

Mr. Olmert Announces Wine Initiative



**Mr. Ehud Olmert, Minister of Trade & Industry & Deputy Prime Minister**, has announced a new initiative to double exports of Israeli wines. The project will invest a .million dollars a year in the next five years

Mr. Olmert approved a proposal by **Yaron Kimche**, Chairman of the Israel **Wine Institute**, made after extensive discussions with representatives of wineries, the **Ministry of Trade & Industry**, the **Ministry of Agriculture**, the **Wines & Grapes Board** and the **Export .Institute**

This is the first time there has been government support for the wine industry and it is the first time all sections of the .industry have been prepared to work together

Exports of Israeli wine totaled US \$ 13.2 million in 2004, a growth of 15% over 2003. Overall, Israeli wines were sold to 57 countries, but the biggest share was to USA – US \$ followed by France – US \$ 1.2 and the UK – US \$ 1. So ,7 of exports were to three countries. The main 70% exporters in size are Carmel Winery & Golan Heights Winery, followed by Barkan Wine Cellars. Other significant exporters include Efrat, Binyamina, Tishbi, Galil Mountain, .Recanati, & Castel

Today there are over 150 Israeli wineries. The 2004 harvest yielded tonnes – the largest harvest 53,500 for 30 years. The Intifada, rising imports and economic recession has made the domestic market more competitive than ever. Yet the quality of Israeli wines has never been so good. The obvious economic necessity is to increase exports.



However it is not enough to sell brands such as Carmel, Yarden & Castel. The industry needs to present itself so *wines of Israel* become talked about – like wines of .Australia, Chile or South Africa

The objective therefore is to recreate Israeli wine as a brand; to focus on key markets & key market sectors; and to bring the wineries of all sizes together under one banner

Amongst the wineries & their representatives who participated in the meetings & supported the proposals were

**Carmel** – Adam Montefiore, *Marketing & Export Director*  
**Barkan** – Schmuël Boxer, *Managing Director*  
**Golan Heights Winery** – Shalom Blayer, *Managing Director*  
**Efrat** – Moti Teperberg, *Owner & Managing Director*  
**Binyamina** – Ilan Hasson, *Managing Director*  
**Recanati** – Doron Rand, *Managing Director*  
**Castel** – Eli Ben Zaken, *Owner*  
**Margalit** – Yair Margalit, *Owner*

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