

**December 11, 2007**

**FRUIT WINERIES SHOULD NOT BE PENALIZED - RUNCIMAN**

(Toronto) – Leeds-Grenville MPP Bob Runciman today filed an order paper question to Minister of Public Infrastructure and Renewal in support of Countryman's Estate Winery in Maitland. The winery was recently approved to sell their Strawberry Delight Wine in a number of LCBO outlets, including Brockville, Gananoque, Kemptville, Downtown Kingston, Perth, and a variety of Ottawa area locations.

The question asked Minister David Caplan to explain why the LCBO requires Fruit wineries (QC Status) to pay a significantly higher percentage of the retail sales price than VQA wines. Runciman found out about this inequity during a recent meeting with the winery owners, Marsha and Gene Countryman.

"It is important to support an industry with significant potential for growth." said Runciman. "There is no justification for a higher taxation percentage that makes it even more challenging for what is essentially a start-up industry, to grow and prosper".