

**DISTRICT 1 NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE
STRUCTURAL CHANGE MEETING**

**Niagara District Secondary School
January 19, 2009
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.**

Board and Advisory Team Members in attendance: Bill George Jr., Doug Hernder, Matthias Oppenlaender, Trevor Falk, Albrecht Seeger, Bill Schenck, Jim Morrison, Bart Huisman, Steve Pohorly, Lou Puglisi

Attendance: 88

Staff in attendance: Debbie Zimmerman, Nick Hubbard, Mary Jane Combe

Grower Suggestions:

Market Access

- LCBO satellite stores – VQA wines
- Additional store options outside LCBO
- VQA stores – B.C. model – trade issues
- Quality / consumer demand
- Consumer awareness of VQA - marketing
- Equal winery licences (pre & post 1993)
- Market Access
- Greater access takes time to increase sales – increase shelf space and listings at LCBO
- LCBO – policy change – actively encourage change

Government Policy

- Content Act / domestic purchases
- Labelling – CIC
- Greenbelt – government tax break
- U.S. – government payment for agricultural land (trust)
- Trade issues – NAFTA not with Chile & Argentina
- European subsidies –level playing field
- Buy Ontario first before imports – flexibility in Wine Content Act
- Same content as other countries
- 1973 – tariffs higher – handling tax reduced from \$0.65 to 0
- Need re-investment by Government in the industry
- Federal government involvement – need to be part of the discussion -reducing import duties
- VQA inventory – to carry through potential short crops
 - Government assistance to carry inventory
- Employment created by this industry – Government has announced tax advantages for Canadian manufacturing

Governance

- Content, quality & price – difficult discussions with WCO
- Actual Ontario content/ sales (Market Share)
- Winery representation at GGO District meetings – hoping WCO is consulting their members as well
- Ontario wines competing with imports on price
- Sugar schedules alone can't solve the wine industry problems
- Grape quality needs to improve – sugar scale
- Reduced quantity of grapes over short term
- Support local economy – data
 - Market access, taxation & content & marketing
- Recession – impact on global economy and demand for icewine? – domestic sales down 9.8%
- Oregon/ B.C. models – market wine strategy
- Timeline for planting grapes/ contracts /land available from juice grapes – when will industry improve?
- Do the wineries want to buy our grapes?
- Is there a future for small growers?

{end}