Trade Minister Tim Groser has welcomed the new Treaty Protocol on Wine Labelling, agreed today by members of the World Wine Trade Group (WWTG).

In 2007, the WWTG negotiated a Treaty on Wine Labelling which set new standards in the field. The Protocol takes this further by requiring participant countries to allow the importation and sale of wine from other signatories, provided it meets minimum standards for labelling (relating to alcohol tolerance, variety, vintage and wine region), and the exporting country’s laws and regulations.

The key benefits of the Protocol for New Zealand producers are that, once in force, it should provide enhanced access to overseas markets, enhanced predictability about regulation in key markets; and will set a useful benchmark for WWTG observer countries and other non-members.

“I’m pleased that New Zealand has marked its year as chair of the WWTG by the negotiation of this Protocol.

“New Zealand welcomes this cooperative approach which helps all WWTG members and others with whom the Group is sharing information. That has been the case for our industry, which has seen its exports top NZ$1.2 billion annually despite difficult economic conditions,” Mr Groser says.

Since 1998 the WWTG has been a leader in encouraging a wide range of activities which will benefit trade in wine and thereby provide some welcome improvement in the returns for producers in New Zealand and elsewhere. The Group’s work fully recognises the importance to consumers of accurate information and the avoidance of deceptive labelling.

The WWTG comprises eight non-EU wine producing countries who now account for almost a third of total global wine exports, a share which has risen rapidly over the past decade. Members include New Zealand, Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile, Georgia, South Africa and the United States; some other wine producing countries, such as Brazil, China, Mexico and Uruguay attend as observers.

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