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Languedoc AOCs Finalize a New Designation Structure Designed to Aid Consumers and Winegrowers

NARBONNE, France, Dec. 13, 2010 /PRNewswire/ -- New changes to the designation structure in the Languedoc have been confirmed by the General Assembly of the CIVL (Conseil Interprofessionnel des Vins du Languedoc) in order to clarify and simplify the values offered to consumers across all 29 different Languedoc AOCs. Under this new structure, all AOC wines will be divided into three main categories: AOC Languedoc, Grand Vin du Languedoc and Grand Cru du Languedoc. The categories were created based on price as well as strict yield controls and other winegrowing measures designed to help winegrowers better anticipate market conditions and economic fluctuations from year to year. As of 2011, the new terms of "Grand Vin du Languedoc" and "Cru du Languedoc" will appear on labels alongside the name of the specific AOC in which the wine is made. The CIVL believes the new designations will help wine consumers and will also regulate pricing, keeping the supply and demand for these wines in a healthy balance.

"The new hierarchy plays a huge part in designing the future of the Languedoc for the next 15 years," says Jerome Villaret, Executive Officer of the CIVL. "By more clearly defining Languedoc's AOC wines across a variety of price points and production wine lovers will be able to find the most appropriate Languedoc AOC wines for any occasion."

At the base level are wines labeled "AOC Languedoc", a designation first introduced in 2007 which forms the foundation for the new organizational system. From the beginning, wines bearing the AOC Languedoc designation have been distinguished by their strong quality to price ratio and represent table wines perfect for everyday drinking. In terms of quantity, this level represents about 30% of total production of AOC wines from Languedoc.

At the heart of the range, 60% of the region's total AOC production, are the "Grand Vins" of Languedoc. These are the wines from the AOCs of Minervois, Corbieres, Saint Chinian, Malpere, Faugeres, Cabardes, all sweet Muscats, the sparkling wines of Limoux and Picpoul de Pinet. These wines retail at slightly higher price points and are defined by their ability to express the distinguishing characteristics of the AOC from which they come.

Finally, at the summit, are the "Grand Cru" of Languedoc. Those approved as Grand Cru on include the AOCs of Minervois La Liviniere, Corbieres Boutenac, Saint Chinian Roquebrun, Saint Chinian Berlou, Terrasses du Larzac, Gres de Montpellier, Pic Saint Loup, Pezenas, La Clape and the still white wines of Limoux. These AOC wines come from more concentrated demarcated areas and are often produced in more limited quantities, making them the very top wines that the Languedoc has to offer. This level represents only 10% of the total number of wines.

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