

## NEWS RELEASE

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The Australian Wine  
Research Institute

### Queensland winemaker tops the tasting class

The Australian Wine Research Institute (AWRI) announced today that Jessica Ferguson, Assistant Winemaker at Sirromet Wines, had been named the dux of the 35<sup>th</sup> Advanced Wine Assessment Course.

As dux, Jessica has been offered a place as an associate judge for the 2015 Royal Queensland Wine Show (RQWS), to be held in June – a highly sought after position due to the very limited places available.

Jessica, who is the first Queensland winemaker to be named dux of the course, said “I found the AWAC challenging, but very rewarding – with all my winemaking experience to date being at a single winery in a niche region (Granite Belt), I really welcomed the chance to develop and focus my tasting skills with less familiar styles. I’d like to thank the AWRI and the RQWS for the opportunity to be an associate judge this year.”

The selection of the dux of each course is based on statistical scores, verbal skills and group interaction.

Con Simos, Group Manager at the AWRI who is responsible for the course, commented that “The AWAC attracts a diverse group of highly skilled participants, who benefit from each other’s experience over the four-day course. Jessica demonstrated excellent tasting and discussion skills and deserves her opportunity in the national wine show system.”

The AWAC, presented by the AWRI, puts participants through a gruelling and intensive four-day program of wine sensory education and assessment. It aims to prepare potential new wine show judges and develop the sensory analysis capabilities and vocabulary of Australian wine professionals at an elite level. Twelve leading wine show judges, journalists and winemakers contribute to the delivery of the course, alongside AWRI staff.

The next two AWACs will be held in July 2015. Course details are available at:  
[http://www.awri.com.au/industry\\_support/courses-seminars-workshops/awac/](http://www.awri.com.au/industry_support/courses-seminars-workshops/awac/)

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Jessica Ferguson, Assistant Winemaker, Sirocco Wines, dux of AWAC 35

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**The Australian Wine Research Institute** is the Australian grape and wine industry's own research organisation. It supports a sustainable and successful grape and wine industry through world class research, practical solutions and knowledge transfer.