

MEDIA RELEASE

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The practical side of a wine industry in transition

Australia's premier wine industry conference has been expanded in 2010 to help guide the industry's transition towards new structures and new business thinking.

WFA's biennial **Wine Industry Outlook Conference** will be run over two days for the first time, combining a traditional conference program with a series of practical workshop sessions the following day.

There will be a specific session on fine wine, a shift in focus towards domestic markets and an emphasis across the two days on positive change strategies.

"We see this as an extension of the discussions, research and planning the industry has been engaged with over the past 12 months," said WFA's chief executive, Stephen Strachan. "It's about confronting new realities and understanding the practical next steps."

The conference will be held in the Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre on October 19 and 20. Delegates can book for either or both days.

Day one will provide detailed analysis of fine wine demand and the US and Chinese markets, outline planned market development initiatives, and highlight strategies for converting opportunity into profitable business. New market research findings on Australian wine's competitiveness in China will be presented, along with the results of a recent project to assess domestic and export market opportunities.

Speakers will include international experts from Rabobank in Hong Kong and the UK-based Wine Intelligence, the President of the US Wine Market Council, John Gillespie, and leading business development and marketing consultants Gary Bertwistle and Graeme Chipp.

Day two, to be run under the banner of WFA's *WineSkills* program, will include two international speakers, three plenary sessions, a series of concurrent workshops covering marketing, distribution, tourism and business development, and a hypothetical coordinated by moderator Michael Pascoe.

"The theme of this day is the need to look closely at existing business models and be prepared to rewrite business, marketing and distribution plans to focus on what consumers rather than winemakers want," Mr Strachan said. "Our strategies must be market rather than sector driven and our focus must be on sustainable success, not simply volume growth."

"This is arguably the most important conference we have ever held and I encourage anyone who cares about the industry to participate."

The program can be downloaded at www.wfa.org.au/outlook_conference.aspx. Registrations will open later this month.

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