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Canadian Wine Industry Releases National Grape and Wine Research Strategy Report

Ottawa, May 9, 2007. The Canadian grape and wine industry today released a strategy report to help build the next generation of grape and wine research in Canada.

The report follows a ten month roundtable advisory process which included representatives from grape growers, wineries, research organizations, academia and government.

“Industry and stakeholders have worked together in an unprecedented way to provide research-based recommendations and it is critical that the government implement these measures to ensure the growth and future of this important and growing segment of the Canadian economy,” said Dan Paszkowski, President of the Canadian Vintners Association.

The report lays out a roadmap for a national research strategy to facilitate the adoption and application of science in the Canadian grape and wine industry, including areas such as environmental sustainability, wine and grape quality, knowledge driven and market oriented innovation, grape plant certification to protect the resource base, and the growing field of genomics.

“The national strategy is incremental to regional research and instrumental to building a culture of innovation which will be directly linked to the industry’s market success,” said Hans Buchler, Chair of the British Columbia Wine Grape Council. “We urge the government to act on our recommendations.”

The wine industry has undertaken considerable growth and development over the past decade, with more than 300 estate wineries and 1,000 grape growers employing roughly 10,000 Canadians in 6 provinces across the country. The continued linkage of research and Canada’s innovative culture, together with a strong industry and government partnership defining direction, will build on the strength and leadership of the Canadian wine industry.

“Wine grapes are the highest value-added agricultural commodity in the world,” stated Donald Ziraldo, Chair of the National Grape and Wine Strategy Advisory Committee. “The *raison d’être* for the creation of a National Wine and Grape Research Strategy is to promote partnerships and innovation that will help Canadian winemakers and grape growers meet the challenges of a competitive and volatile global market, while continuing to improve the product in the consumer’s glass.”

The report is available at http://www.canadianvintners.com/news/news_cva.htm

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Backgrounder: National Grape and Wine Research Strategy Report

Summary

This report documents the need to:

- Support a national grape and wine research strategy that encompasses the entire grape and wine production value chain, capable of focusing on issues of national importance to provide opportunities for all growers and wineries.
- Support a national grape and wine research strategy that focuses on the following priorities:

Sustainable Viticulture Management Practices

- Environmental sustainability
- Economic sustainability
- Enhanced value promotion
- Identification and capture of market opportunities

Pursuing Consistency and Premium Quality

- Improved consistency of Icewine quality
- Improved consistency of table wine quality
- Improved consistency of grape quality

Pursuing an Improved Business Environment

- Crisis avoidance management
- Access and quick response to new business options

Plant Certification Program

- Establish research expertise to support the development of grape plant certification in Canada

Wine and Grape Genomics

- Establish a national genomics/metabolomics strategy
- Establish a National Wine Sector Research Advisory Council to work in partnership with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada to provide industry driven direction to research efforts to strengthen the grape and wine value chain through a supportive business environment.
- Increase Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada investment in wine and grape research and development to ensure the industry is properly equipped to enable quick response to current and future trends to seize opportunities that impact the value chain. National funding should be incremental to existing regional research efforts, but contribute to local, regional, national and international goals of the grape and wine sector.

National Grape and Wine Research Strategy

Advisory Committee Members

Norm Beal	Chair, Wine Council of Ontario
Pat Bowen	Research Scientist, Viticulture, Pacific Agri-Food Research Centre, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Hans Buchler	Chair, British Columbia Wine Grape Council
Ray Duc	Chair, Grape Growers of Ontario
George Heiss	Proprietor, Gray Monk Estate Winery
Isabelle Lesschaeve	Director, Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI), Brock University
Dan Paszkowski	President, Canadian Vintners Association
Allan Schmidt	President, Vineland Estates Winery
Ben Stewart	Proprietor, Quails' Gate Estate Winery
Hennie JJ van Vuuren	Director, Wine Research Centre, University of British Columbia
Bruce Walker	Chair, Canadian Vintners Association
Donald Ziraldo	Chair, National Grape and Wine Strategy Advisory Committee