

WIRSPA

West Indies Rum & Spirits
Producers' Association Inc.



NEWSLETTER

6 January 2026

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Launch of WIRSPA's ESG Digest



WIRSPA launched its new **Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Digest** in December, a bi-monthly publication designed to highlight producer action across responsible drinking, community engagement, sustainability and governance. The first issue captures a wide range of initiatives undertaken during 2025 by leading producers across the region.

[The Digest](#) documents expanded responsible-drinking campaigns, strengthened marketing codes, disaster relief and community investment, alongside continued progress on renewable energy, water efficiency, waste treatment, packaging innovation and

biodiversity protection. Together, these examples reflect a high level of practical action rather than aspirational commitments.

This publication complements a forthcoming sustainability report that will take a deeper look at producer efforts to reduce environmental impact and carbon footprint through detailed case studies. Both publications form part of WIRSPA's broader effort to improve transparency and tell the industry's story more effectively.

Advancing Knowledge Through Communities of Practice

Producers closed 2025 with a shared focus on strengthening technical knowledge and collaboration in 2026. Central to this effort is the planned launch of Communities of Practice, bringing producers together around priority production and operational issues.

Initial focus areas include waste treatment, molasses, bottling and packaging, ageing and maturation, quality systems, sustainability and responsible drinking. The Communities of Practice will support regular exchange, shared problem-solving and the gradual development of collaborative R&D approaches where appropriate.

Producers also highlighted the importance of training and skills development, including in-person technical courses and internships. Together, these initiatives aim to build long-term technical capacity and support continuous improvement across Caribbean rum production.

Responsible Drinking Following Adoption of the UN NCD Declaration



Following the adoption of the UN Political Declaration on Noncommunicable Diseases in December, WIRSPA members are preparing to intensify responsible-drinking efforts at the national level in 2026. Producers see an opportunity to translate global commitments into practical, locally grounded action.

A priority will be coalition-building with other private-sector actors involved in the production, importation and retail of alcoholic beverages. Areas of focus include protecting minors from harmful advertising, strengthening age-verification practices, and raising awareness of the risks associated with drinking and driving, drinking during pregnancy and excessive consumption.

These efforts build on existing industry action, including the adoption of marketing codes, expanded responsible-drinking messaging and improved labelling. WIRSPA will continue to support members by facilitating coordination and sharing best practice across the region.

Directors and Producers Review Markets and Resilience

WIRSPA Directors and producers met in December to review market conditions and shared priorities heading into 2026. A weak US market, driven by inflation, softer consumer demand and tariffs, continues to affect brands across the region, reinforcing the need to accelerate diversification into new markets.

Directors also exchanged information on responsible-drinking initiatives implemented ahead of the festive season, with producers reporting increased investment in moderation messaging and consumer awareness during a high-risk period.

The meeting included an update from Jamaican producers on the impact of Hurricane Melissa, highlighting effects on operations, staff and communities. Early lessons underscored the importance of preparedness, staff welfare and embedding resilience planning as extreme weather events become more frequent.

WIRSPA Supplier Showcase & Technical Conference 2026

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Registration for [WIRSPA's Supplier Showcase & Technical Conference](#), to be held in Trinidad & Tobago from 18–22 May 2026, is scheduled to commence in January 2026. The conference brings together regional and international distillers, technical specialists and suppliers, with many participants representing senior decision-makers within their companies.

The conference will open with a Supplier Showcase, followed by a distillery visit on day two. The technical programme will then address key themes across fermentation, distillation, waste treatment, quality

systems, bottling, blending and ageing, alongside broader discussions on trade, supply chains and energy efficiency.

A strong cross-cutting focus will be on the growing role of artificial intelligence and automation in spirits production, maintenance and planning. Producer feedback in late 2025 strongly endorsed these themes, underlining the conference's role in supporting innovation, resilience and competitiveness across the Caribbean rum industry.

WIRSPA x TheRumLab Partnership: Tickets & Discounts

WIRSPA and @therumlab are partnering to offer **two (2) complimentary General Admission tickets** to all WIRSPA corporate members who wish to attend any of the 2026 USA Rum Educational & Grand Tasting events.

For all other attendees, a **20% discount** is available on all ticket types by using the promotional code **WIRSPA20**.

WIRSPA producers may claim their two complimentary tickets by emailing Federico J. Hernández: fede@therumlab.com and copy carolann.doyle@wirspa.com.

Additionally, brands that decide to participate in [The Ultimate Awards 2026 Best Sipping Rum](#) will receive a **5% discount** with code **WIRSPA**, which will be applicable during the week of the Miami Rum Congress.



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