



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Industry investment set to pay off as WGGA releases tender for key national vineyard biosecurity projects**

Wine Grape Growers Australia (WGGA) has today put out to tender, two projects to secure a sustainable future for national biosecurity management in viticulture. This initiative has been funded by contributions from a range of grape grower organisations and demonstrates viticulture's commitment to the long-term sustainability of Australia's vineyards, despite difficult economic times for many growers.

"The wine industry has consistently demonstrated an understanding of the importance of biosecurity", Lawrie Stanford, Executive Director of WGGA, said. "We are delighted to be able to initiate these projects for on-going biosecurity management in the wine sector and across the viticulture industries."

Stanford added that it is not just industry that is concerned about biosecurity – government is also. The numbers attached to the risk are big. As an example, the 1995 Papaya Fruit Fly incursion in Queensland cost over \$150 million initially – and there are on-going containment costs. "People understand the importance of being prepared in this area" Mr Stanford said.

WGGA is hoping to engage, through some kind of collaborative or consultancy arrangement, with one or more suitably qualified organisations or individuals to ensure the best outcome from the projects being tendered out. The project outcomes will include close cooperation and involvement between table grape growers, dried fruit growers, the nursery sector and the wine sector.

Mr Stanford noted that "there are two complementary but separate projects, and we are open to receiving tenders for undertaking them separately or together. One of the projects is a short-term task to prepare a business case to put to industry for long-term national biosecurity activities across the viticulture industries, and a funding base for the wine sector, while the other addresses ongoing viticulture and wine sector management of biosecurity in the interim."

Mr Vic Patrick, Chair of WGGA and long-time advocate of biosecurity, noted that a concerted, proactive program for biosecurity preparedness reflects the global reach of modern trade. Not only does more frequent travel of people and transport of goods around the globe increase the risk of pest and disease incursions, but at the same time, the increasing importance of overseas trade means preventing such incursions is vital to preserving our trading status in overseas markets as well as for promoting our products as disease free.

Interested parties are directed to the tender document at [www.wgga.com.au](http://www.wgga.com.au) in the first instance and they may discuss their interest with Lawrie Stanford, Executive Director of WGGA on (08) 8133 4400 or 0417 859 282. Media enquiries may also be directed to the latter.

#### **About WGGA**

WGGA is the national voice for Australian winegrape growers. It is an incorporated association that is accountable to its members through a representative Executive Committee. There are roughly 6,200 winegrape growers in Australia and WGGA can count around 3,700 of these as having a direct involvement in the organisation.

The value of winegrape sales across Australia is estimated to have been roughly \$880 million in 2012. A peak in winegrape prices earlier in the 2000's means the value of winegrape sales reached around \$1.5 billion.

WGGA embraces a mission of advancing the development and sustainability of the Australian wine sector and pursues this mission across the four dimensions of a quadruple bottom line:

- Economic - enhancing grower competitiveness, grower profitability potential and maximising contribution to the Australian and regional economies.
- Social - strengthening supply chain business ethics; responsibility to communities and employees; supporting responsible wine consumption.
- Environment - embracing a custodian role for water and ecological assets; supporting biodiversity.
- Governance - championing transparency and equity across the wine value chain and positive revenue growth for government from a progressive tax base.