
STRENGTHENING ONTARIO'S WINE AND GRAPE INDUSTRY*McQuinty Government Bolsters VQA Brand, Enhances Consumer Protection*

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NEWS

Ontario wine-drinkers will soon have access to clearer labelling on bottles of wine made of locally grown grapes.

Ontario is working with winemakers and the LCBO to ensure consumers have clear signage and labelling to help them choose between wine made of 100 per cent Ontario grapes or wine made of a blend of local and foreign grapes.

VQA wines are made of 100 per cent Ontario grapes and are a strong contributor to the province's economy.

To get more Ontarians buying great-tasting local wines, the government will increase access to VQA wines through the LCBO and renew the successful VQA support program. These initiatives are part of a comprehensive government plan to place a greater emphasis on VQA wines.

QUOTES

"VQA wines are recognized around the world for their quality and taste. We're building on this success so that our wine and grape industry continues to succeed in the years ahead."

- Ted McMeekin, Minister of Consumer Services

QUICK FACTS

- VQA wine sales at the LCBO are rising much faster than sales of blended wines and imported wines in Ontario.
- VQA wines are made from 100 per cent Ontario grapes.
- About 108 wineries in Ontario produce VQA wines.
- A large segment of Ontario's wine and grape industry is located in Ontario's Greenbelt.

LEARN MORE

Learn more about Ontario's plan for the [wine and grape](#) industry.

Read about Ontario's [VQA wines](#).

Key Facts

Ontario's wine and grape industry is an important part of our province's economy. The industry employs over 5,000 people and draws tourists to our province's wine regions. Grapes are one of the key crops grown in Ontario's award-winning Greenbelt, and it is crucial that the industry have a long-term plan that focuses on wine made from Ontario grapes.

In fall, 2008, the Ontario government asked the Grape Growers of Ontario (GGO) and Wine Council of Ontario (WCO) to come forward with a long-term plan to strengthen the grape and wine industry. This was done in conjunction with one-time funding of \$4 million to Ontario grape farmers for un-contracted grapes.

In August, the GGO and WCO submitted their proposal. They agreed that the government and LCBO could do more to support the grape and wine sector, but were unable to reach consensus on a long-term plan.

Setting A Strong Foundation For The Future

The Ontario government is now proposing a plan to build on the success of the grape and wine industry. In the long term, the success of Ontario's wine industry depends on VQA wines. In the short term, grape growers need time to transition. Ontario's proposed plan addresses both these needs by:

- Renewing the successful VQA wine support program to promote sales of VQA wines through LCBO stores across the province.
- Increasing consumer access to VQA wines at the LCBO.
- Renewing the marketing program for Ontario VQA wines.
- Ensuring clearer labelling and signage for all Ontario wines.
- Increasing the levy on blended wines sold in wine retail stores to finance supports for Ontario's growing VQA sector.
- Asking the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission to examine how grape pricing and marketing can be improved.
- Requiring a short-term increase in wineries' overall Cellared in Canada content to 40 per cent Ontario grapes, with a 25 per cent per bottle minimum.
- Providing support to grape farmers that will encourage growth of VQA-quality grapes and support a new grape varietal plan between now and 2014.
- Putting greater emphasis on VQA wines by introducing legislation to eliminate the domestic content requirement for blended wines in the *Wine Content and Labelling Act, 2000* by 2014.

These measures will focus the entire industry on producing VQA wines, which both wineries and growers have agreed is the future of the industry.

The Ministry of Consumer Services will be discussing implementation of this plan with the Grape Growers of Ontario and Wine Council of Ontario to determine an appropriate phase-in. The government intends to have a plan that is revenue-neutral, and shifts focus and supports towards VQA wines. The government is not considering the purchase of un-contracted grapes this fall.

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