



# The Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP

## Minister for Primary Industries

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### MEDIA RELEASE

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Friday 31 October 2014

#### **CHRIS BARNES WINS TOP NSW WINE AWARD**

Hunter Valley wine industry leader Chris Barnes AM has today been announced as the winner of the prestigious 2014 Graham Gregory Award by NSW Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson.

Ms Hodgkinson presented the award to Mr Barnes at the NSW Wine Industry Awards lunch in Sydney in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the NSW wine industry.

“The Graham Gregory Award was established to acknowledge individual contribution to the NSW wine industry, which makes Chris Barnes a very worthy recipient,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

“Mr Barnes is widely recognised by his peers as the driving force behind the formation of the NSW Wine Industry Association and a fearless advocate for the interests of winemakers and grape growers in NSW.

“He has worked tirelessly as an industry advocate during his 40-year involvement with the NSW wine industry, holding a range of industry positions including former president of the NSW Wine Industry Association from 1999 to 2005.

“The Association’s current standing and its strength of purpose is in no small part due to Mr Barnes’ vision, leadership and commitment to the industry.”

Mr Barnes, who has lived in the Hunter since starting as the manager of Saxonvale Wines in 1970, served on the NSW Wine Industry Association's executive for 15 years as both president and more recently vice-president, and 10 years as chairman of the licensing sub-committee.

He also served a record eight years as president of the Hunter Valley Vineyard Association and has represented the Hunter Valley wine industry on a number of State and Commonwealth committees.

In 2003 Mr Barnes was named a Member (AM) of The Order of Australia for his services to the NSW wine industry.

The Graham Gregory Award is named after the former NSW Agriculture Deputy Director-General, Graham Gregory, who is regarded as a significant pioneer of the NSW industry.

The NSW wine industry contributes more than \$500 million to the economy, and remains a significant player on the national scene, representing about 35 per cent of Australian wine produced.