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## MEDIA RELEASE

# Objection! Australian grape and wine producers get a chance to have their say on Prosecco grape variety

Australian Grape & Wine is urging anyone with an interest in the grape variety Prosecco, or the ongoing rights to use other grape variety terms, to make sure their voice is heard as the Australian Government opens a public objections process in a range of proposed European Union (EU) wine geographical indications (GIs).

“It’s absolutely critical that Australian grape growers and winemakers submit their views to Government through this public objections process” said Lee McLean, Chief Executive of Australian Grape & Wine.

“Prosecco is a grape variety just like shiraz or chardonnay” said Mr McLean. “We need to let political decision makers in Australia and the EU know that maintaining our ability to use grape variety names is an essential element of rules-based trade and investment in our sector.”

Through the negotiation for the Australia-European Community Agreement on Trade in Wine (Wine Agreement), the EU is seeking protection for 50 new wine GIs – including Prosecco and Picpoul de Pinet - as well as updates to existing GIs. The public objections process is a way for interested stakeholders to provide submissions of objection to the wine GIs for which the EU is seeking protection for in Australia.

It is the second time the grape variety name Prosecco has been subjected to a public objections process in Australia under the agreement. The last attempt by the EU to stop Australian producers from using the name Prosecco was quashed by the Registrar of Trademarks in legal proceedings in 2012 and 2013 on the ground that Prosecco is a grape variety name.

“We understand some will be frustrated by the requirement to re-prosecute the arguments they made in 2012/13, particularly given the common-sense outcome delivered by the Registrar of Trademarks at the time” said Mr McLean. “However, it’s critical that every grower and every winemaker with an interest in Prosecco takes the time to lodge a submission into this process.”

Australian Prosecco has grown to over \$200 million dollars in value, with regions like Victoria’s King Valley investing millions in vineyards, production facilities and associated tourism infrastructure. The variety is grown in 20 regions across Australia and is fetching the second highest average grape price of any white grape variety at the moment. To lose the right to use Prosecco, now when the sector is under significant economic pressure, would be devastating to these regions and their communities. It would also leave Australian grape and [wine businesses wondering which grape varieties will be targeted next](#) by the EU.

“We are not interested in entertaining the cynical protectionism that is driving the EU’s push to stop Australian producers from using the variety name Prosecco” said Mr McLean. “We need everyone with an interest to fight for a common-sense outcome that retains our right to use Prosecco and sets a strong precedent for how other grape variety names will be treated in the future.”



Submissions must be lodged before 12.00pm, Friday 21 April 2023 AEST via the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's [Have Your Say](#) webpage. The Department has also made available a range of documents to help stakeholders understand the process and will undertake public information sessions online. This information and public information session details can be found [here](#).

- Ends -

**Media Contact: Ali Laslett, 0424 135 381 / [ali@agw.org.au](mailto:ali@agw.org.au)**

**Available for Interview: Lee McLean, Chief Executive. 0418 998 749 / [lee@agw.org.au](mailto:lee@agw.org.au)**

**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.