

**24 FEBRUARY 2009 - PRESS RELEASE
FURTHER DECREASE IN 2009 WINE GRAPE HARVEST**

The 2009 wine grape harvest should amount to 1 300 202 tons, according to industry estimates (producer cellars and viticultural consultants) on 16 February 2009. This is 21 675 tons (1,6 per cent) smaller than the January 2009 estimate, and 8,5 per cent smaller than the 2008 record harvest. The 2009 wine crop, including juice and concentrate for non-alcoholic purposes, wine for brandy and distilling wine, is expected to amount to 1 005,4 million litres, calculated at an average recovery of 773 litres per ton of grapes. This is respectively 16,6 and 120,4 million litres less than the January 2009 estimate and the 2008 harvest.

The biggest decrease, compared to 2008, is expected in the Orange River (36 per cent) which is mainly attributed to the very low yields of Sultana vineyards. With the exception of Klein Karoo, smaller harvests are expected in all the other districts. The berries generally appear to be smaller and bunches looser than normal. Grape flavours are exceptional with high acids and the grapes are generally very healthy. A very good quality year is expected. A heatwave at the end of the first week in February is causing accelerated ripening of certain cultivars and this may put pressure on cellar capacity.

Domestic sales of natural wine for 2008 indicate that the market is stagnant at 312 million litres. On the other hand exports of natural wine increased by 31,7 per cent in 2008. Exports of bulk wine increased by 54,8 per cent. Brandy sales show a 3,6 per cent decrease over the same period.

Stock levels at producer and private cellars on 31 December 2009 are expected to decrease to 282,5 million litres, compared to 365,4 million litres on 31 December 2008.

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