

Media Release

Ms Mary-Anne Thomas MP
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Agriculture



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CELEBRATE FESTIVE SEASON IN STYLE: TIME TO 'DRINK VICTORIAN'

Victorians are being encouraged to back local businesses and enjoy a glass of their favourite Victorian wine, craft beer, spirit or cider this holiday season, as more locally produced drinks are available at bars, restaurants and retailers.

Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas today launched the *Drink Victorian* campaign at Cumulus Inc in Melbourne's CBD, alongside business owners taking part in the program and members of the Victorian Drinks Alliance.

There are 100 hospitality venues from across Melbourne participating in the campaign, which backs local businesses by encouraging venues to offer more drinks produced in Victoria for sale.

Industry and consumers can learn more about Victorian drinks through regional visits to producers, education programs, an industry 'super tasting,' and other events.

The Victorian Drinks Alliance developed the project to promote local products and back Victorian businesses as we recover from the global pandemic, bushfires, export challenges and strong international and interstate competition in the domestic market.

It is a collaboration between Food and Drink Victoria, Wine Victoria, Cider Australia, the Independent Brewers Association, the Australian Distillers Association and Spirits Victoria.

Drink Victorian has been backed by \$1.5 million, jointly funded by Agriculture Victoria through its *Small-Scale and Craft* and *Food to Market* programs as well as Global Victoria.

The Food to Market Program is part of the Andrews Labor Government's Agriculture Strategy and will help to deliver on its vision for a Victorian agriculture sector that is strong, innovative, and sustainable.

A key focus of the 10-year strategy is supporting industry to grow through increased exports, investment, greater diversification, and new products. For more information visit drinkvictorian.com

Quote attributable to Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas

"Victoria is home to some of the world's best beer, wine, spirits and ciders and I'm excited to raise my glass to the Drink Victorian Program to ensure more people get to enjoy locally-produced drinks this festive season."

Quote attributable to Minister for Trade Martin Pakula

"Our exporters have faced challenges due to the pandemic – the Drink Victorian program will support these businesses and local jobs."

Quote attributable to Wine Victoria Chair and Victorian Drinks Alliance Co-Chair Angie Bradbury

"From craft beer to specialty spirits and some of the country's finest wine, we have such a diverse selection of drinks producers across metro and regional Victoria and it's great to see them promoted through this program."

Quote attributable to co-chair of the Victorian Drinks Alliance Anthea Loucas Boshia

"The diversity of producers across the state is unparalleled in Australia and with so many local farmers and producers featuring on our menus, it seems natural to pair these dishes with local drinks."