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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Idaho Wine Industry creates a bold new plan for the future

Idaho Wines has created a Strategic Plan to move the Idaho Wine industry forward!

To begin with, you may need a little history about Idaho wine to this day. The Idaho Wine Industry has been a vibrant and growing community for more than 100 years in the Pacific Northwest region of the United States of America. There are currently 38 wineries (7 new within the past 6 months) and 1600 acres of premium *Vitis Vinifera* Wine grape vineyards in the state. We are also home to a vivacious artisanal food industry that produces high quality cheeses, meats, breads, vegetables, fruits, and more. With the ideal growing conditions offered in Idaho, many growers are producing amazing varieties of wine that are continually being recognized, acknowledged, and awarded.

In order to help the Wine Industry here in Idaho, The Idaho Wine Commission (IWC) recently worked with Steve Burns, former executive director of the Washington Wine Commission, to create a strategic plan that will enable Idaho Wines to continually grow throughout the next ten years. According to Burns, "Idaho Wine 2020 is a long-term strategic plan designed to create a positive future for the wine industry in the state of Idaho". The plan is designed to provide a detailed focus and long-run vision to the Idaho Wine Commissions marketing program and light the way to the strategic long-term development of the wine business in Idaho. Idaho Wine 2020 will focus on a qualitative, economic, and sustainability perspective.

A new mission statement was created for the IWC as well: "The Idaho Wine Commission (IWC) is the unifying organization for the vintners and wine grape growers of the Gem State. The IWC is a marketing, promotions and educational organization dedicated to improving the business climate for its members". In order to be successful, we also have to find who were targeting, we determined we need to focus on the following groups: wine oriented media, lifestyle oriented media, the wine trade, and legislators/educators. Since the IWC's fiscal year runs from July 1- June 30, and we're almost through this years, there have been many plans set forth for the rest of this year, continuing into the next, and looking forward all the way up to 2020.

There are many things that need to be developed in order to drive consumer traffic into the tasting rooms in the area. Those include the new Idaho Wine Country tour brochure, Savor Idaho event, Idaho Wine month, an updated Idaho Wines website, Logo “branding”, an Idaho AVA map, and finally, an Idaho fact sheet. The new tour brochures were recently printed in February of this year and are being distributed throughout the state. These brochures serve to provide basic information on Idaho Wine Country to entice consumers to visit local tasting rooms and enjoy what they have to offer. “This project alone will increase the positive awareness about Idaho wine amongst wine trade, media and consumers exponentially”, says Burns.

Next, we have to update the Idaho Wines website, make it more appealing and attractive to communicate our marketing messages through the Internet. The website will provide a one-stop information source for wine tourists, wine writes, restaurateurs, and retailers about the wines of Idaho. The site is set to be up and running by September 1 of this year in order to garner the wine tourists during harvest. A “branding” and creation of a new logo is also in store, making sure everything has the same logo placed on it because that’s often the first thing a consumer notices. The new logo will hopefully be ready with the website. An Idaho AVA map will be a necessary and vital tool for visitors and tourists in order to easily locate tasting rooms. A simple, one page fact sheet on Idaho wines and the Idaho Wine industry that states key facts.

In 2010, the IWC will “host” the annual Wine America meeting, USA’s only national wine trade association. Steve Burns believes this will “bring a substantial number of wine industry opinion leaders to Idaho and allow us to showcase the food, wine and tourism options that exist”. The Idaho Wine 2020 strategic plan focuses immensely on media opinion leaders and singles them out as the #1 target audience for commission programs. Therefore, we will be hosting the first significant media tour during harvest of 2009, showcasing the many non-wine travel options that make Idaho a unique and special place as well. And finally, before 2010, we will be funding and executing a “benchmark economic impact study [that] will enhance all aspects of the commissions marketing, public relations and educational efforts” (Burns).

From 2010-2020, the industry is continually going to grow exponentially both in terms of wineries and vineyard acreage. In order to grow with the industry, IWC will have a Savor Idaho event in San Francisco, Chicago, New York City, Tokyo, London, and Frankfurt. In addition, an in state Idaho-only charity wine auction, host wine and lifestyle media from across the USA as well as an international wine symposium.

As you can see, the Idaho Wine Commission has a lot planned for the next 10+ years. We hope that with these plans set forth, we will be able to follow them, achieve great things, and eventually gain our way to the top even in these tough economic hard times. The wine industry is continually growing and we want to show the world what Idaho has to offer, stay tuned at www.idahowines.org to learn more information and see what we are doing as the months go by.