



MEDIA RELEASE

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Grower Seminar to fill the gap on options and opportunities for winegrape growers

It has been a big year for industry information and analysis and a Grower Seminar organised by Wine Grape Growers Australia (WGGGA) for next Wednesday afternoon, 12 November 2014 at Prospect Oval, North Adelaide, thinks it has plugged a gap in the information made available so far. Mr Lawrie Stanford, Executive Director of WGGGA says "this will be a positive forum offering real options for growers and alternatives to the private-brand dominated messages presented by other events this year".

The seminar taps into the strong interest for knowledge about options and opportunities in the industry, in what is likely to be another year of low profitability in 2015.

WGGGA Chairman Vic Patrick says "the seminar will give growers real insights and practical ideas to enable their businesses to 'survive the present and innovate for the future", the title of the seminar.

WGGGA believes that with enough quality thinking on the topic, the gap between supply and demand could be eaten away by improving the opportunity for non-privately branded wine, particularly for cooler-style wines which in turn, will improve prospects for warm inland product. **Shane Tremble from the Woolworths Liquor Group**, will address just such an issue, reporting on new direct route-to-market opportunities for grape growers, important insights into how the retail sector works and the latest consumer trends.

A massive global opportunity in bulk wine trade has caught WGGGA's attention and Mr Stanford notes that "we have shown in the numbers that lower-end wine from a high-cost producing nation like Australia, will struggle to make profit in this trade but who knows what innovation could do? After all, innovation is everything we haven't yet thought of!" At the seminar, recently appointed **Chair of the Australian Wine Research Institute, Louisa Rose**, will share her ideas on "what does innovation look like" and encourage growers and industry institutions to think outside the square.

The third theme of the seminar is the importance of adapting business models to existing circumstances. As Mr Stanford emphasises, "the most transformative decisions in dealing with the gap between supply and demand will be made at the level of individual businesses. Each business must be clear about the market they target and structure their business model appropriately." With a wealth of experience in the latter, **Jeff McDonald from Collaborative Farming Australia**, will present the options to restructure for profit including the possibility of achieving scale through collaborative farming.

And if that's not enough to justify the trip to Prospect, the final speaker, **agricultural consultant and former CEO of Boar's Rock, Rob Hunt**, will discuss the hot topic of market-based winegrape price determination.

This taps into a compelling majority interest, among both buyers and sellers of winegrapes, for improved assessments of quality in the industry that was revealed in a 2012 survey. Improved quality is fully acknowledged to be the best chance the Australian industry has to be more competitive in overseas markets. Mr Patrick notes: "Rob's presentation will be an opportunity to see how well measurement systems can work in practice – with, believe it or not, benefits to winemakers as well as growers."

Despite such strong presentations, the Q&A session at the end will almost certainly be the highlight of the afternoon - positive and thought-provoking presentations are certain to raise further discussion. The seminar is free and media representatives are welcome to attend - as WGGA is keen to ensure that the messages and outcomes are disseminated widely as soon as possible. An opportunity for networking over drinks at the end will also feature on the day.

Please visit wgga.com.au to view the program and further information.

Media enquiries to Lawrie Stanford, Executive Director on 0417 859 282.