

## Erwin Wiens Selected as 2023 Grape King

**St. Catharines, ON (September 12, 2022)** — Grape Growers of Ontario and Farm Credit Canada are pleased to announce that Niagara-on-the-Lake grape grower Erwin Wiens has been chosen by his peers as the 2023 Grape King (*pictured – credit Denis Cahill*).



“We are delighted that Erwin Wiens has been selected as 2023 Grape King. Erwin will be a wonderful ambassador for the Ontario grape and wine industry,” says Grape Growers of Ontario Chair, Matthias Oppenlaender. “The annual crowning of the Grape King is a time honoured tradition that began in 1956 to recognize exemplary vineyard management and knowledge of the industry,” says Debbie Zimmerman, CEO of the Grape Growers of Ontario.

“FCC is pleased to support the tradition of naming an Ontario Grape King and with it, celebrating the best in the business like this year’s recipient, Erwin Wiens. Erwin exemplifies all the best qualities of Ontario grape growers. He contributes to the innovation, product quality, shared knowledge and enhanced access to consumers that ensures the long-term success of this valuable agricultural sector.” said George Klosler, Senior District Director, Farm Credit Canada. “Erwin is very deserving of being named Ontario’s Grape King and we wish him continued success.”

The Grape King carries the distinction of being nominated by their peers and selected by our industry judges who visit each of the nominated vineyards. The Grape King serves as a representative for Ontario’s grape and wine industry at events across the country, starting with the Invitational Grape Stomp on September 17<sup>th</sup> in Montebello Park and in the annual Grande Parade on September 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Niagara Grape and Wine Festival.

Erwin was raised in a fruit farming family. He attended Carleton University for Criminal Law where he met his wife, Dorothy. They raised four accomplished daughters, Brianna, MacKenzie, Taylor and Jessica and have a son-in-law Daniel. Today, Erwin and Dorothy tend to a thriving 120-acre vineyard, cultivating a range of grapes including Chardonnay, Riesling, Pinot Gris and Merlot.

Erwin is a valuable member of the Board of Directors of the Grape Growers of Ontario since 2015, where he now presides as the Chair of their Sustainability Committee. Furthermore, Erwin is Chair of the Niagara Regional Irrigation Committee and a member of both the Niagara-on-the-Lake Irrigation Committee and the Agricultural Committee.

Following a distinguished 31-year career in law enforcement, Erwin retired from the Hamilton Police Service. Since 2018, Erwin has been an integral member of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Town Council, where he currently holds the esteemed position of Deputy Lord Mayor. In this role, Erwin also lends his expertise as a Board member on the Niagara Parks Commission and the Niagara District Airport Commission.

Erwin and Dorothy are proud members of the Niagara Lions Club, where Erwin serves as President. Their devotion to the community also extends to their membership at the Cornerstone Community Church.

Erwin Wiens will be officially installed as the 66<sup>th</sup> Grape King in his vineyard located at 800 Concession 1 in Niagara-on-the-Lake on Wednesday, September 13<sup>th</sup> following the Grape Growers of Ontario's annual Celebrity Luncheon. This year, given the challenges many in our community are facing, Grape Growers of Ontario together with Lakeview Vineyard Equipment and Farm Credit Canada will be making a donation to Community Care.

Details and directions can be found at [www.grapegrowersofontario.com](http://www.grapegrowersofontario.com) or by calling 905-688-0990 ext 224.

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### **About the Grape Growers of Ontario**

The Grape Growers of Ontario is the official organization that represents all of Ontario's 500 farm families on 18,000 acres in the province's three viticulture areas: Niagara Peninsula, Lake Erie North Shore and Prince Edward County, and emerging wine regions. Follow Grape Growers of Ontario on Twitter and Instagram [@Grapegrowersont](https://twitter.com/Grapegrowersont), like us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/Grapegrowersont) and get more information at [grapegrowersofontario.com](http://grapegrowersofontario.com).

### **About Farm Credit Canada**

FCC is Canada's leading agriculture and food lender, with a healthy loan portfolio of more than \$44 billion. Our employees are dedicated to the future of Canadian agriculture and food. We provide flexible, competitively priced financing, management software, information and knowledge specifically designed for the agriculture and food industry. As a self-sustaining Crown corporation, we provide an appropriate return to our shareholder, and reinvest our profits back into the industry and communities we serve. For more information, visit [fcc.ca](http://fcc.ca).

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