

Submission
No 37

INQUIRY INTO WINE GRAPE MARKET AND PRICES

Name: Name suppressed

Date received: 29/09/2010

Parts of this submission have been omitted at the request of the author.

Partially Confidential

"CONFIDENTIAL"

Date: - 23 September 2010.

**The Director – Standing Committee on State Development.
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney N.S.W 2000.**

I am writing in regard about the hardship I am facing as a wine grape grower in the Griffith area, with pricing and security in the industry. I am the third generation farmer in my family and I have been a grape grower for the past fifteen years.

Fifteen years ago to be a farmer it was a life style thing, ten years ago it started to become a business where you had to start crunching numbers to get ahead, today we are flat out trying to keep our heads above water. In the last 15 years the Wine Grapes Marketing Board has lost its powers to dictate fair pricing for the farmers. There is now nothing to stop the wineries doing what they want to use growers which doesn't encourage future generations to the industry.

Some wineries were offering \$100 for chardonnay whilst others were offering \$350 per ton for the same variety. WHY? The \$100 per ton grapes goes on the same open market as the one for \$350 to me that is profiteering on a grade scale. Who or what regulates them, as the wineries get bigger financially and their personal wealth gets more as individuals in their business, we as farmers is getting poorer.

For Vintage of 2007-2008 after paying bills for (fuel, chemical, picking costs, pruning etc) I got to keep 18.75% of my profit for myself which works out to be on a 40 hour per week \$4.73 per hour,

How can I put money aside for my family's future or a better quality of life. I'm not alone other farmers are sitting next to me on the same sinking ship.

As a grower we need to have a industry code of conduct in place and a industry body (maybe the wine grapes marketing board) to be our voice for the farmers for a better future, fairer pricing and a better industry for generations to come. We need it now before it is too late and that farmers including myself walk away from farming forever.

If you wish to contact or to discuss this in person with me feel free to do so.

Thank you.