

## **As we mark 50 years of Earth Day, New Zealand wine industry commits to cutting carbon**

New Zealand Winegrowers has committed to the goal of the New Zealand wine industry being net carbon-zero before 2050.

The pledge was made at the end of 2019 and is a representation of the evolving sustainability initiatives that are already taking place within the New Zealand wine industry.

These initiatives include a Climate Change Mitigation Programme to support members through the transition to a zero-carbon economy, improvements to the Sustainable Winegrowing New Zealand (SWNZ) scorecard that better enables measurement of industry progress against greenhouse gas emissions, and a Bragato Research Institute Climate Change Research Programme providing guidance on adjusting vineyard practices in response to our changing climate.

The importance of this commitment is highlighted as we celebrate Earth Day today, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, where the theme for 2020 is climate action.

“New Zealand wines are known around the world for their unique quality, and that distinctiveness reflects the places where the grapes are grown and how the wine is made,” said Philip Gregan, CEO of New Zealand Winegrowers.

“New Zealand wineries and growers have a vital interest in protecting and sustaining our vineyards for future generations, and the commitment to carbon neutrality prior to the New Zealand 2050 regulatory deadline, reflects this” said Gregan.

The Earth Day movement began in the early 1970s, just as Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc was being discovered in New Zealand. The growth of the world’s awareness of our wines, and the growing alarm about the impacts of climate change, were like two parallel lines in the wine industry’s consciousness.

By the mid-1990s, the world-leading sustainability programme Sustainable Winegrowing New Zealand (SWNZ) was launched. Since its inception, SWNZ has had to go where there is no blueprint, and then re-invent and redefine its role in how we measure and report our impacts on the planet. Today, 98% of New Zealand’s vineyard producing area is SWNZ certified, with 7% also operating under recognised certified organic programmes.

The focus on sustainability has always been an integral part of the New Zealand wine industry. The belief is held that nature’s resources belong to the earth, and people are welcome to use these resources, as long as they do so respectfully. This custodial responsibility is preserved in the Māori concept of kaitiakitanga, meaning guardianship and protection. For New Zealand’s wine industry, it represents a commitment to protect the places that make our famous wines.

Over the next few days, New Zealand Winegrowers will be sharing stories from New Zealand wineries about the steps they are already taking to reduce their environmental footprint. Make sure to follow @nzwinegrowers to see these and more.



-ENDS-

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*Editor's note:*

- **Zero Carbon Act**

The recently passed Zero Carbon Act is designed to progress the global effort under the Paris Agreement, which seeks to limit average temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels by 2050. The Act establishes the legislative framework for setting clear emissions reduction targets for all of New Zealand to reach in 2050 and beyond.

- See more about New Zealand Winegrowers Sustainability focus on Climate Change here

<https://www.nzwine.com/en/sustainability/focus-areas/climate/>

- New Zealand wine is exported to more than 100 countries and is New Zealand's sixth largest export good. Exports are currently at \$1.9 billion by value.