



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ontario's Grape and Wine Industry Thanks the Ontario Government for Extending the VQA Wine Support Program and Renewing the COVID Recovery Funding

NIAGARA, ON, April 28, 2022 - Today the Government of Ontario committed to expanding funding for the VQA Support Program, extending the program through 2024/25, renewing the \$10M COVID Recovery Fund for wine and cider and to continue working with our industry to ensure our long-term success.

"Our winery members are grateful to the Ontario government for today's budget announcement", said Carolyn Hurst, Chair of Ontario Craft Wineries. "Renewing the COVID Recovery Fund for another year will provide much needed help and relief to Ontario wineries who have been hard hit by the economic impacts of the pandemic."

The COVID Recovery program will provide \$10M this year to Ontario wineries to help them address the challenges posed by COVID. Wineries will be able to use these funds to invest in many activities including promotion, market development and tourism recovery. We look forward to continuing to work towards a focused long-term strategy so that wineries can continue to increase capital investment in local production, expand vineyard plantings, buy more grapes, hire more Ontarians, and expand rural economic development.

"Wine Growers Ontario is thankful that the government has committed to increased funding for the VQA Wine Support Program and ensuring that the program is there for our industry for three more years", said Del Rollo, Chair of Wine Growers Ontario. "Focused, long-term funding is a huge relief to Ontario wineries."

Increased funding to Ontario's VQA Wine Support Program will enable investments in marketing, labour and capital. The multi-year commitment will also help Ontario wineries make multi-year plans for investment in promotion and marketing at the LCBO, a key partner in the future health of our industry.

"Our Made in Ontario, locally grown and produced grape and wine industry is rooted in the land and we thank Minister Thompson and Minister Bethlenfalvy for recognizing the importance of Ontario grape growers and their vineyards as the foundation of the domestic value-chain", said Matthias Oppenlaender, Chair, Grape Growers of Ontario. "We welcome the additional stability and certainty for our sector that will come from today's budget, which supports our wineries, encourages the purchase of Ontario grapes for our domestically grown wines, and has signaled the right direction for our industry for the long term".



Grape Growers
of ONTARIO



ONTARIO
CRAFT
WINERIES



**WINE
GROWERS**
ONTARIO

About Ontario's Grape and Wine Industry

Ontario's grape and wine industry supports over 18,000 jobs in the province and welcomes over 2.4 million visitors to wine country every year.

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