

Exports will boost businesses

■ Nicky Moffat

A GLEN APLIN winery will increase production, buying in extra grapes from the region as it pushes to break into the Chinese wine market and grow existing exports to Taiwan.

Kominos Wines has exported 45 shipping containers of wine to Taiwan since it began exports 22 years ago.

Owner Tony Comino says that if Chinese citizens increased their wine

Granite Belt producers get support to grow markets

consumption by just half a litre per year, half of Australia's wines could be completely "mopped up".

Mr Comino and wife Mary, who manages the export side of the business, found out this month they'll be provided a government grant for the first time in the business' export history.

The funds will enable the Cominos to travel to China for the first time, where they

will research the market and strengthen supply chain relationships.

Growing Queensland's \$1.3-million Food Exports program supports regional producers like Kominos Wines to export break in to lucrative overseas markets and supply chains.

"China is 35 provinces of 30 million people each... they're drinking about half a litre of wine [per year],

which is what we were doing in 1970 in Australia," Mr Comino said.

"If they get to one litre, that'll mop up half of Australia's production.

"It's small increments with a big impact."

Kominos Wines sold its first shipping container to Taiwan in 1997, when there were only six wineries on the Granite Belt.

The business now has a

strong relationship with a distributor in Taiwan and has for some years been looking into the Chinese market.

"It's not our cultural background so this will help us understand the market better than we have done in the past," Mr Comino said.

He believes the biggest area for growth is through exports and said the Food Exports program showed

"great foresight". Sutton Farms, south of Cottonvale, is one of nine food companies to receive funding through the program's second round, Minister for Agricultural Development Mark Furner said. "The juices, ciders and brandy crafted at Sutton Farms are exceptional because they come straight from the orchard," he said.

"David Sutton is at the top of his game and he is every bit deserving of international exposure."

