

**For Immediate Release
For Lifestyle and Business Editors/Journalists**



5th SOWETO WINE FESTIVAL MATURING WITH AGE

SOWETO, GAUTENG, 16 JULY 2009 – With less than two months to go, the 5th annual Standard Bank Soweto Wine Festival happening on the 4th & 5th September at Soweto Campus, University of Johannesburg is promising to be the most predominant wine festival in South Africa, if sponsorship growth is anything to judge by.

Sponsors adding sparkle to the festival are Standard Bank with SAN Parks, Johannesburg Tourism Company, Cradle of Humankind and Pick n Pay Hyper with media partners Kaya FM, City Press and DStv. New to the sponsorship stable is Vodacom, Nederburg Wine Estate, Alto Wine Estate, JC Le Roux and 4th Street Wine.

Standard Bank has partnered with the Cape Wine Academy for the last three years to bring the Standard Bank Soweto Wine Festival to the community of Soweto.

“We intend to use this opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to the upliftment of the community of Soweto and the Agriculture industry at large, particularly the wine industry, says **Hannah Mphelo-Abbas, Gauteng Provincial Director, Standard Bank.**

Marilyn Cooper, Cape Wine Master, joint founding member of the Soweto Wine Festival and MD of the Cape Wine Academy, who are the organisers of the festival says that the skill to consistent growth even during a recession is the four-pillar approach – growth must be prevalent in equal measures in the 4 major sectors that make up the festival – the big brand sponsorship, the wine estate exhibitors, the visitors to the festival and finally, the communications around the festival. If there is failure in any one of these pillars, then the festival will not grow as it should and provide what it must – community upliftment, wine education and growth in local wine sales. She comments, “Wine is a big part of our South African heritage and has been for 350 years – we will celebrate this Soweto-Style at the festival”.

Says Babalwa Shota, City Press Lifestyle & Features Editor, “Being part of the Soweto Wine Festival is extremely exciting for us as we’ve recently established a **City Press Wine Club** and have been steadily introducing our readers to the wonders of the grape and its history on our shores, with the guidance of the Cape Wine Academy”.

Mnikelo Mangciphu, joint founding member of the Soweto Wine Festival and owner of Morara Wine Emporium in Soweto, says “I believe that the Soweto Wine Festival is a ‘must-do event’ for every South African wine label, especially empowerment farms. Black wine enthusiasts come from all over South Africa, Africa and a few international visitors. Our wineries cannot ignore the fact that the black middle class audience is worth R180billion plus and in the future will constitute around 70% of their consumers. This is the only growth market in South Africa when it comes to their products. These are their future consumers”.

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One of the new sponsors' is the Alto wine label. Says **Alto's winemaker, Schalk van der Westhuizen**, "As we mark our national industry's 350th anniversary, we can say it has truly come of age now that wine has become accessible to all South Africans. I know I speak for everyone at Alto when I say how proud we are to be associated with a festival that brings the pleasure of wine to the people".

Soweto Wine Festival statistics researched by wine.co.za year-on-year since 2005, shows collective growth in wine education, wine consumption and purchasing price decisions within the black middle class visitors.

In 2006, 43% of visitors at the festival could not name a type of wine. In 2008, 100% named a favourite type of wine, with Chardonnay peaking at 37%.

Purchasing price paid for a bottle has also significantly increased. In 2006, 32% visitors were spending up to a maximum R100 per bottle. In 2008, over 27% said they spend over R100 per bottle with 17% spending over R200 per bottle. This is a premium label audience. Not to be sniffed at.

Growth in visitors to the festival has also steadily grown. In 2005, the first festival was held over three days at Ubuntu Kraal in Orlando West and was attended by 1500 visitors with 82 wineries exhibiting. In 2006, the festival moved to the present premises University of Johannesburg and had 3000 visitors attending with 88 wineries exhibiting. In 2007, 4225 visitors came to the festival with 94 wineries exhibiting, and in 2008, 4635 black wine enthusiasts and 103 wineries packed the hall to capacity.

Says **Neo Merafi, DSTv Publicity** "DStv is proud to be part of the Standard Bank Soweto Wine Festival for the third year and we have seen the event grow in leaps and bounds. We also use this event as a means for the public to get up close and personal with the brand. We want them to feel and touch DStv at all levels".

In celebrating 5 years in Soweto and 350 years in South African winemaking, the festival is running a major "**Soweto Loves Cape Wine**" **competition** in conjunction with Pick n Pay Hyper. Winners go on an all expenses paid tour to the Cape Winelands for 3 nights.

Says **Michelle Waters, Pick n Pay Hypers National Category Strategist on Liquor**, "In line with Pick n Pays' policy and ethos, Pick n Pay Hypers believes in working with and within the communities surrounding their stores. By sponsoring an event of this magnitude, not only are we living the dream of Pick n Pay within our communities, but uplifting the community through education and enlightenment on wining and dining".

end

EDITORS NOTES

FESTIVAL DETAILS

Dates and Times:

Friday 4th September 2009 – 6pm to 10pm

Saturday 5th September 2009 – 5pm to 10pm

Venue:

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Main Hall, Soweto Campus, University of Johannesburg, Old Potch Rd, Soweto

Tickets:

R55 per person

Ticket Availability:

- At the festival
- At select Pick n Pay Hypers - Boksburg, Norwood, Woodmead, Steeledale, Northgate, Princess Crossing, Soweto and Greenstone
- At Morara Wines
- At Cape Wine Academy

More info and images: www.sowetowinefestival.co.za

Soweto Wine Festival

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