

For Immediate Release:

February 27, 2009

Media Contacts:

Annette Ringwood Boyd

Virginia Wine Board Marketing Office

804.344.8200

Annette.boyd@virginiawine.org

Marcie Siegel

Virginia Wineries Association

Events Chair

540.948.3321

massweelyholding@earthlink.com

Keswick Vineyards Wins the 2009 Virginia Governor's Cup Award

Richmond, Virginia -- From a field of 250 entries in this year's Governor's Cup Wine Competition, **Keswick Vineyards** received the distinguished 2009 Governor's Cup for their 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon. On behalf of Governor Tim Kaine, Virginia's Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Todd Haymore presented the 2009 Governor's Cup, the highest award in the Commonwealth of Virginia for a Virginia wine, to owners Cindy and Al Schornberg of Keswick Vineyards at the awards ceremony and tasting held on Friday, February 27, at the SunTrust Governor's Cup Grand Tasting held in conjunction with Virginia Wine Expo in Richmond, Virginia. When accepting the Governor's Cup, Al Schornberg commented on the many folks at Keswick Vineyards who contributed to producing the wine, including Stephen Barnard, general manager and winemaker at Keswick Vineyards.

The Keswick Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon is comprised of 75% Cabernet Sauvignon and 25% Merlot, from fruit grown on the Keswick Vineyards Estate. "What makes this wine even more remarkable is the fact that this wine needs a further 1-2 years in the bottle to fully develop." said owner Al Schornberg upon receiving the coveted Governor's Cup at the SunTrust Governor's Cup Grand Tasting that took place at the Greater Richmond Convention Center on February 28th. "The wine is inky in color, with plum, cassis and black cherries on the nose. The palate is rich with flavors of bitter chocolate, espresso and gobs of dark fruit. The wine shows tremendous complexity, even in youth and should develop secondary aromas of cedar, cigar box and truffles with cellaring."

This is the first time that Keswick Vineyards has produced a varietal Cabernet Sauvignon, tending to use it as a blender in previous vintages. Stephen Barnard, general manager and winemaker stated, "I think 2007 was a fantastic growing season and that this wine reflects the quality of the fruit. I had the pleasure making this wine and we always thought this wine was special, right from the start. For me, this is further validation of Virginia's potential as a red wine producing state."

Also awarded was Best of White to **Rappahannock Cellars** for their 2007 Oaked Chardonnay. In addition to the Governor's Cup and the Best of White honors, twenty-two other Virginia wines won gold medals at the competition this year.

The 27th Annual Governor's Cup Wine Competition, sponsored by the Virginia Wineries Association (VWA), took place in January. A panel of approximately 44 judges evaluated over 250 entries from 46 Virginia wineries across the state. After a full day of tasting and deliberation, the judges awarded 22 gold medals, 45 silver medals and 64 bronze medals. Marcie Siegal, General Manager of Sweely Estate and co-events chair of the of the Virginia Wineries Association's Governor's Cup Competition said "this was another great year for Virginia wines. It is notable that the majority of awards went to red wines this year. It is further reinforcement of a flourishing industry and the remarkable progression of the quality of Virginia wines."

The rapid growth of Virginia's vibrant wine industry has made it one of the fastest growing agricultural sectors in the state. In 1979, there were only six wineries in Virginia. Today, there are more than 140 wineries, with growth escalating as fast as the state's advancements in wine quality and reputation. For a complete list of winners and further information about events, tours and tastings, please visit the Virginia Wine Marketing Office's website at www.virginiawine.org or call 1-804-344-8200.