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MEDIA RELEASE

Grape and wine industry left to wither on the vine as Federal Budget fails to deliver

Australian Grape & Wine condemns the lack of assistance for grape growers and winemakers in the Albanese Government's Budget, calling it a "missed opportunity" that ignores industry's pleas for urgent support.

"This Budget provides no relief for the serious challenges facing growers and winemakers in regional communities across much of Australia," stated CEO Lee McLean. "The industry's struggles are not the result of normal market fluctuations, but stem from factors outside the industry's control, including the loss of our largest export market in 2020."

McLean criticised the omission of the industry's modest [pre-Budget submission](#) requests, including a \$30 million sustainability package, \$36 million for export assistance, and \$20 million for domestic wine tourism.

"We made it crystal clear – many in regional wine communities across Australia are on their knees and need urgent government action to stop a bad situation from becoming a catastrophe," McLean stated. "However, instead of support, all we got was a new tax in the form of the deeply flawed Biosecurity Protection Levy."

"While China's decision to lift import duties is positive, it will simply not resolve the issues facing growers and winemakers" McLean stated. "The economic shock experienced by our industry has led to unsustainable prices for grapes, an oversupply of wine, and increasing economic disadvantage in regional Australia."

"It's a damning indictment of just how dire the situation is when the refund on an empty wine bottle is worth more than what many of our growers receive for the grapes that fill it" said Mr McLean.

"It's disappointing that despite the sector's \$45.5 billion economic contribution, the government has turned a blind eye to our pleas for assistance," said McLean. "We call on them to reconsider this missed opportunity."

Australian Grape & Wine is committed to fighting for growers, winemakers and regional communities. "We will not let this go," said Mr McLean. "This deliberate failure to help families in regional Australia jeopardises the viability of entire communities, and without help it is only going to get worse."

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About Australian Grape and Wine Inc

Australian Grape and Wine Inc is the national association of grape and wine producers. We address issues across the supply-chain that impact on the profitability and sustainability of the sector. We lead and advocate public policy that enhances the ability to responsibly produce, promote and enjoy Australian wine in moderation.

Australian Grape & Wine is recognised as a representative organisation for winegrape and wine producers under the Wine Australia Act 2013, and is incorporated under the SA Associations Incorporation Act 1985. We work in partnership with the Australian Government to develop and implement policy that is in the best interests of winegrape growers and winemakers across Australia.