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Contact: Michele Cozzi 07 4681 0411 or 0417 620571 marketing@granitebeltwinecountry.com.au

Granite Belt Growers Return to South Bank

As snow falls today on the high ground of Queensland's Granite Belt, the region's producers are looking forward to descending the 1000 metres to showcase their produce in Brisbane next month.

After a hugely successful launch event in May, the South Bank Growers' Market will be back on Sunday August 24 2008. The markets will showcase the best wine and food from Queensland's Granite Belt.

The first South Bank Growers' market was inundated by Brisbane foodies and enthusiastic locals who relished the opportunity to buy fresh regional produce and award-winning wines direct from the region's producers. Many stall holders sold out in the first few hours.

Ross Alexander of the South Bank Lifestyle Markets is pleased with the success of the inaugural growers markets. Working closely with Granite Belt Wine & Tourism, they have agreed for producers to return each quarter. The theme will be regional and seasonal, with the August markets to showcase what's in season in winter.

"Having the Granite Belt at the South Bank Growers' Market is a great opportunity for the Brisbane community to support this region which is rich with high quality food and wine," said Mr Alexander.

WHAT: Bank Growers Market
WHO: 40 stalls featuring produce from Queensland's Granite Belt
WHEN: Sunday 24 August 10am to 4pm
WHERE: South Bank Parklands, between Grey & Little Stanley Street

ENDS

To learn more about Queensland's premier wine region visit www.granitebeltwinecountry.com.au or phone 1800 SO COOL and **Experience Elevated Taste !**

EDITOR'S NOTES

- Wine** The history of the Queensland wine industry dates back to the 1860s - and like all good wines it has developed with age. Of Queensland's current 1100 hectares planted to wine grapes, approximately half of these are on the Granite Belt. The Granite Belt is Queensland's premier wine region and one of ten wine regions in the state, of which only two have official GI status. The Granite Belt is home to approximately 50 wine cellar doors, the state's most awarded winemakers, plus the Queensland College of Wine Tourism - the first of its type in the world.
- Food** The Granite Belt is the only area in Queensland to produce apples: creating a gross value of approximately \$35m per annum (DPI&F 2006). Agriculture is the largest employer in the area, which boasts a vibrant and diverse horticultural sector. In this part of Queensland, the food production sector is expected to experience an average annual growth rate of approximately 8.0% per annum, despite the drought. Over the 10 years to 2017, growth in the sector is expected to result in a 12.7% increase in the regional economy's turnover (source Darling Downs & South West Queensland Centre of Enterprise and AEC Group 2007.)