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Press Release
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Link between alcohol consumption and chronic disease: leading food scientist recommends ‘Mediterranean-style’ approach to wine

Lack of clarity around the correlation between alcohol consumption and chronic disease has led to inconsistent and diverging recommendations based on weak evidence, and those who drink should follow the Mediterranean model of alcohol consumption. These are the key findings of Dr. Riccardo Dalle Grave M.D., Scientific Responsible for Associazione Disturbi Alimentari e del Peso (AIDAP) and Head of the Department of Eating and Weight Disorders at the Villa Garda Hospital in Italy.



On June 21, 2022, the Irish Government proposed new regulations that would put health warnings on wine labels and all alcohol bottles sold in the country. The European Commission did not reject their draft regulation, despite attempts by other member states to block the proposal. As Italy is a key exporter of wine, with more than half of the industry’s € 14 billion annual revenue coming from exports, the Italian government and the country’s wine producers were understandably concerned about the Irish proposals and the potential risks to the Italian food and agricultural sector.

The motivation behind Ireland's labelling proposal was the need to address alcohol as a public health issue, and the warnings will read: "Drinking alcohol causes liver disease" and "There is a direct link between alcohol and fatal cancers". But the truth is that the divergence in recommendations on alcohol consumption is still extremely relevant.

The proposal, and the general confusion surrounding the relationship between diet and health in general, and alcohol consumption and chronic noncommunicable diseases in particular, prompted Dr. Dalle Grave M.D. to conduct a review of the scientific evidence.

'To establish the existence of a definite relationship between alcohol intake and disease', explains Dr. Dalle Grave, 'evidence has been sought by means of three main study methodologies. Unfortunately, each of these study methods has significant methodological limitations and has produced diverging results'. According to Dr. Dalle Grave M.D., doctors, the scientific community, and health stakeholders need solid, evidence-based data to provide recommendations to their patients and the public. He concluded: 'On the basis of our current understanding, we can only recommend to those who do not drink alcohol to not start doing so, and to those who do drink, to do so following the Mediterranean model of alcohol consumption in combination with the Mediterranean diet, an eating lifestyle that is associated with reduced mortality from all causes'.

The full article is available on the Italian Wine Podcast website at:

<https://www.italianwinepodcast.com/2023/02/08/moderate-alcohol-consumption-alcohol-abstinence-and-chronic-diseases/>

About: The *Italian Wine Podcast: Cin Cin with Italian Wine People!* launched in 2017 as a project dedicated exclusively to the Italian wine world. The program uncovers the unique world of Italian wine in conversation with some of its key protagonists. Under the umbrella brand of Mamma Jumbo Shrimp (encompassing books, maps, and videos, bringing together a global community of wine, food, and travel), Italian Wine Podcast aims to inform, educate, and entertain listeners with content for wine professionals and casual listeners alike. The only daily wine podcast in the world, content includes wine business, food & travel, diversity and inclusion, wine producers, science, and marketing and communication. Italian Wine Podcast is available on SoundCloud, iTunes, Spotify, Stitcher, XimalayaFM (for China), and on the official website. It now boasts almost 1300 recorded episodes with a growing online following of over 4 million listens. Donations to the show are welcomed and help fund a portion of the show's equipment, production, and publication costs. To advertise on the show, please request a prospectus and/or customized advertising plan from info@italianwinepodcast.com. Cin Cin!