

May 22, 2025

The Honourable Doug Ford  
Premier of Ontario  
Legislative Building  
1 Queen's Park  
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1  
[doug.fordco@pc.ola.org](mailto:doug.fordco@pc.ola.org)  
[premier@ontario.ca](mailto:premier@ontario.ca)

Dear Premier Ford:

On behalf of the Grape Growers of Ontario (GGO), I want to thank you and the Ontario government for your continued support of the grape and wine industry, as highlighted in the recent 2025 budget announcement. These commitments underscore the government's dedication to our 500 grape-growing families across Ontario, and the long-term sustainability of our sector.

We commend the government's directive to the LCBO to prioritize Ontario-made products through enhanced support programs, boosting Ontario's economy. We also appreciate the measures taken to increase grape purchase for Ontario grape growers, including the:

- **New Ontario Grape Support Program** aimed at increasing the number of Ontario grapes in bottles of wine. Including: At full implementation, this program is anticipated to double, on average, the percentage of Ontario grapes in blended wine, leading to the purchase of thousands of additional tonnes of Ontario grapes from grape farmers.
- **Extension of the VQA Support program** until 2029-30, and enhancements of the program eligibility to include ice wines, as well as VQA wine sold in convenience stores and on-site winery retail stores.
- **Increase to Ontario's Risk Management Program (RMP)** funding to support farmers in responding to market challenges while boosting their long-term business confidence and competitiveness.

Our growers are committed to ensuring a sustainable and competitive future for Ontario-grown grape products and we look forward to productive collaboration with both the government and industry partners as we initialize these important supports.

We applaud the government's continued investment in Ontario's grape and wine sector and recognizing its vital role in the province's economy. We look forward to working together with you to ensure its continued growth and success.

### ***Rooted in Ontario***

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# Grape Growers of ONTARIO

Sincerely,

Matthais Oppenlaender,  
Chair, Grape Growers of Ontario

Kevin Watson,  
Vice Chair, Grape Growers of Ontario

Debbie Zimmerman,  
CEO, Grape Growers of Ontario

Cc: Patrick Sackville, Chief of Staff, Office of the Premier  
Rahul Bedi, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Premier

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