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MEDIA RELEASE

Australia-Canada take dispute to next level

The Winemakers' Federation of Australia (WFA) today welcomed the announcement from the Hon Steven Ciobo, Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, that Australia would progress to the next step in its World Trade Organization (WTO) dispute settlement action, against Canada's discriminatory measures affecting Australian wine.

Tony Battaglione, WFA Chief Executive explained 'the Australian Government and Minister Ciobo have continued their strong leadership and investment in industry priorities. The request to establish a panel is a vital step to ensuring meaningful outcomes are achieved and highlights this and the value of the WTO system in resolving trade disputes.'

He continued, 'Canada is an extremely important market for Australian wine, our fourth largest by volume and value (\$187 million). We need to ensure a level trading environment to allow competition for all wine producers.'

'The Australian wine industry does not oppose a helping hand for the Canadian wine producers. We believe they add diversity and colour to the global wine sector. However, such help should not discriminate against sales of imported Australian wine. The Canadian consumer deserves a better deal than that" Mr Battaglione said.

As always WFA is open to resolving issues with Canada through further negotiation, and will continue to ensure Australian wine producers' rights to trade fairly are maintained.

This is the first since 2003, where Australia has initiated formal WTO action. WFA will continue to work with the Australian Government to progress this action, and ensure outcomes are progressed for Australian wine business.

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