### **Further information:**

For interviews contact Steve Guy on 0427 553 280

For media assistance contact Nick Carne at the Winemakers’ Federation of Australia on (08) 8222 9255 or 0404 850 859

