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European Wine Appellations Fight for Survival

Winemakers Associations Take Proactive Stance, Issue Manifesto Ahead of European Elections

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In the verdant vineyards and time-honored cellars of Europe, a collective of wine appellations, under the banner of the European Federation of Origin Wines (EFOW), is preparing to steer through some formidable challenges. As Europe stands on the cusp of new legislative frameworks, the EFOW is meticulously laying out a roadmap not only to address these challenges but also to assert their priorities in the ever-evolving wine

industry.

The wine sector, pulsating at the heart of European agriculture, faces a complex array of hurdles. These range from the potential impacts of geopolitical strife affecting trade to the pressing and pervasive threats posed by climate change. Add to this the sociocultural shifts altering consumer patterns and preferences, and it's clear the industry stands at a critical juncture. The EFOW is taking a proactive stance by condensing its strategies and concerns into a manifesto aimed directly at the upcoming candidates of the European elections.

Preserving a Specialized Policy within the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

Central to the EFOW's advocacy is the insistence on maintaining a specific and robust policy for the wine sector within the CAP. This involves securing dedicated funding that will continue to support the unique needs of the viticulture industry. This approach underscores a broader strategy to strengthen vital regulatory instruments like vineyard planting authorizations and sectoral interventions, which include support for promotion, restructuring, and investment in productivity.

Crisis Management and Flexible Response

Facing an era where crises can emerge with little warning, the appellations emphasize the necessity for enhanced crisis management tools. They advocate for more agile activation of mechanisms such as the agricultural reserve fund and extraordinary market disturbance measures, calling for flexibility in response to ensure resilience in tumultuous times.

Quality Policy at the Core of Wine Policy

The appellations are also making a strong case for re-centering the policy on quality—encompassing Protected Designations of Origin (PDOs) and Protected Geographical Indications (PGIs)—at the heart of Europe's wine policy. Recent shifts towards sustainability have somewhat sidelined the importance of quality policies,

which can actually complement sustainability efforts and serve as catalysts for regional transformation. The EFOW urges European institutions to enhance the promotion and protection of these quality labels and to empower their management bodies.

Innovation and Open Markets

Another critical area of focus is on expanding support for innovation and research to combat climate change, ensuring viticultural practices are adapted to new realities. Moreover, the appellations are calling for continued trade policies that promote market openness, particularly in non-EU countries, while advocating against protectionist measures that could stifle sectoral trade development.

Health Debates and Despolarization

Lastly, the EFOW calls for a de-escalation in health debates, seeking a depolarized approach to address challenges in a balanced and constructive manner. This shift could facilitate a more harmonious approach to regulatory challenges, aligning health policies with industry sustainability and consumer safety without compromising the sector's integrity and growth.

This manifesto from the EFOW is not just a document; it's a declaration of intent. It reflects a commitment to quality and sustainability, showcasing a strategic and proactive approach from the wine appellations to navigate a complex and evolving landscape. As they lay their concerns and plans before Europe's future legislators, the goal is clear: to ensure their voices are not only heard but also heeded at the highest levels of policy-making. In doing so, they aim to preserve the rich heritage and vibrant future of Europe's wine culture.