



Robyn Preston MP

Member for Hawkesbury

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, 17 March 2020

SUPPORT FOR BUSHFIRE HIT WINE-GRAPE GROWERS

The NSW Government today announced new measures to support the bushfire-affected NSW wine industry, with funding available to cover the costs of testing grapes for smoke taint.

Member for Hawkesbury, Robyn Preston, said the smoke haze from the widespread bushfires across the State has impacted wine-grape growing regions, affecting the composition of grapes and wine they produce.

“NSW wine growers need our support to help understand the damage these bushfires have had on their business,” Ms Preston said.

“That’s why the NSW Government has put this program in place to cover the cost of sample analysis for smoke taint in wine grapes.

“We need to protect NSW wine markets and avoid smoke-tainted wine from reaching consumers, and testing grapes will be key to ensuring that happens.”

The funding will cover a number of bulk sample analyses per business to a cap of \$1,200 and is available for all impacted wine grape growers across NSW.

Early sample analyses from the Hunter Valley, Mudgee and Orange has shown some smoke taint levels above critical thresholds which consumers can easily detect.

Ms Preston said covering the costs of tests will help provide growers the information they need to make decisions about what to do with their grapes.

“Smoke taint lab tests cost around \$300, and we want to support wine grape growers to access this service at a time when cash flow has been impacted.”

“Grape yields have already been significantly reduced across NSW following effects of ongoing drought across NSW – and now smoke haze has significantly damaged what crops were available.

“Determining smoke taint levels will assist winemakers to adopt the right strategies and process their grapes accordingly.”

For more information on bushfire recovery and available financial assistance for producers and farming businesses visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/bushfires

Media: Josh Byrne | Hawkesbury Electorate Office | (02) 4578 0300