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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Million dollar research program invests in grape and wine industry's future**

Canada's \$6.8 billion grape and wine industry faces several multifaceted challenges in order to sustain its economic impact and meet its growth potential.

To address these challenges, Brock University researchers are leading a five-year, \$1.42 million integrated research program to improve grapevine health, wine quality, market competitiveness and the sustainability of the Canadian industry.

Project lead Debbie Inglis, Director of Brock's Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI), says many of the challenges the industry faces are due to changing climate conditions that must be addressed by working closely with industry partners.

"The outcomes of this research program will continue to open new doors for Canadian wine while also increasing Canada's reputation as a global leader in cool climate oenology and viticulture," says Inglis.

CCOVI's senior scientists Belinda Kemp and Jim Willwerth will be collaborating with Inglis on the program's various projects which include identifying the best clone and rootstock combinations for Ontario's climate and soil types, developing vineyard practices tailored to sparkling wine production, and managing tannins in Canadian red wines.

Grape growers will be able to use the clone and rootstock results to help overcome climate change challenges and the project will also commercialize

precise decision-making tools and real-time monitoring technologies for growers and winemakers.

To support this research, CCOVI received a \$600,000 grant from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), \$345,000 in funding from Ontario Grape and Wine Research Inc. and in-kind support from industry partners totaling \$484,600.

“By leveraging funding and support from both government and industry, we are able to address timely, industry-driven research questions that will help sustain the industry’s growth,” says Inglis.

Industry partners contributing in-kind support to the project include Chateau des Charmes, Constellation Brands Canada, Huebel Grapes Estates, Schenck Farms and Greenhouses, Trius Winery at Hillebrand and Ziraldo Estate Wines.

#### **Supported Research Projects:**

The funding announced today will be used to support five interrelated research projects based out of CCOVI.

- Clone and rootstock combinations for the Canadian climate and terroir.
- Grapevine cold hardiness: biochemical and physiological responses and influence of clone, rootstock and environmental interactions.
- Cold hardiness predictive systems with automation to mitigate the impact of cold weather events on grapevines.
- Impact of leaf removal timing and severity on red and sparkling wine quality.
- TanninAlert: an online tannin management tool for Ontario winemakers.

The impact from CCOVI’s research and activities goes beyond the grape industry. A recently released economic impact study found that in 2014-15 the institute contributed more than \$91-million and the equivalent of 307 jobs to Ontario’s economy.

To learn more about CCOVI’s impact on the grape and wine industry visit: [brocku.ca/ccovi](http://brocku.ca/ccovi)

For assistance arranging interviews:

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