

MEDIA RELEASE

NASAA Ltd Certified Organic 'Wine of the Year' Australia 2016

Australia's Organic Wine of the Year 2016 is Rosnay Organic Wines 'Garage No.1' Cowra Cabernet Sauvignon 2014, the first wine made personally by Sam Statham.

In conjunction with Winestate Magazine, NASAA (*The National Association for Sustainable Agriculture, Australia*), only certified Australian organic wines were judged for this prestigious award, using a fully managed professional tasting process and panel.

This third annual NASAA & Winestate organic wine judging was open only to wines grown and produced in Australia that are certified by a Department of Agriculture Accredited Certification Body such as 'NASAA Certified Organic' an organisation that is partnering with Winestate Publishing to promote Australia's organic wines to the world.

Organic wines means that the wines have been made from grapes that are grown without the use of any "artificial chemicals" such as systemic fungicides, herbicides and synthetic fertilisers.

The overall winner, Rosnay Organic Wines, is based in Canowindra, a small town between Cowra and Orange in the NSW Central Ranges. It was the first organic and biodynamic vineyard of the Cowra Wine Region, planted by the Statham family as part a unique certified organic rural farming subdivision, now known as Rivers Road Organic Farms.

The Stathams are dedicated to the principles of organics and sustainable living and are proving that organic wines can hold their own in the wine world, winning a number of medals and trophies in recent years. They established the property as an organic property and winery in 1997, naming it after a maternal French ancestor Alberic Dulong de Rosnay, a Beaujolais vigneron. It is a diverse family farm enterprise, which spans production, processing and tourism.

"Rosnay - the farm and the idea - encompasses all of my passions - family, eco-living, community, self reliance, cooperation, natural farming systems, and an almost spiritual - call it biodynamic - connection with this place," says Sam Statham.

"My first knowledge of wine I gained in France in 1995 as a result of my Mum, Florence, being French, so I did university in southern France and studied Geography. Part of that course was a subject called 'Terroir' - a word I'd never heard in Australia. But in France it's in the blood. My field assignment was to visit a vineyard, and I had to do a visual report of the interactions of soil, hydrology, climate, microclimate, native vegetation, grape varieties and cultural methods - that result in a site's unique flavours. I also heard reference to an a mentor I never met, Emile Peynaud, whose book, 'Knowing and Making Wine', is my wine making bible today."

Winemaking for Sam began late - after 15 years growing organic grapes, olives and other crops with his parents. In 2012 he won a trip back to France from the NSW Department of Agriculture - the Inaugural NSW Organic Pioneers Award. It was in this second visit that he decided to stop just "hanging out" with winemakers, but to actually have a go.

"The next vintage, inspired by the organic wines of southern France, and with Peynaud's book in hand, I made my first wine, and called it Garage Wine Number 1. Two tonnes of Cabernet Sauvignon, hand picked with friends and customers and then a complex process of trial and error over a month, with hand plunging twice daily and then to further lengthy malolactic fermentation.

“The challenge for me is to try and do it again, but I’ll definitely have fun, and hopefully more Statham good luck along the way”.

The judging the process of reviewing 139 wines from five States and the ACT took place at Winestate magazine where all wines were judged blind by a panel of three independent expert wine industry judges.

Judges statement: Winestate Publisher Peter Simic said: “Overall the panel and myself as chairman were very pleased at the number of entries submitted showing that organic wines have now moved beyond the amateur field and are now being supported by professional commercial wine makers.

“This is a major step forward. In fact the quality of the fruit involved in the wines overall was as good if not at a better standard than the average tasting that Winestate would do for general non organic wines. However, whilst the judges acknowledged the value of organic grape growing practices, some work needs to be done on winemaking techniques or practices to lift the standard even further.

“With the ongoing interest in organic products it shows that there is an exciting market for this segment and Winestate is very pleased to be involved in promoting this sector that has great export potential”.

The results were announced tonight at the National Wine Centre, Adelaide.

Media Contacts:

For Winestate: Peter Simic, 0414 695 232

For NASAA, Mark Anderson, 0407 755 873 / 08 8370 8455

For Rosnay Organic, Sam Statham 0428 667 317

For 24/7 Media Assistance: Mike O’Reilly, 0414 882 505



Sam Statham his mother Florence Leclerc Statham

Winestate Publishing is a powerful independent voice for the Australian winemaker and the industry. It is Australia’s oldest and most respected magazine authority on Australian & NZ wines.

The National Association for Sustainable Agriculture, Australia (NASAA) was formed in 1986 and supports the education of industry and consumers on organic, biodynamic and sustainable agricultural practices. NASAA was Australia’s first organic certifier.