



## Media release

Monday 4 September 2017

### **New investment agreement between Wine Australia and the AWRI to underpin success of Australia's grape and wine sector**

Wine Australia and the Australian Wine Research Institute (AWRI) today entered into an agreement covering research, development and extension (RDE) activities at the AWRI from 2017–25.

This long-term partnership reflects a high level of strategic alignment between the two organisations. It provides the AWRI with greater certainty and flexibility and will allow it to plan and deliver RDE more efficiently for the benefit of levy payers and the broader community.

Key grape and wine sector priorities that will be addressed under this agreement include:

- improvements in wine production efficiency
- improved tools for the creation of target wine styles and strategies to mitigate faults
- increased understanding of wine flavour and texture how they are influenced by viticultural and winemaking inputs
- enhanced yeast and bacterial germplasm options
- improved fermentation processes
- greater understanding of terroir in an Australian context
- continued support for market access for Australian wine, and
- extension activities that support producers and facilitate awareness and adoption of research outcomes.

Following the signing of the agreement, Wine Australia CEO Andreas Clark said, 'Wine Australia and the AWRI share a common goal – to support the profitability of the Australian grape and wine sector. This agreement will see the AWRI continue to conduct RDE activities that achieve Wine Australia's strategic objectives and deliver timely, relevant and valuable outcomes for Australia's grape and wine community.'

AWRI Managing Director, Dr Dan Johnson commented that, 'This agreement is excellent news for Australian grape and wine producers. It ensures that the industry's own research organisation will continue to provide the world-class research and services that have supported growers and winemakers since 1955. The outcomes to be delivered under this agreement will directly benefit Australia's wine producers and grapegrowers, who will gain access to new knowledge and tools to enhance wine production efficiency and quality', Dr Johnson said.

#### **New RDE funding framework**

This agreement is the first of a series of bilateral partnerships between Wine Australia and major research institutions under a new RDE funding framework.

Describing the new framework, Mr Clark said, 'these bilateral partnerships will allow our research partners to be better able to make strategic investments and plan for the future, to maintain technical capabilities in key areas, and they will have greater flexibility to pursue promising research results within an overall agreed framework.'



'We want to ensure that in areas of high priority, we give researchers with proven expertise the resources to undertake research in the areas that will deliver the most benefit to the grape and wine sector. Regular interaction, reporting and review points will ensure ongoing alignment with grape and wine sector priorities.

'Each of the organisations with whom we are negotiating bilateral agreements has proven strengths in important and often complementary areas, and that is one of the defining features of Australia's grape and wine research community.

'It is not surprising that our first partnership is with the AWRI. Its expertise and commitment has been central to establishing Australia's reputation as a research leader, and this will continue.'

Under the new RDE funding framework, Wine Australia will also retain the capacity to support additional projects through competitive calls.

## **AWRI RDE plan**

Based on the new funding framework, the AWRI has developed a new RDE plan that outlines its vision for its activities from 2017 to 2025. While this plan will attract investment from a range of sources, the entire plan has been formulated to align with Wine Australia's strategic priorities, allowing the two organisations to continue to act as an integrated team and deliver the greatest value possible for Australia's levy payers.

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### **About Wine Australia**

Wine Australia supports a competitive wine sector by investing in research, development and extension (RD&E), growing domestic and international markets and protecting the reputation of Australian wine.

Wine Australia is funded by grapegrowers and winemakers through levies and user-pays charges and the Australian Government, which provides matching funding for RD&E investments.

Wine Australia is the trading name of the Australian Grape and Wine Authority, a Commonwealth statutory authority established under the *Australian Grape and Wine Authority Act 2013*.

### **About The Australian Wine Research Institute**

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.