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Queensland Decides

Queensland politicians may be waiting for exit polls on 21st March, but they'll be pipped at the post by a new survey being undertaken by Granite Belt winemakers. Wine – in moderation – is infinitely more interesting than politics, they believe.

Under Australian law, wine labels must carry certain information – the big question is: how should Queensland's top drops be identified?

Should they read "**Granite Belt, Queensland**" or, should they read "**Granite Belt, Australia**"? Both are legal, but what does the consumer want?

It is a timely question as - for the first time ever – the 2008 Wine of the Year in *Winestate* magazine came from the Granite Belt. It beat off 10,000 all-comers from across the country, busting the myth that Queenslanders can't make wine.

Granite Belt Wine & Tourism's Chair of Wine, Leeanne Puglisi-Gangemi, said, "Within the industry we've toyed with it for years and in the end it has come down to individual commercial preference. The wine media has also debated what would best bolster sales, but they can't agree either. So we thought we'd ask the wine- loving public. It is a chance to test parochialism and bias."

If you are over 18, you can vote now online. Voting closes at 1pm on Monday 16th March. Australian residents who submit their email address will go into the draw for a mixed case of wine from the Queensland wine capital – a little something with which to celebrate or commiserate the results of the state election.

To vote – click on the VOTE NOW button on www.granitebeltwinecountry.com.au

Across the Granite Belt the **2009 vintage** is so far looking fantastic. Mrs Gangemi added: "A long dry period leading up to harvest should give us some great whites this vintage. Most of the Verdelho is now in the tank and the Chardonnay and Viognier harvest is well underway. The reds are also looking good too: Merlot, Shiraz and Cabernet harvest will start in about two weeks."

To learn more about the Queensland wine capital visit www.granitebeltwinecountry.com.au or phone 1800 SO COOL or (07) 4681 2057.

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NOTES:

1. *Winestate* magazine's 2008 Wine of the Year was won by the 2007 Heritage Estate Reserve Chardonnay.
2. 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. **To get all the facts about the Granite Belt wine industry click here.**