

For Immediate Release

Ontario Government Launches Ontario Wine Week Public invited to taste Ontario's finest wines June 16th

Niagara, ON – June 14, 2005 – The Provincial government has created Ontario Wine Week to recognize the world-class wines produced in Ontario.

“Ontario wines continue to win international awards and are among the best in the world,” said Bruce Crozier, MPP for Essex who introduced the Private Member’s Bill proclaiming the third week in June in each year as Ontario Wine Week. The bill was passed in the Legislature last night.

“I hope the public will help celebrate their success by supporting the products produced by Ontario’s talented wine makers and grape growers,” Crozier added.

Linda Franklin, president of the Wine Council of Ontario (WCO), said the government’s support of the Ontario wine industry has been an important part of their success and she looks forward to ongoing co-operation in the future.

As part of Ontario Wine Week, the public is invited to experience first-hand the best of VQA at the 10th anniversary of the Ontario Wine Awards consumer tasting at the Distillery district on Thursday, June 16, 2005 from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. For tickets call Sandy Kurbis at 416-398-3335, ext. 2 or email tickets@forefrontcom.com.

Tony Aspler, acclaimed wine writer and founder of the Ontario Wine Awards, said the competition was created to provide recognition for Ontario’s outstanding wines and to enhance their profile in the world market. To see a list of the gold, silver and bronze medal winning wines of the 10th Annual Ontario Wine Awards visit www.tonyaspler.com

Consumers who buy VQA wine over the next four weeks in select LCBO stores will receive a fold-out version of the 2005 Ontario Wine route map as well as an invitation for a VIP tour of an Ontario winery. Also available in LCBO stores is the new Official Guide to Ontario Wineries. The WCO has made trip planning easy with this handy guide that can also be accessed by visiting www.winesofontario.org.

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The Wine Council of Ontario is a non-profit trade association that represents Ontario's four wine regions – Niagara Peninsula, Pelee Island, Lake Erie North Shore and Prince Edward Country. These regions grow 90 per cent of the grapes used in Canadian wine production. Ontario is home to more than 90 grape wineries that produce 46 million litres of wine worth \$400 million retail sales annually. Directly and indirectly, 5,050 people are employed by the Ontario wine industry.

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