

Wine Australia

Media Statement

25 March 2020

Wine Australia protects truth in labelling

Wine Australia has suspended the export licence of Dandelion Vineyards Pty Ltd (Dandelion) until 1 May 2020 after finding that the exporter unintentionally contravened the *Wine Australia Act 2013* (Act) by making label claims that were not supported by records kept under the Label Integrity Program (LIP), and subsequently selling and exporting wine with misleading label claims.

The LIP is a compulsory record-keeping system established under the Act. The LIP is administered by Wine Australia to ensure the truth of claims made about the vintage, variety and geographical indication (GI) of wine.

Under the Act, it is an offence to make label claims that are not supported by records kept in accordance with the LIP, or to sell wine with misleading label claims.

There are no concerns about the quality, health or safety of the products produced by Dandelion and Wine Australia is confident that all recipients of the mislabelled wine have been informed, and that there is now no wine on the market with incorrect labels.

The licence suspension reflects Wine Australia's commitment to ensuring consumers worldwide can be confident that claims made about vintage, variety and GI on Australian wine labels are truthful.

It is to Dandelion's credit that it made admissions, took steps to notify its customers of non-compliance matters, rectified known non-compliance matters, took steps to improve its record keeping practices and cooperated with Wine Australia's investigations.

To minimise the potential for regulatory action, wine producers that identify potential labelling issues should contact Wine Australia voluntarily to discuss how the issues can be addressed.

Dandelion may make an application to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal for review of Wine Australia's decision in accordance with the *Administrative Appeals Tribunal Act 1995*. The prescribed time for making an application under the Act is 28 days from notification of the licence suspension.

[Ends]

Fast facts

- Wine Australia protects the reputation of Australian wine by regulating the export of wine, conducting audits of wine producers and ensuring the truthfulness of claims made on Australian wine labels in both the domestic and export markets.
- Wine cannot be exported from Australia without an export licence issued by Wine Australia, which has the power to suspend or cancel licences when necessary.
- There is a strong culture of compliance in the Australian grape and wine sector. Wine Australia has only suspended or cancelled six licences in the past four years. To put that in context, there are more than 3000 active licence holders.
- Australian wine regulations specify that more than 85 per cent of grapes must come from a particular vintage, variety or GI for a wine to be entitled to carry that specific vintage, variety or GI claim. If there are blends of vintages, varieties or GIs, this must be indicated on the label with the dominant region named first and other regions in descending order.
- More information on labelling rules can be found at www.wineaustralia.com/labelling.
- Suspected breaches of Australian wine regulations can be reported at Wine Watch www.wineaustralia.com/wine-watch.

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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, protecting the reputation of Australian wine and administering the Export and Regional Wine Support Package.

Wine Australia is an Australian Commonwealth Government statutory authority, established under the *Wine Australia Act 2013*, and funded by grape growers and winemakers through levies and user-pays charges and the Australian Government, which provides matching funding for RD&E investments.