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MEDIA RELEASE

Prosecco producers advocate for a level playing field

Australian wine producers are visiting Parliament House in Canberra today to brief Parliamentarians on the importance of the Prosecco grape variety to Australia's wine sector and regional economies. The right to use the variety name on Australian bottles is under threat, as the European Union seeks to use the Australia – EU FTA as a vehicle to ban Australian producers from using the variety name.

"The fact is, Prosecco is a grape variety name, just like Chardonnay or Cabernet Sauvignon" said Mr Lee McLean, Chief Executive of Australian Grape & Wine. "The European Union's approach to this issue is motivated by a desire to protect Italian producers from competition and nothing more."

The value of production of Australian Prosecco is around \$200 million per annum, with 20 regions growing the variety. The majority of production, however, is concentrated in Victoria's King Valley and Murray-Valley.

In the King Valley, the variety is underpinning regional employment, economic growth and tourism. Otto Dal Zotto of Dal Zotto Wines, who was the first person to commercially grow Prosecco in Australia said, "Prosecco is, and always has been, a globally recognised grape variety."

"We need our trade negotiators and the Australian Government to understand that there are real jobs and real people at stake" said Natalie Pizzini of Pizzini Wines. "We've invested in this variety in good faith and the EU is trying to move the goal posts to protect Italian producers against fair competition."

The variety's growth has been a shining light at a challenging time for the Australian wine sector. "Australian Prosecco has grown from a small base to a total direct value of over \$205 million to December 2021. It currently fetches an average price that is more than double the price of most other varieties" said Mr McLean. "Consumers only have to look at wine lists in our pubs, restaurants and cafes to see that growth in popularity."

This growth has been driven by investment and responding to consumer tastes. Katherine Brown, of Brown Family Wine Group, the largest Australian producer of Prosecco, noted that "Our family has invested millions of dollars in equipment, facilities, people and marketing to build up Australian Prosecco to what it is today."

"These producers are here to make sure our politicians understand that decisions relating to Prosecco have significant consequences for businesses, regional communities and ultimately people. Prosecco isn't just a bargaining chip for our negotiators" said Mr McLean. "If we don't back our producers now, there is a real risk other varieties like Vermentino, Fiano, Nero d'Avola and Montepulciano will be next in the firing line."

Australian Grape & Wine is standing shoulder to shoulder with Australia's Prosecco producers and is working with industry to #SaveAussieProsecco.

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[Prosecco Fact Sheet](#)

AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW - Lee McLean, CEO, Australian Grape & Wine on 0418 998 749.

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About Australian Grape and Wine Inc

Australian Grape and Wine Inc is the national association of grape and wine producers. We address issues across the supply-chain that impact on the profitability and sustainability of the sector. We lead and advocate public policy that enhances the ability to responsibly produce, promote and enjoy Australian wine in moderation.

Australian Grape & Wine is recognised as a representative organisation for winegrape and wine producers under the Wine Australia Act 2013, and is incorporated under the SA Associations Incorporation Act 1985. We work in partnership with the Australian Government to develop and implement policy that is in the best interests of winegrape growers and winemakers across Australia.