

21 February, 2013

### **Imports the downside in latest wine sales figures**

Australians are choosing to pay a little more for their wine but the strong dollar is still causing problems for local winemakers.

Figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics today show total wine sales for the last three months of 2012 fell compared with the previous year, but sales of bottled white rose by 1.2% and red wine by an impressive 9.1%.

This partially offset a 17% decrease in sales of lower-priced soft packs.

“Cask sales have been falling for a number of years as consumers have shown an increasing preference for bottled wine, reflecting greater wine knowledge and interest,” said the chief executive of the Winemakers’ Federation of Australia, Paul Evans.

On the downside, sales of imported wine rose 5.2% by volume and 14.4% by value.

“That’s a smaller increase than in 2011 but still a significant one because each imported wine sold takes money from the pockets of Australian winemakers and grape growers,” Mr Evans said.

“The strong dollar is really hurting us as it makes our wine more expensive overseas and imported wine so much cheaper here.

“Wine drinkers like to try new things and that’s one of the great attractions of wine, but with the diversity of styles being made at every price point in Australia, you really can taste the world of wine while buying local.”

The ABS figures show that total sales of white wine fell 4.8% to 55.8 million litres in the December quarter, while red wine sales fell 2.1% to 43.8 million litres. Total sales of bottled wine were 32.4 million litres for white wine and 31.2 million litres for red.

**Media enquiries: Nick Carne 0404 850 859 or [nick@wfa.org.au](mailto:nick@wfa.org.au)**