

# WIRSPA

## NEWS ROUNDUP

### WIRSPA Meet In Jamaica, December 2019

WIRSPA directors and producers met in Jamaica last December for our bi-annual board meeting. The meeting addressed a range of regional and international trade issues, among them, WTO issues and Brexit, as well as rum standards and regulations. A substantial portion of the meeting was devoted to the industry's support for Caribbean governments efforts to reduce the harmful use of alcohol and to promote responsible drinking.

WIRSPA also took the opportunity to recognise the contributions of two recently [retired icons of the Jamaica rum industry](#), Evon Brown and Lloyd Forbes. As former directors and chairmen of the Jamaica rum industry and of WIRSPA, both Brown and Forbes worked with other WIRSPA members to ensure our brands were able to enter North America and EU markets unhindered.

Evon Brown was also part of the team that negotiated substantial funding from the EU which provided co-financing for industry modernisation and brand building investments, through the 2002 - 2016 rum programs.

Lloyd Forbes chaired WIRSPA's technical committee for many years, providing invaluable expert support to modernisation efforts, particularly among smaller regional producers.



## Social Media and GIs In WIRSPA Member States

There is an active debate in some Cariforum member states on the development of Geographical Indications. This debate is mirrored on social media where the tone of the debate has been characterized by a high level of intolerance and mischaracterization. WIRSPA members felt it necessary in December to issue a [public statement](#), calling for a respectful debate, while respecting the right to open debate and transparency.



The statement was signed by the following country representatives:

**Antigua & Barbuda:** Anthony Bento, Managing Director of Antigua Distillery Ltd.

**Barbados:** Raphael Grisoni, representing the Barbados Rum Distillers Committee and Managing Director of Mount Gay Distilleries Ltd.

**Belize:** Amanda Perdomo, Business Development Manager, Travellers Liquors Ltd.

**Dominica:** Clifton Shillingford, Shillingford Estates Ltd.

**Dominican Republic:** Mario Pujols, Executive Director of the Association of Dominican Rum Producers (ADOPRON)

**Grenada:** Fred Antoine, representing the Grenada Rum & Spirits Producers Association and General Manager of Grenada Distillers Ltd.

**Guyana:** Komal Samaroo, Executive Chairman of Demerara Distillers Ltd.

**Haiti:** Jean Marc Gardere, General Manager of Société du Rhum Barbancourt SRL

**Jamaica:** Clement Lawrence, representing the Jamaica Rum & Spirits Trade Association and Chairman of J. Wray & Nephew Ltd.

**St. Lucia:** Margaret Monplaisir, Managing Director of St. Lucia Distilleries Ltd.

**St. Vincent & the Grenadines:** Kenrick Greaves, Managing Director of St. Vincent Distillers Ltd.

**Trinidad:** Ian Forbes, COO, Angostura Limited

## WIRSPA Panel at Miami Rum Congress, February 2020

As part of our outreach to influencers and social media audiences, WIRSPA presented a [panel discussion](#) at the [Miami Rum Congress](#) on **WIRSPA: Elevating Caribbean Rum for Fifty Years and Beyond**, a look at the organisation's history and achievements since its formal inauguration in 1971.

Participating on the panel were WIRSPA's Chairman, Komal Samaroo, Head of Demerara Distillers; Anthony Bento, Managing Director of Antigua Distillery; Raphael Grisoni, Managing Director of Mount Gay Distilleries; Vaughn Renwick, WIRSPA's CEO and Matt Pietrek, WIRSPA Community Envoy (Social Media).



Matt Pietrek recently visited [Grenada Distillers Ltd.](#), [Renegade Rum Distillery](#) and the [Westerhall](#) and [River Antoine](#) estates in Grenada. He also visited [Demerara Distillers](#) Plantation Diamond facility in Guyana.

See [WIRSPA's Facebook page](#) for further details.

## Brands Showcase Planned For Guyana In May 2020

WIRSPA brands will showcase their products in Guyana, to Canadian liquor boards and selected rum influencers from 6<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> May 2020. Along with an Authentic Caribbean Rum masterclass and sampling sessions, there will also be a visit to the Demerara Distillers Rum Heritage Centre and Diamond Distillery.



