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LEADING U.S., EUROPEAN WINE REGIONS SIGN DECLARATION  
TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE LOCATION

*Napa, Oregon and Washington Joined by Champagne, Port and Sherry Regions*

**Napa, CA** – Producers of Champagne, Port and Sherry joined winemakers from Napa Valley, Oregon, and Washington State in signing a declaration of joint principles stating the importance of location to wine and the need to protect place names. This unprecedented meeting marks the beginning of a broader, collaborative effort on the part of these trade associations focusing on educating consumers about the importance of wine origin and the practice of clear and accurate labeling.

This effort comes at a time when there is growing concern about mislabeling and the lack of legal protection for place names in the United States. In fact, last month at Vinexpo, the world's largest international wine and spirits exhibition, wine leaders from around the world signed on in support of a declaration produced by the Napa Valley Vintners (NVV) that addresses this issue in very clear and simple terms.

"Winemakers worldwide know that when it comes to wine, location matters," said Joel Aiken, president of the NVV board of directors. "Our goal for this initiative is simple – In Europe most people are familiar with the concept of "terroir", but in the U.S. this concept is not part of the vernacular. We have joined together as winemakers to help promote a broader public awareness of why place is important to wine, and why the names of the places where great wines are produced need to be used accurately."

In the declaration, the signatories state that: "Wine, more than any other beverage, is valued based on its association to its place of origin – and with good reason. The names of these places are familiar, and synonymous with quality." The declaration goes on to say that, "The geographic place names of wine regions are the sole birthright of the grapes that are grown there, and when these names appear on wines that do not contain fruit from that region, they lose their integrity and their relevance, becoming merely words."

"Regardless of what side of the Atlantic you come from, we all agree that great wine is made in unique places all over the world and that these unique place names must be protected. A failure to do so does nothing but diminish the credibility of our industry as a whole," said Bruno Paillard, representing the Comité Interprofessionnel du Vin de Champagne (CIVC). "Just as it doesn't make sense for Florida oranges to come from New Mexico or Idaho potatoes from Georgia, a wine bearing the name of Napa Valley or Champagne should not come from China. We are committed to educating consumers about the importance of place and ending the use of misleading labels."

The joint declaration signed in Napa was crafted and agreed to by the NVV and winemakers from Oregon and Washington State, with an open-ended invitation for other wine regions to sign on at any time. By joining in the U.S. effort, Champagne (represented by CIVC), Port (represented by IVDP) and Sherry (represented by Fedejerez) acknowledge the importance of an international movement to ensure that premium winemaking location names are maintained and protected.

“Port is the first demarcated and regulated wine region in the world. Our hundreds of years of history have taught us that location is integral to the grapes we grow and the wine we make,” said George Sandeman, President of the Port Shippers Association (AEVP). “We are pleased to join these other wine making regions in pledging to work together to ensure more consumers understand the impact that location has on wines.”

“While Washington State is a relatively young and rapidly growing wine region, the concept of location is an issue we have embraced for quite some time. For us there is no greater service we can provide to consumers than authenticity,” says Jamie Peha, Market Director, Washington Wine Commission. “But what is exciting about today is we have a chance to join together with other wine growing regions to take that message on to the world stage.”

As part of today’s event, Champagne, Port and Sherry also announced plans to open the Center for Wine Origins later this year. The organization will be dedicated to educating U.S. consumers and policymakers about the importance of location and accurate labeling. It will be a central part of the European participation in the name protection campaign launched today.

“Today marks an important milestone for the wine world. While we each represent different, unique regions around the world we are all united in one fundamental belief – location matters,” said Bosco Torremocha, Vice Presidente, Consejo Regulador de las DD.OO Jerez-Xeres-Sherry. “While this is a principle for which Sherry has long been an advocate, the fact that today we are joining hands with so many others truly marks an historic day.”

“Oregon’s wine industry has long recognized the critical importance of ‘place’,” adds Harry Peterson-Nedry, chair of the Oregon Wine Advocacy Council Advocacy Committee. “Since 1977 Oregon wine labels have not allowed unauthentic place names or semi-generic geographical indicators to be used. We heartily support worldwide recognition of accurate place identity as a basic tool for the consumer in purchasing wine and other products whose quality depends on where it is grown or made. Unless we want commonplace wines, we should honor unique places where great wines are made!”

All the attending trade associations have committed to working together on a host of initiatives in the coming months, ranging from joint public awareness efforts to potential collaboration on research and analysis, policymaker outreach, etc.

The full text of the declaration can be found at [www.napavintners.com](http://www.napavintners.com) and [www.champagne.us](http://www.champagne.us).

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