



For Immediate Release

Winery & Grower Alliance of Ontario welcomes Premier's Advisory Council recommendations

Strong growth potential in domestic industry through increased consumer access and exposure

Niagara, ON – February 18, 2016 - The Winery & Grower Alliance of Ontario (WGAO) reacted favourably to the recommendations from the Premier's Advisory Council on Government Assets.

"The WGAO has worked diligently with Mr. Clark and his team to ensure the changes provide growth opportunities for all segments of the Ontario wine industry. Mr. Clark's recommendations are balanced and provide the opportunity for the \$3.3 billion Ontario wine and grape industry to grow into the future. We look forward to enhancing consumer access and exposure to Ontario wines through grocers across the province," said Patrick Gedge, President & CEO, Winery & Grower Alliance of Ontario.

WGAO and its members were consulted extensively by the PAC team led by Mr. Clark. WGAO stressed the important economic driver and growth potential of the Ontario wine industry that extends across agriculture, production, distribution, and tourism.

"We consistently advocated for a progressive policy framework for the Ontario Wine Industry across three principles that would drive domestic industry growth, recognize investments already made, and ensure our ability to compete with the international wine market," continued Mr. Gedge. "As a next step, we are taking the initiative to move at least 35 of our members' stores to the new model."

"We thank Mr. Clark and his team for running a very transparent, consultative process that was productive and thorough," concluded Mr. Gedge.

About the WGAO

The Winery & Grower Alliance of Ontario is a trade association of leading wineries and grape growers working together to ensure the entire Ontario wine industry is robust, sustainable and profitable. WGAO members produce over 85% of all the wine in Ontario, including both Vintners Quality Alliance (VQA) and International Canadian Blends (ICB) wine. They also purchase over 85% of the grapes grown by independent farmers in the province.

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