



**March 12, 2015
For Immediate Release**

The Wine Marketing Association of Ontario names new Executive Director of Marketing

-Local wine industry partners with the Ontario government to promote Ontario VQA wine-

Niagara, ON - (March 12, 2015) – The Ontario wine industry is pleased to announce that Sylvia Augaitis will be leading the marketing promotion of Ontario VQA wines as the Executive Director of the non-profit marketing association, the Wine Marketing Association of Ontario (WMAO). This new organization is managing the Wine Country Ontario brand.

Ms. Augaitis is a senior marketing and communications leader who has leveraged some of Canada's most successful brands, including Canadian Tire, Owens Corning and Ralston Purina. Sylvia is a strategic business leader with P&L operating experience and a track record of business results in consumer packaged goods, not-for-profit and retail sectors. She began her business career with Ralston Purina and quickly rose to the position of Group Marketing Director for the Canadian business, contributing to the doubling of the business over a five-year period. Her success attracted the attention of the NutraSweet Company where she was appointed Director of Marketing to reposition the company and product in the midst of the expiry of key NutraSweet intellectual property. Ms. Augaitis later became Senior Vice President of Doner Canada, a Division of Doner Inc. the largest privately held advertising agency globally. Reporting to the President and CEO in the USA, she was lead and had primary responsibility for the largest account in the agency, Canadian Tire. Most notably, Sylvia and her team contributed to the successful defence of Canadian Tire's consumer franchise during the arrival of retail juggernauts Walmart and Home Depot to Canada. Despite the unprecedented competitive incursions, Canadian Tire continued to grow without a single year of decline. Sylvia was most recently Senior Communications Officer with the Television Bureau of Canada representing the interests of Canada's major Television broadcasters.

Sylvia began working closely with the Wine Marketing Association of Ontario marketing team on February, 18th of this year and is excited to be part of the Ontario wine industry.



"Sylvia's extensive marketing and communications experience will be a huge asset to the Ontario VQA wine industry. We look forward to having her build on the growth and success of recent years in order to achieve the goals of our bright future," said Allan Schmidt, Board Member of the Wine Marketing Association of Ontario.

"The establishment of WMAO by the wine and grape industry in Ontario is a major step forward in successfully marketing VQA wine to consumers and tourists across the province and internationally," said Jim Clark, Board Member of the Wine Marketing Association of Ontario. "Our industry is very pleased to have been able to partner with the Ontario government to invest in and continue to grow the 400 million dollars in VQA wine sales that contributes to Ontario's economy."

The Wine Marketing Association of Ontario is dedicated to promoting Ontario's wine-growing regions—from the wines and wineries themselves to the complete experience of each destination: local cuisine, year-round activities and warm hospitality. Wine Country Ontario promotes Ontario's vintners and the unique qualities of our authentic, 100% VQA wines. Wine Country Ontario is a brand trademark of the Wine Marketing Association of Ontario.

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