



INDUSTRY EXCELLENCE
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WINE INDUSTRY PLAYERS GIVE UNANIMOUS SUPPORT TO TRANSFORMATION CHARTER

The first active steps to the drafting of a South African Wine Industry Charter and Scorecard have been taken after representatives from all sectors of the wine industry recently approved the industry's transformation plan, its commitment to Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) and the need for this Charter. Speaking at the Cape Wine 2004 showcase in Cape Town yesterday (31 March), Dr Johan van Rooyen, chief executive of the South African Wine and Brandy Company (SAWB), said the Charter will have a major impact on all in the wine industry and could, if introduced correctly, play a profound role in increasing its competitiveness. The nuts and bolts of the Charter's content still have to be thrashed out, but ensuring that all stakeholders in the wine industry have a voice in the process and that the process itself is transparent, are non-negotiable and will ensure a positive response.

“The purpose of the Wine Industry Charter and Scorecard is to align and focus all sectors of the wine industry into coherent strategic activities, to create synergies within the industry and to provide a measurement of progress,” he said. “At a recent meeting prior to Cape Wine 2004, a fully representative quorum representing – amongst others – the South African Wine Industry Trust (SAWIT), labour, major players in the wine industry, cellars and supporting industries unanimously agreed to a need for the drafting of a Charter and Scorecard, where the emphasis will be on – inter alia – BEE in the industry, as well as raising the industry's international competitiveness.”

A representative conference on Black Economic Empowerment in the SA Wine Industry jointly staged by SAWB and SAWIT in November last year mandated these two industry bodies to proceed with the drafting of a Wine-BEE Charter and Industry Scorecard.

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Although support for the Charter and Scorecard had been given from within the industry, a timeframe for the drafting process has not been decided on.

“The main reason for this is that Wine Industry Charter cannot be presented to government independent of the Liquor Industry Charter representing the beer and non-brandy spirits industries, for which those industries are also responsible. A lot of co-ordination between the chambers of the SAWB, the rest of the liquor industry and government must still be done. The drafting of these Charters will be milestones for all concerned. And with so many institutions involved, it is never going to be easy. But we only have one shot with which to get it right.

“The support from the SAWB’s various stakeholders underscores an enthusiastic commitment to get the ball rolling. We will be having a conference before the end of 2004 to report back on various issues and areas of progress.”

According to Van Rooyen, the Charter will provide the strategic framework and scorecard for BEE in the wine industry (farming, wine producing and trade). This wine Charter will interact with other relevant BEE Charters and Scorecards, such as AgriBEE and the future Liquor Industry Scorecard to ensure coherent and integrated benchmarking, target setting and implementation. An institutional structure and monitoring system to direct BEE at an industry level will also be established.

“The Charter will be informed by the new Economic Empowerment Act and related legislation re the Liquor Act, the Wine Industry Strategy Plan (WIP), the South African Agricultural Strategy Plan, the AgriBEE process, Nedlac’s approach to sector strategy development and the discussions and inputs by the BEE conference delegates,” he said. “The process will also recognise the different activities and concerns within the wine value chain in its entirety. With the support of the whole industry, the first major step to our goal has been taken.”

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