



MEDIA STATEMENT

Tuesday, April 8, 2014

Winemakers' Federation welcomes end of 15% tariff

Elimination of a 15% import tariff into Japan on Australia's wine over the next seven years as part of the Japan-Australia Economic Partnership has been welcomed by the Winemakers' Federation of Australia (WFA).

"This agreement is a critical part of developing export opportunities for our Australian wine in Japan," WFA President Tony D'Aloisio said today from China where he's attending Australia Week.

"The WFA met recently with Minister for Trade and Investment Andrew Robb to discuss the ongoing need to improve market access for the wine industry, including completion of outstanding Free Trade Agreements in a number of key markets such as Japan and China," he said.

"Today's announcement builds on the recent successful negotiation of an agreement with Korea and provides further momentum for a similar agreement with China.

"We welcome the government's focus on the importance of these agreements to the Australian wine sector and we will continue to work with them to ensure industry interests are progressed."

The Japan agreement will eliminate a 15% tariff on bottled, sparkling and bulk wine over seven years, helping to lift Australia's competitiveness in this key market. It also puts Australia back on a level playing field with Chile which entered into an economic partnership with Japan in 2007 that saw a gradual removal of tariffs on their wine.

"Australia is currently the 6th largest exporter of wine to Japan by value and volume, Mr D'Aloisio said. "Countries such as Chile have enjoyed significant increases in market share in Japan following finalisation of a similar trading agreement where they now currently sit second behind France.

Mr D'Aloisio said traditional export markets such as the USA and the UK were important for Australian exporters, but opening up new opportunities and improving Australia's competitive edge in Asia such as in Japan, China, Korea and Thailand remained important for the industry's future.

"The critical area we need help from the Australian Government on is in ensuring that when Australian wines enter new and developing markets and we take on our competitors from France, Spain, Chile and New Zealand, we are doing so on a level playing field. The agreement with Japan, and hopefully a similar agreement with China, aims to help us do just that," he said.

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