

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

9 May 2018

### **Australian Winemakers Welcome Budget 2018**

The Winemakers' Federation of Australia (WFA) welcomed the announcement in the 2018 Federal Budget of the appointment of six new agricultural counsellors in the Department of Agriculture.

Tony Battaglione, Chief Executive of Winemakers Federation of Australia, said 'Agricultural counsellors are vital to the development and maintenance of markets for our agricultural exports. WFA has worked closely with the network of agricultural counsellors around the world, with the most recent success being the reduction in major technical barriers to trade in Vietnam.'

'The government's emphasis on improved access for agriculture to overseas markets is most welcome. The wine sector will benefit from these initiatives as will rural and regional Australia'.

Tony Battaglione also welcomed the recognition of agriculture as a vital cog in the Australian economy and commended the government for its increased investment in biosecurity.

'The additional \$101.6 million earmarked to better protect our borders is vital to security of supply and our ability to meet growing export demand. Relief for small producers, with the Budget continuing the immediate asset write-off for small business assets under \$20,000 is also welcome'.

#### **Industry Background**

The Australian wine industry contributes (conservatively) \$40.2 billion in gross output to the Australian economy and supports over 170,000 full and part time jobs. Total annual wine production has been estimated at 1.2 billions litres with a gross value of \$5.9 billion. Wine grapes are grown in every Australian state & territory with South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria being the largest wine grape producers. Wine is Australia's fourth most valuable export after beef, wheat and wool valued at \$2.5 billion in 2017-18. Australian wine is export oriented with approximately 60 per cent of output headed for wine markets in Europe, North America and Asia.

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**MEDIA NOTE: Available for interview - WFA Chief Executive Tony Battaglione – 0413 014 807**

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