



AUSTRALIAN VINTAGE LTD

Winemaker Crowned World's Best, Again

- McGuigan Wines Wins 2011 International Winemaker of the Year at International Wine & Spirits Competition in London -

Multi-award winning wine producer **McGuigan Wines** has been hailed as the '**world's best winemaker**' for the second time in three years by the prestigious International Wine and Spirit Competition in London. Having already received the same award in 2009, **McGuigan Wines** was named **International Winemaker of the Year** as well as **Australian Producer of the Year** at the awards ceremony on 16th November.

Central to the success was the highly decorated **McGuigan Bin 9000 Semillon**, with the 2006 vintage taking Gold and 'Best in Class' as well as being awarded the highly coveted **International Semillon Trophy** – an award more commonly known as the 'World's Best Semillon.' The 1997, 2003, 2004 and 2005 vintages of the Bin 9000 Semillon also won Gold and 'Best in Class' awards.

Established in 1992, **McGuigan Wines** is owned by Australian Vintage Ltd (AVL), one of Australia's largest wine producers and the second largest vineyard operator in Australia with over 2,700 hectares across key winemaking regions.

A publicly listed company, AVL crushed over 147,000t in FY11 – approximately 10% of Australia's total annual production, and is active in key export markets including the UK, Ireland, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Canada, USA and China. On the strength of a string of recent international award wins, AVL has grown branded bottle sales across export markets by 4% year-on-year.

On being named the world's best winemaker, AVL CEO Neil McGuigan said: "What an achievement. For McGuigan Wines to have won International Winemaker of the Year once is phenomenal, but to be recognised by our industry peers as International Winemaker of the Year twice in just three years is mind blowing. It's a truly once in a lifetime event".

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McGuigan continues: "It's a great boost for the Australian industry – there is no doubt that the industry as a whole is under pressure with the strong dollar and continuing global economic uncertainty. That said AVL grew profitability in FY11 despite this ongoing turmoil in industry and market fundamentals. Our full year results for FY11 show EBIT up 24% to \$29.3M and net profit after significant items \$6.6M. We're moving in the right direction, and it is international recognition such as this that vindicates our overriding philosophy of making the wine the hero."

The backbone of the success was built on **McGuigan Wines** performance across the competition, winning an impressive 34 medals from a total of 37 entries – an unrivalled success rate of 91.9%. In addition to the International Semillon Trophy the winery received 5 Gold, 21 Silver and 8 bronze medals including 11 'Best in Class' awards.

McGuigan adds: "To put this in perspective, we won the same number of Gold 'Best in Class' awards as the entire German industry, and the entire Chilean industry; and more than the sum total of Portuguese table wines – an amazing achievement for a single producer."

"Our 2011 results outshone the previous performance in 2009 when we were also awarded International Winemaker of the Year and Australian Producer of the Year. What's most pleasing about our results in 2011 is that we've kept on improving, not rested on our laurels and have continued to drive quality and innovation across our portfolio."

Globally, **McGuigan Wines** has grown by 22% in volume and 11% in value in the 12 months to September 2011 and is the fastest growing global wine brand in the UK top 15 with 62% growth in the past 12 months and annual sales of £65M. **McGuigan Wines** is the number one selling Australian wine in Ireland, and the second largest overall wine brand in Ireland, whilst on the domestic front sales totaled \$72M in FY11. McGuigan Black Label Red is the number one selling branded bottled red wine in Australia.

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Founded in 1969 the International Wine and Spirit Competition is the premier competition of its kind in the world, attracting entries from over 80 countries across the globe.

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Note to Editors

In addition to **McGuigan Wines**, Australian Vintage Ltd is the producer of a range of award-winning brands including **Tempus Two**, **Nepenthe**, **Yaldara** and **Miranda**.

For all media enquiries, interviews, images and samples, please contact The Mint Partners
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