



## FACT SHEET

WIETA has been in existence for over a decade. It is a unique multi-stakeholder, non-profit voluntary organisation, which actively promotes ethical trade in the wine industry value chain through training, technical assessment and audits to assess members' compliance with its code of good practice. Stakeholders include producers, retailers, trade unions, non-governmental organisations and the government.

The WIETA code of good practice is premised on the base code of the International Labour Conventions' Ethical Trading Initiative and also incorporates South African labour legislation. It precludes the use of child labour, asserts that employment should be freely chosen, and that all employees should have the right to a healthy and safe working environment. Among the conditions it sets are that workers should have the right to freedom of association, a living wage and to be protected from unfair discrimination. Worker housing and tenure security rights should also be respected.

Currently, 79 cellars and farms are WIETA accredited. In the future, the whole supply chain, ie not just the cellars but all the producers and suppliers, will be audited. The South African wine industry's campaign for ethical best practice is unique in the world, and brand owners, farmers, trade unions and NGOs are standing together behind this drive to ensure that everyone in the production chain follows good labour practices.

There are just over 3 500 primary producers, and 43% of these are small, mixed farms which supply less than 100 tons of wine grapes annually. A total of 573 cellars crush grapes. This translates into a huge challenge. Some of the big producers, however, have been working with their producers for a while to ensure that they can be accredited, and have indicated that they will be writing into their 2013 or 2014 contracts that all farms supplying them must be WIETA accredited. WIETA is gearing up with trainers and auditors to meet this challenge, and it is envisaged that by the end of 2014, 60% of South Africa's winegrowers will be accredited.

International demand has played an important part in driving this process, and the monopolies and supermarkets have been hugely supportive, with foreign retailers offering formal commitment to the initiative. "Tesco is in full support of the drive to establish WIETA across the South African wine industry and ensure good labour practice throughout. It is increasingly important for industries to prove that they are operating ethically and striving to improve conditions for workers. The WIETA initiative and the new seal are a credible way to achieve this," says product development manager Graham Nash.

*The WIETA website has been updated and contains a wealth of useful information – visit [www.wieta.org.za](http://www.wieta.org.za).*

### **THE NEW WIETA SEAL**

The new ethical seal will testify to reasonable working conditions, based on rigorous and closely monitored qualification criteria. This is believed to be a world-first among wine-producing countries. The seal will be used either on the front or back labels, or placed on the neck alongside the sustainability seal.



This seal is a parallel effort to Fair Trade or Fair for Life, which are also recognised as ethical certifications. WIETA will consider recognising ethical, health and safety audits by other bodies. However, the WIETA standards and audit methodology will not change.

### **HOW DO PRODUCERS GET THE SEAL?**

Only those brand owners who meet the criteria set by WIETA will be entitled to use the seal on their wines. Brand owners will be required to enter an annually renewable, legally binding agreement with WIETA. To ensure total traceability, brand owners will have to identify all their suppliers. At least 60% of these suppliers will have to be WIETA accredited, while the other 40% will have to demonstrate that they are preparing themselves for accreditation.

### **TIMEFRAME**

The fast-tracking ethical programme will be implemented in three phases, starting with the simultaneous training of workers, owners and management in labour law and the WIETA code of fair trading principles. All training manuals will be supplied free of charge by WIETA. After the initial training phase, all producers will be required to complete assessment forms to determine their level of compliance and will be given further support from WIETA in taking the necessary steps to address gaps. In the final stage of the process, producers will be required to pass a full WIETA audit, involving on-site inspections.

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### **LONG-TERM VISION**

The ultimate goal is to have one seal, issued by the Wine and Spirit Board, that certifies the Wine of Origin information (vintage, date, variety), the environmental sustainability (IPW) and the ethical treatment of workers (WIETA).