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For Immediate Release

Roussillon Region Classifies 2011 A Stellar Vintage *Miracle production puts region on the radar*

November 21, 2011- New York, NY For the first time in over six vintages, winemakers in the South of France's Roussillon region have experienced ample grape production with Mediterranean varieties - for its dry and fortified wines - growing abundant grape clusters, producing a superb vintage. "The allure of the 2011 vintage is apparent in the fruit," said Eric Aracil, Export Manager of the CIVR (*Conseil Interprofessionnel des Vins du Roussillon*), the regional wine trade council. Aracil, an oenologist by trade added, "With substantial volumes, aromatic potential and balanced acidity showing in the wines post-harvest, 2011 will undoubtedly be a fantastic year in Roussillon, and quite possibly the harvest of this new century!"

It had been over six vintages since winemakers hadn't had the good luck to have normal to heavy bunches of grapes in the majority of the varietals, in some areas 50% more than in the previous years (except for the more northerly varietals such as Merlot and Cabernet). In spite of the large quantities harvested and the high temperatures, total acidities are at a fairly high level. Despite the unpredictable weather that threatened the crops this past summer, the 2011 harvest which began in August and ended mid-October produced generous volumes of quality wine. The ratio* between grape clusters and leaves, less favorable than in previous years, did not upset the physiological maturation of the grapes, which took place at the normal date comparable to that of last year.

Looking back at the timeline, the heavy rains in October 2010 and January-February 2011 brought normal temperatures for the season; however spring sprung quickly in the region with a hot April-May. Aracil adds, "Any early ripening that we would have expected end of June because of the hot spring we endured, was completely wiped out by July's cooler temperatures, and the abundance of grape clusters on the vines". On August 5th a hailstorm hit 1,000 hectares (2,500 acres) between Aspres and the Mediterranean Sea, although only damaging 100 hectares (250 acres) in total.

Picking began on August 8th, one week ahead of the normal harvest cycle. By the end of August, most of the producers were harvesting, completing picking by mid-October. Harvest ended well with optimal conditions for structured dry reds and fortified wines, such as the Rivesaltes, Banyuls and Maury cuvees, noting that the wines coming from the Muscat d'Alexandrie grape look to be remarkable.

The 2011 vintage at first appeared to be much less concentrated than 2010, but the favorable weather conditions allowed for a concentration of the berries by a slow and steady increase in the qualitative profile of each grape. The first white and rosé wines in vats are exhibiting great aromatic potential and an evident balanced acidity. The first tanks of reds, harvested from many younger vines (green harvest) are also aromatic, showing pleasant tannins.

In conclusion, the weather conditions were very favorable in obtaining a bountiful crop. Rainfall in October 2010 helped rebuild root reserves (*réserves de souches*), kicking off a propitious flowering with few problems. The amount of rainfall in the spring was in step with the vegetative cycle. The progression of maturing tied to the very beautiful months of August and September was continuous, with no hurdles. The harvest took place under very good conditions. In general, producers handled any plant-health issues that arose. The state of health - which appeared as potentially fragile because of the size of the berries and the compactness of the clusters - stayed good throughout.

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The Tramontane - which blew in rotation starting at the end of August - was a precious ally, accompanied by sunny days and high temperatures in September and in early October. The grapes were very aromatic. In the plots that were hit by hail (Aug 5th), where no rot set in, we noted a high percentage of dried out, Corinthian raisin-like, berries. Many grapes, notably those used for dry wines, were saved thanks to careful sorting.

About CIVR:

The official trade association for the wines of Roussillon, the Conseil Interprofessionnel des Vins du Roussillon (CIVR) is charged with the promotion of its 13 AOP wines, both in France and in key export markets. Its duties include maintaining strict quality controls for the benefit of the consumer as well as the organization of both economic studies and collective communication activities to benefit the region's more than 4,500 winemakers. The CIVR has also created a team solely dedicated to research and development.

www.winesofroussillon.com

* In an ideal scenario, the leaves (the lungs of the vine, enabling the production of sap which feeds the berries) are more plentiful in relation to the number of grape clusters. In spite of the fact that there were so few leaves this year, the berries were somehow still regularly fed. The alcoholic maturity (sugars) took place without any problem. This year the normal ratio was inverted - more bunches than leaves, leading producers to believe that the vine would have been "out of breath" and therefore unable to properly feed all of the berries, leading to a lack of polyphenolic maturity. Much to everyone's surprise and delight, this was not the case. In fact, nourishment of this year's crops was on schedule and the berries suffered no adverse effects from the lack of leaves. They hit their milestones!

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If you'd like more information about this topic, or to schedule an interview with Eric Aracil, Export Manager of CIVR, please contact Marie-Christina Batich at 212-386-7416 or marie-christina.batich@sopexa.com. Samples available upon request.

