



## House of Assembly

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### VINTAGE WINE 2016

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO ( Light ) ( 14:41 ):** My question is to the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries. Minister, can you update the house on the progress of the 2016 wine vintage?

**The Hon. L.W.K. BIGNELL ( Mawson—Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Tourism, Minister for Recreation and Sport, Minister for Racing) (14:41):** I thank the member for Light for the question and acknowledge the great work he does on behalf of the grape growers and winemakers in his electorate. We have 18 wine regions throughout South Australia and they are a vitally important part of our economy. We just need to look at the carpet in here to see the bunches of grapes that obviously point to the fact that, right since the very early days

of the colony, the wine industry has been very important to our economy.

This year's report card on food and wine saw an increase from \$17.1 billion to \$18.2 billion, so that is a fair jump—\$1.1 billion in a 12-month period. That is a terrific result and just shows how important the agriculture sector is. It employs one in five working South Australians. We all need to be out there supporting these industries as much as we possibly can.

One thing we cannot do though is pull the right levers to make the weather do the right thing at all times. We have had some challenging vintages over the past decade and this 2016 one, while some people still have some grapes out there to bring in, is looking like a very good vintage right across all of our 18 wine regions. Not only are yields up in most places, but the quality is exceptional.

We had a very dry December, and I know there were a lot of people worried about water around my area of McLaren Vale. It slowed the growing season a bit, and then in January and February we had rains which really freshened things up, so all the reports that I am getting back from people like James March up in the Barossa is that the shiraz, in particular, up there is looking great and they are looking to have not just a really good vintage in terms of quantity, but the quality is exceptional. Adelaide Hills is

reporting the same. The Riverland, of course, which produces more wine than any other region in South Australia, has also had a very good year as well.

What we have seen though is that a lot of grape varieties ripened at the same time, which put everyone under a little bit of pressure. I want to pay tribute to the 3,500 grape growers that we have in South Australia and to all of those people involved along the process. We have grape growers, winemakers, retail shops, distributors and those people who are involved in the export industry. It really is part of the engine room of the South Australian economy and employs so many people. Of course, we produce 80 per cent of Australia's premium wine, and 50 per cent of the total wine market is made here in South Australia.

The Premier was in the US a few weeks ago, and he made the announcement that Adelaide had been accepted into the Great Wine Capitals of the world global network. We are in there with eight other international cities, including Porto, Bordeaux, San Francisco and other places around the world that are seen as—

Mr Pisoni interjecting:

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Unley is warned for the second and the final time.

**The Hon. L.W.K. BIGNELL:** — international leaders in wine, so

it is only fitting that Adelaide would be chosen as the great wine capital of Australia, and to be part of that international network. I know the people in the Napa Valley have been trying to get Adelaide in for a few years, and we have done the work now. It will help us not just to be on a list of international wine regions but, also, in the collaboration and discussions between the wine and tourism industries here and all around the world. It will help our growers, winemakers and tourism operators to benchmark their operations and activities against those of other places.

When I was in the Napa Valley about six years ago, one of the big advantages they had was in biosecurity so, when the European grapevine moth turned up in their vineyards, they could ring their friends in Italy and France and work out how to get rid of it, and it was gone in one season rather than their messing around and letting that pest grow throughout the beautiful Napa Valley.