



## Our wines rated world class

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Nelson wineries continue to shine on the international stage, with both Waimea Estates and Seifried Estate winning gold medals and trophies at the recent Decanter Wine Awards, the world's biggest wine competition.

Waimea's sauvignon blanc 2010 won gold and the hotly contested regional trophy for the champion New Zealand sauvignon blanc under 10 (NZ\$20), while Seifried did likewise with its 2010 Winemakers Collection Nelson Sweet Agnes riesling.

Seifried also won silver medals for its 2010 sauvignon blanc and 2010 Aotea gewurztraminer in the show, which attracted 12,252 entries from 44 countries.

With less than 3 per cent of wines winning a gold or a trophy, both wineries were delighted with their success. Their wines will now be pitted against other regional winners to decide who wins the overall international trophy for each wine style.

Waimea general manager and viticulturalist Ben Bolitho said the winery was "over the moon" to win in a category which a lot of other New Zealand winemakers entered.

Since getting the award, it had received some "pretty significant" orders for the wine from British distributors, which boded well for the rest of the year, he said.

"Things are definitely looking more promising than the last couple of years and it appears the wine oversupply situation is disappearing."

Waimea made 10,000 cases of its 2010 sauvignon blanc, its most popular wine. With a better growing year it had produced 20,000 cases this year, which was shaping up to be equally as good, Mr Bolitho said.

He would be celebrating the award over a few wines when his father Trevor and sales and marketing manager Martin Carrington returned from overseas in a week or two.

It's not the first time Waimea has done well at the Decanter awards – its Spinyback pinot gris won the top white wine under 10 in 2008.

In all, the winery had won 36 gold medals and eight trophies in competitions for its white and red wines since 2009 which was an excellent record for a family-owned winery, he said.

Seifried's win at the Decanter awards continues a remarkable record for its Sweet Agnes riesling, which has won the international trophy for the best sweet wine every year since 2006, except in 2007, when it won just the regional award.

In all competitions, it has collected eight trophies and 16 gold medals since 2006.

Agnes Seifried, after whom the wine is named, said she and the staff were elated with the latest win because the sweet riesling was a passion of her husband Hermann, who along with their daughter Heidi and vineyard staff, devoted a lot of hard work and time to producing it.

As a niche market wine, it sold extremely well, particularly overseas, and helped raised the profile of the winery, she said.

Meanwhile, it's been a vintage fortnight for Richmond Plains, with the small organic vineyard winning a trophy to go with the two gold medals it won at the recent Hong Kong International Wine Challenge.

Hot on the heels of being awarded the first golds presented for organic wines, the competition announced the Nelson producer's sauvignon blanc 2010 as the trophy winner for best of show organic and biodynamic wine.

On top of this, the wine also won a gold medal as Gentlemen's Favourite, where the male judges awarded their preferred wines over all categories.

Richmond Plains owner Lars Jensen said it showed the wine was one of the best in the show.

**- Nelson**