

Brussels, 7th July 2011

PRESS RELEASE

The European wine companies association (CEEV) welcomes the ratification by the European Parliament of the Regulation on Food Information to Consumers.

The exemption from mandatory ingredients and nutritional labelling confirms the opportunity to fully take into account the specificities of the wine sector.

Brussels, 7th July. The European wine companies (Comité Européen des Entreprises Vins - CEEV) warmly welcome the ratification by the European Parliament of the Regulation on Food Information to Consumers, that grants a temporary exemption to wines and other alcoholic beverages from mandatory ingredients and nutrition labelling.

"Wine is an agricultural product subject to an exhaustive harmonised EU legislation in the framework of the Common Agricultural policy, which covers every single aspect from the vineyard till the bottle" said José Ramón Fernandez, Secretary General of CEEV. He also explained that, contrary to the other food and beverages, wine is not made to a fixed manufacturing recipe. "Each wine is unique as it changes from one year to another depending on natural conditions and the characteristics of each harvest. Its final composition and nutritional values cannot be known until shortly before the wine is bottled, which makes changes into labelling disproportionately burdensome for a sector composed by an overwhelming majority of small and medium producers"

According to the adopted text, the Commission will have three years to produce a report on ingredients and nutritional labelling for alcoholic beverages, eventually accompanied with proposals for implementing rules if they were deemed necessary.

"CEEV is willing to collaborate with the European Commission on this task, as well as on the various areas where implementing rules might be defined in the short and medium term such as the legibility criteria, or the use of pictogrammes and symbols" said Lamberto Gancia, President of CEEV. "The challenges ahead are complex, and likely to have a major impact on our sector if the specificities of our products and sector were not fully taken into consideration".

-----END-----

For further information, please contact:

José Ramón Fernandez

Secretary General

ceev@ceev.be

Tel: +32 2 230 99 70

Mobile: +32 495 28 18 42

www.ceev.be

ceev

comité européen des entreprises vins

Vins, Vins Aromatisés, Vins Mousseux, Vins de Liqueur et autres Produits de la Vigne

Avenue des Arts 43, B-1040 Bruxelles - Tél : +32 2 230 99 70 - Fax : +32 2 513 02 18 - E-Mail : ceev@ceev.be

Note to the editors

- Comité Européen des Entreprises Vins (CEEV – “Comité Vins”, www.ceev.be) represents the wine companies in the industry and trade in the European Union: *still wines, aromatised wines, sparkling wines, liqueur wines and other vine products*. It brings together 24 national organisations. With more than 7.000 companies, mainly SMEs, and more than 200.000 direct jobs in the EU, its members produce and market the vast majority of quality European wines, with and without a geographical indication, and account for over 90% of European wine exports. With around 6 billion € worth of exports every year, the wine sector makes a contribution of over 3 billion € to the EU trade balance.
- Regulation 607/2009 *laying down certain detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 479/2008 as regards protected designations of origin and geographical indications, traditional terms, labelling and presentation of certain wine sector products* - sets up specific labelling rules for wine, aiming at ensuring that consumers are properly protected and informed, whilst allowing for the proper functioning of the Internal Market. It includes provisions on sugar declaration, legibility, font size, indication of allergens, use of symbols, etc.
- The Wine sector is extremely atomised, composed by an overwhelming majority of small producers:
 - In 2005, there were 1.3 million holdings with vineyards for wine production in the EU-25¹;
 - The average size of EU wine holdings was 2.6 ha in 2005.
 - For instance, in France alone (2007) there are 109 000 holdings in total, of which 44 000 are less than 2 hectares.

¹ Source: SEC(2007) 893/2 – EC DG AGRI Impact Assessment accompanying document to the Proposal for a Council Regulation on the common organisation of the market in wine and amending certain regulations