Also invited to participate in the showcase are producers from the French Caribbean (Martinique and Guadeloupe) as well as prospective new affiliate brand members of WIRSPA, who will be invited as part of a new membership expansion drive.

WIRSPA will also hold its Annual General Meeting and directors meeting on the preceding days 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

## WIRSPA Technical Conference, 28 September – 02 October 2020

WIRSPA's annual [technical conference](#) will be held in St. Lucia this year, with its now established Supplier Showcase as a feature on the agenda. The showcase affords producers the opportunity to hear from a wide-ranging group of suppliers of goods and services to the industry.

Also featured are two workshop days with specialized technical presentations on areas of interest to the industry. Together with our customary distillery visit, which will be to St. Lucia Distillers, we expect another successful conference in 2020.

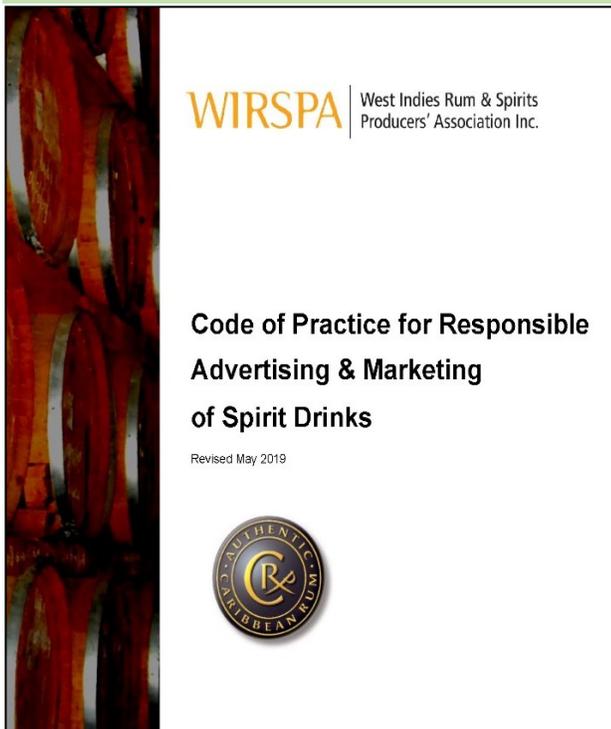
Following the very interesting and comprehensive presentations at the WIRSPA-Lallemand Caribbean Distilling Seminar in [Jamaica \(2018\)](#) and the [Dominican Republic \(2019\)](#), it is expected that this year's speakers will continue the standard of excellence through high-quality sessions.

A wide array of Caribbean rum producers, including French, Latin American and WIRSPA members are expected to participate.



The graphic features the WIRSPA logo at the top left, with the text 'West Indies Rum & Spirits Producers' Association Inc.' below it. To the right is the 'Authentic Caribbean Rum' seal. The main title 'TECHNICAL CONFERENCE 2020' is in large blue letters. Below it, the dates '28th September - 2nd October' and location 'Castries, St. Lucia' are listed. A photograph shows a group of people in hard hats and safety vests standing in front of a distillery. At the bottom, it says 'REGISTRATION OPENS ON 1 MAY 2020' and 'www.wirspa.com'.

## WIRSPA Prepares Compliance Assessment of Advertising Code



The cover features a vertical strip of colorful, abstract patterns on the left. The WIRSPA logo is at the top left, with the text 'West Indies Rum & Spirits Producers' Association Inc.' to its right. The title 'Code of Practice for Responsible Advertising & Marketing of Spirit Drinks' is centered, with 'Revised May 2019' below it. The 'Authentic Caribbean Rum' seal is at the bottom center.

As highlighted last year, WIRSPA Secretariat will shortly launch an internal assessment of the implementation of the updated [Code of Practice](#).

Launched in June 2019, the revised code has a significant section on digital markets and social media.

Also included are recommendations for internal checks and balances to help improve compliance.

WIRSPA's assessment will seek to evaluate how companies have implemented the new code since [its launch](#).

