

The Catena Institute of Wine Marks its Role in the Launch of Argentina's First Wine and Viticulture Sustainability Protocol

Bodegas de Argentina today announces the publication of groundbreaking document after a four-year study in collaboration with the Institute

MENDOZA, ARGENTINA – November 21, 2013 – [Bodegas de Argentina](#), an association of 240 Argentine wineries designed to advance Argentine wine both nationally and abroad, today announced the publication of Argentina's first wine and viticulture sustainability protocol. The 173 page document marks the culmination of a four-year study with the [Catena Institute of Wine](#) in collaboration with the association's sustainability commission, local universities and government entities.

"Our winemaking region, a high altitude desert, is different from any other in the world," said Laura Catena, founder of the Catena Institute of Wine. "The Bodegas de Argentina Sustainability Protocol takes into consideration our geographic, climatic and social environments, and will pave the way for small growers and wineries of all sizes to farm sustainably and preserve our centuries old viticultural heritage."

"Catena's contribution was vital," said Juan Carlos Pina, General Manager of Bodegas de Argentina at a news conference at Bodega Catena Zapata today. "The leading countries of the world are doing this and so must we. Today we have taken a great step and this house [Catena] has contributed greatly and played a leading role together with other wineries."

In 2009, Catena brought the California Code of Sustainability to the Institute and asked viticulturalist Luis Reginato to work on a sustainability protocol to be applied in the family's estate vineyards. When it became evident that this initiative would greatly benefit Argentina's wine industry as a whole, the Catena family brought the sustainability code to Bodegas de Argentina with a proposal for a larger national study.

From 2011 to 2013, the Bodegas de Argentina Sustainability Commission and the Catena Institute of Wine collaborated to evaluate every aspect of the Sustainability Code. Feedback was received from the INV (Instituto Nacional de Vitivinicultura), FCA (the local Agricultural Sciences University), the Maza University of winemaking and agriculture and the INTA (Argentina's Agricultural Research Institute.)

The California Code of Sustainability was where the study began, but many of its sustainable solutions were not applicable to the Argentine climate, geography, flora and fauna. For instance, if trees are cut down to plant a vineyard in California, sustainable practices dictate that native forests be created to provide homes for any owls that may have been displaced. In Mendoza, there is only enough water to cultivate four percent

of the region's land, so flora and fauna are abundant, and in the case of the owls, there is no need to build houses for them as they are able to coexist with the Argentine vineyards by living in underground caves.

For centuries water has been an expensive and highly allocated resource in Mendoza. "The water for our vineyards is carried from the Andean glaciers in canals build by the native Huarpe population hundreds of years ago, or from underground aquifers, and are strictly rationed by the government," said Luis Reginato, Viticulture Director at Catena Zapata. "Drip irrigation systems are established in most new vineyards and water is rarely wasted. This is an aspect of sustainability where most growers and wineries in Argentina are already working at a highly sustainable level."

Due to Mendoza's dry climate pesticides are rarely used. The sustainability protocol also establishes clear guidelines for education in pesticide use and general vineyard management to avoid pests. These guidelines are essential, especially to the small growers in the region – around 50 percent of the country's vineyards – which are less than five hectares in size.

"Moving forward, wineries and growers will be able to use the Bodegas de Argentina Sustainability Protocol to certify their vineyards and wineries," says Catena. "This is a very important step for Argentina and we, at the Catena Institute of Wine are proud of having played a pioneering role."

###