



***** MEDIA ADVISORY *****

FOR RELEASE ON: August 4, 2011

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**NEW OREGON WINE COUNTRY
LICENSE PLATE
TO BOLSTER TOURISM**

WHAT: SB 442 was signed into law today by Governor John Kitzhaber establishing the Wine Country specialty license plate, the first initiative of its kind in the nation.

Plates will be available for a \$30 surcharge due at issuance and every two-year renewal. Wine Country plate proceeds will be directed to the Oregon Tourism Commission to support the promotion of Oregon as a travel & tourism destination, and will be distributed as follows:

- 50% to matching grants for wine & culinary tourism promotion
- 50% to regional tourism agencies throughout Oregon, based on an acreage formula of grapes in production

The bill was conceived and initiated by Travel Salem and co-sponsored by Senator Jackie Winters and Representative Kevin Cameron. The Oregon Winegrowers Association provided critical guidance and advocacy on behalf of the bill.

WHY: This “jobs bill” was developed as an innovative marketing strategy to focus attention on Oregon’s culinary scene, drive new tourism revenues to support economic growth across the state, and to galvanize the tourism & wine industries. The Wine Country plate celebrates Oregon’s rich agricultural resources and world-class culinary heritage, and serves as a moving “billboard” promoting Oregon’s status as an agri-tourism hotspot. The plate provides Oregonians with the opportunity to show their support for the tourism industry and contribute toward a healthy and vibrant tourism economy.

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WHEN: Plates will be available in January 2012.

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Travel Salem is a non-profit organization that promotes the Mid-Willamette Valley as a premier, year-round destination for conventions, events and leisure travelers. Tourism economic impact for the region is \$496 million annually. Travel Salem manages the award-winning Travel Café, the official Salem area destination visitors center located at the historic Grand Hotel building (181 High St. NE, Salem), two I-5 satellite visitor information locations at the BEST WESTERN PLUS Mill Creek Inn (3125 Ryan Dr. SE) and the Red Lion Hotel (3301 Market St. NE), and a full-service travel planning website www.TravelSalem.com.

The Oregon Winegrowers Association advocates for the interests of Oregon's 849 vineyard and 419 winery owners. For more information visit www.OregonWine.org.