## Labelling Initiative Gathers Steam

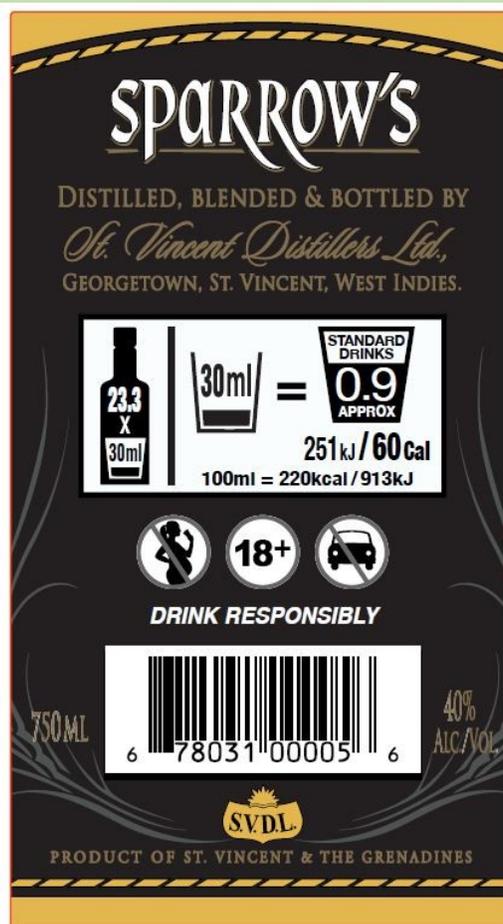
Following the announcement in June 2019 to move to upgrade labels in the regional market by June 2021, several WIRSPA producers have begun the process of introducing new labels.

For many producers the introduction of unique labelling for the regional market has been an extra cost, but nevertheless it is recognised as an important commitment to improving consumer information.

The commitment responds to a call from regional governments for a more responsible approach from the Beverage Alcohol sector, that seeks to address the harmful use of alcohol.

WIRSPA Secretariat continues to provide guidance on the new labelling recommendations and most recently addressed the design of the calorie and servings box, as it relates not just to spirits but also to cordials and liqueurs.

First out of the box on these full commitments is St. Vincent Distillers, who has incorporated the advice logos as well as the servings and calories information, on all their new labels.



## WSET Level 2 Spirits Course

Several WIRSPA producers have expressed an interest in training their staff in a broader range of spirits education. As a result, WIRSPA Secretariat is in discussion with the [Wine & Spirit Education Trust \(WSET\)](#), the leading provider of this type of education, to offer their [Level 2 Award in Spirits](#), at a competitive price.



**WSET**  
WINE & SPIRIT  
EDUCATION TRUST

This course is primarily facilitated online but the plan is also to bring participants together for a one-day, face-to-face component, which will include the final examination. There are no entry requirements for this qualification.

Contact the WIRSPA Secretariat to indicate interest and to preregister.

## River Antoine Distillery to Rebuild Furnaces

Through its ongoing technical assistance to smaller distilleries, the WIRSPA Secretariat has actively supported efforts by River Antoine Distillery in Grenada to rebuild its furnaces and chimneys, following a partial collapse in early January.



River Antoine is one of the last surviving examples of traditional agricultural rum production, with cane ground by water wheel, natural juice fermentations, and wood fired pot stills, resulting in a product much in demand locally and overseas.

## Upcoming Events - 2020

- 29<sup>th</sup> Feb – 1<sup>st</sup> March ● [Jamaica Rum Festival](#) – Kingston, Jamaica
- 4<sup>th</sup> April ● [Chicago Rum Festival](#) – Chicago, USA
- 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> April ● [Paris Rhum Fest](#) – Paris, France
- 4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> May ● WIRSPA Directors Meeting, AGM and Rum Masterclass – Guyana
- Dates TBD ● WSET Level 2 Course – Online & Face-to-Face Components
- 25<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> May ● [Worldwide Distilled Spirits Conference](#) – Edinburgh, Scotland
- 12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> June ● [New York Rum Festival & Congress](#) – New York, USA
- 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> July ● World Spirits Alliance Conference – Geneva, Switzerland
- 12<sup>th</sup> September ● [California Rum Festival & Seminars](#) – California, USA
- 28<sup>th</sup> September – 2<sup>nd</sup> October ● WIRSPA Technical Conference – Gros Islet, St. Lucia
- 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> October ● [UK Rumfest 2020](#) – London, UK

## Follow Us on Social Media



# WIRSPA

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