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## WINE INSTITUTE STATEMENT ON 2010 U.S. DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS

*From Robert P. Koch, Wine Institute President and CEO*

**SAN FRANCISCO** -- Since ancient times, wine has been appreciated as an enhancement to meals and a beverage of enjoyment by cultures throughout the world. Wine Institute supports the key recommendation about alcohol in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines: “If alcohol is consumed, it should be consumed in moderation—up to one drink per day for women and two drinks per day for men—and only by adults of legal drinking age.”

To explain moderation, we agree with the time-tested definition of a serving as being 12 fl. oz. of regular beer, 5 fl. oz. of wine, or 1.5 fl. oz. of 80-proof distilled spirits but are concerned about the additional statement that each of the drinks contains the same amount of alcohol. A precise fluid-ounces-of-alcohol statement implies that the alcohol content is the same for every drink of wine, beer or distilled spirits when, in reality, alcohol content varies widely from drink to drink. Consumers should not be misled into believing there is such a thing as a “standard drink.” In fact, the term “standard drink” does not appear in the Dietary Guidelines.

We agree with the balanced statements in the guideline, “The consumption of alcohol can have beneficial or harmful effects, depending on the amount consumed, age, and other characteristics of the person consuming the alcohol. Alcohol consumption may have beneficial effects when consumed in moderation. Strong evidence from observational studies has shown that moderate alcohol consumption is associated with a lower risk of cardiovascular disease. Moderate alcohol consumption also is associated with reduced risk of all-cause mortality among middle-aged and older adults and may help to keep cognitive function intact with age.” Wine Institute agrees with the Guidelines’ caution against excessive consumption and that there are some individuals who should not drink, and that one should not begin drinking or drink more frequently for potential health benefits.

The Dietary Guidelines are revised and released every five years by the USDA and HHS. To view the guidelines, go to: <http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/DGAs2010-PolicyDocument.htm>.

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