



For immediate release
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Better protection for New Zealand wine regions is on the way

The identity of 18 New Zealand wine regions can now be better protected thanks to the New Zealand Geographical Indications (Wine and Spirits) Registration Act, which came into force today.

“The Geographical Indications (Wine and Spirits) Registration Act is a significant advance for the New Zealand wine industry,” said New Zealand Winegrowers Acting CEO, Jeffrey Clarke. “Our ‘Geographical Indications’ (GIs) - the names and places where our wines come from - are at the very heart of the New Zealand wine story and this new law provides an additional level of protection for them.”

The Geographical Indications (Wine and Spirits) Registration Act formally recognises the collective intellectual property of a wine region by allowing for registration of the region’s name as a GI. This ensures that the name is reserved only for wine from that region. Importantly, registration will also give the region’s winegrowers a greater ability to protect those GI names from misuse overseas.

“We are very pleased to have 18 priority GI applications filed just after midnight on the day the GI Act came into force. The registration of these GIs will provide a solid platform for New Zealand wine producers to promote our wines and regions in international markets and ensure investment in our regional identities are better protected.”

New Zealand wine exports are valued at \$1.66 billion for the year to the end of June 2017. The industry is working towards a goal of \$2 billion of exports in 2020.

-ENDS-

Editor’s notes:

The GIs for which applications have been filed are:

- Northland
- Auckland
- Matakana
- Kumeu
- Waiheke Island
- Gisborne
- Hawke’s Bay
- Central Hawke’s Bay
- Wairarapa
- Gladstone
- Martinborough
- Nelson
- Marlborough
- Canterbury
- North Canterbury

- Waipara Valley
- Waitaki Valley North Otago
- Central Otago

From here, the process to registration is as follows:

- The Intellectual Property Office of New Zealand (IPONZ) will now review each GI application to see whether it meets the legal requirements, and decide whether or not the GI is accepted. That initial review may take up to three months.
- If the GI application is accepted, IPONZ will advertise the acceptance of the GI in *the Journal of IPONZ*. This begins a further 3-month period in which any person may oppose the application. This opposition period can be extended. If no objection is raised, the GI will be registered.
- If the GI application is not accepted, the applicant wine region will be sent a “compliance report” explaining why the application does not meet the requirements, and giving at least 6 months to respond.

More detail on the registration process can be found at: www.iponz.govt.nz/about-ip/geographical-indications/examination-process/

For further information contact:

Jeffrey Clarke

Acting CEO

New Zealand Winegrowers

021 477 428

jeffrey@nzwine.com