



Commonwealth of Virginia
Office of Governor Bob McDonnell

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 12, 2012

Office of the Governor

Contact: Jeff Caldwell

Phone: (804) 225-4260

Email: Jeff.Caldwell@Governor.Virginia.Gov

Virginia Tourism Corporation

Contact: Diane Bechamps

Phone: (804) 356-1326

Email: DBechamps@virginia.org

**Governor McDonnell Showcases Virginia Wines,
Food, Tourism and Film in Québec**

*~Governor and First Lady to introduce Virginia wines at event to
promote Virginia's wine, tourism and film industries~*

**In 2010, tourism supported 204,000 Virginia jobs; Virginia wineries and vineyards support
4,800 jobs; Virginia film supports 2,700 jobs; Virginia agriculture and forestry provide
500,000 jobs**

MONTREAL – Governor Bob McDonnell will welcome top wine and travel journalists and industry leaders at a special event taking place April 12 in Montreal to promote Virginia's wine, tourism and film industries. The event will showcase 6 wines from award-winning wineries to include Barbourville Vineyards, Breaux Vineyards, Boxwood Winery, Tarara Winery, Trump

Winery and Williamsburg Winery. The event will also feature Virginia foods, several of which are distributed in Canada, including Smithfield pork from Smithfield Foods, U.S. Certified Angus Beef, supported by Virginia's cattle farmers from GFS Montreal, Rappahannock River Oysters from ProFishionals and Dr Lucy's cookies from Satau.

“We were honored to bring these wines and local Virginia food products to Canada as part of our administration's efforts to grow the Virginia wine industry, promote tourism, and encourage film and production in Virginia,” said Governor McDonnell. “The growth of these industries is key to keeping Virginia's economy strong and providing good, quality jobs for Virginians.”

Raising the profile of Virginia wines and wine tourism are key components of the governor's economic development and jobs creation initiatives. The governor has promoted Virginia wines at the Virginia Executive Mansion and throughout Virginia, on other domestic business recruitment visits, and on international trade and marketing missions to India, Israel, and countries in Europe and Asia. First Lady Maureen McDonnell has also incorporated wine and wine tourism promotions into her First Lady Initiative Team Effort or FLITE. “I admire Governor McDonnell's continuing commitment to promoting Virginia wine by doing so in the Québec market,” said Diane Béchamps.

Virginia is home to more than 200 wineries statewide and is fifth in the nation for wine grape production. A newly released economic impact study shows that Virginia's burgeoning wine industry contributes almost three-quarters of a billion dollars - or \$747 million - annually to Virginia's economy. Virginia wineries and vineyards support 4,800 jobs that provide \$156 million total in wages. 1.6 million visitors include a visit to a Virginia winery on a trip. Wine travel in Virginia has gained many recent accolades. Virginia was recently named one of the ten best wine travel destinations in the world for 2012 by Wine Enthusiast Magazine. Tourism is an instant revenue generator for Virginia. In 2010 tourism generated \$19 billion in revenue, supported 204,000 jobs and provided \$1.2 billion in state and local taxes.

“Our upcoming event and related meetings in Montreal are important steps in the governor's strategic initiative to make Virginia an international destination for wine and wine tourism,” said Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Todd Haymore. “In addition to work done already in key domestic markets such as Washington, D.C., New York and San Francisco, the time is right to look internationally at Québec, one of the most influential wine centers in North America, to expand the reach of the Virginia wine industry.”

Tourism is a key aspect of Virginia's industry, with more than a half million Canadians welcomed to the state annually, making Canada the largest international inbound market. Canadians come to see and enjoy Virginia's rich history, scenic byways, Blue Ridge Mountains

and sandy white beaches and enjoy our award-winning Virginia wines. Driving South, Virginia is only 1,163 kilometers or 12 hours from Québec.

The Virginia Film Office is part of the state's tourism office and has had recent success luring major motion pictures to Virginia as a result investments by Governor McDonnell and the General Assembly for the Governor's Motion Picture Opportunity Fund. The production of Steven Spielberg's biopic Lincoln, which was filmed 100 percent in Virginia, had an estimated \$35 million economic impact for Virginia. The direct and indirect impact of Virginia's motion picture and video production industry in 2010 was \$345 million, representing 2,700 jobs for the state.

Visit www.Virginia.org to learn more about wine travel and other destinations across the state or call 1-800-671-4195 to request a free, Virginia is for Lovers travel guide. Visit <http://www.Virginia.org> to get more information on Virginia wines including wineries, varietals and special events statewide.

###