

**MEDIA RELEASE
20 FEBRUARY 2009**

SMALLER NEW ZEALAND VINTAGE EXPECTED

Industry focus on ensuring quality in current environment

The 2009 New Zealand grape harvest, which will begin next week, is expected to be smaller than last year according to New Zealand Winegrowers' annual pre-vintage survey.

"Based on data received from more than 60 medium and large wineries, our expectation is that the industry will harvest around 275,000 tonnes of grapes this year" said Philip Gregan New Zealand Winegrowers' chief executive officer.

The wineries covered by the survey accounted for 91% of the 2008 grape harvest. A crop of 275,000 tonnes will be down on the record 2008 vintage of 285,000 tonnes, despite 3,000 hectares of grapes coming into production for the first time.

The forecast reduced harvest is no surprise to Mr Gregan. "Wineries and grape growers know that 2009 will be a challenging year due to the global recession. In that environment the industry is focusing more than ever on the key driver of our global success – producing world class wines. Lower vineyard yields and a reduced total crop, despite the increased producing area, are the inevitable result of that focus."

On the outlook for the vintage Mr Gregan was upbeat. "To date the weather leading into the vintage has been very positive. Most regions are reporting the grapes are in excellent condition, so at this stage the prospects for a high quality vintage appear very good."

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