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**ECO-FRIENDLY PRACTICES AT *THE WINE VINEYARD* EARN IT
TRAVEL GREEN WISCONSIN CERTIFICATION**

LAKE MILLS/WISCONSIN, May 27th, 2010 – Travel Green Wisconsin, a voluntary certification program that recognizes tourism businesses for reducing their environmental footprint through eco-friendly practices and the first of its kind in the country, has just announced that **The Wine Vineyard** has earned certification. For more information about Travel Green Wisconsin, a partnership of the Wisconsin Department of Tourism and the Wisconsin Environmental Initiative, visit www.travelgreenwisconsin.com.

The Wine Vineyard of Lake Mills, Wisconsin is the first business of its kind to achieve this honor. Highlights from The Wine Vineyard's checklist include: local, organic and sustainable wines are heavily promoted in its overall wine portfolio; organic, local and fair-trade products are used and sold; Cork recycling program in place, which uses used corks to produce floors, furniture, shoes and other items; wine carriers made from old barn wood and reusable wine bags are sold; and many other eco-friendly practices.

In releasing the news, Tourism Secretary Kelli A. Trumble made the point that serving the needs of eco-aware travelers is not only the right thing to do, it's good for business. "Sustainability and profitability need not be mutually exclusive," Trumble said. "All signs point to a burgeoning consumer demand for green travel in the nation, and the Wisconsin tourism industry is poised to serve this niche market, all the while continuing to grow tourism revenue for the state." She went on to say that, "With our state's history of land stewardship, it's most fitting that Wisconsin lead the nation in this."

To achieve certification, applicants must earn a minimum of 30 points from a checklist of basic requirements covering a wide range of "green" practices, including: waste reduction, reuse and recycling; energy efficiency, water conservation and wastewater management; air quality; wildlife and landscape; transportation; purchasing; and local community benefits. The Wisconsin Environmental Initiative, an independent third party, then certifies Travel Green Wisconsin applicants.

Since it was launched statewide in 2007, Travel Green Wisconsin has garnered its share of national media coverage, with stories appearing in *USA Today*, the *Chicago Tribune* and *New York Times*, and on *CNN*. The program has certified more than 270 tourism businesses to date, including hotels, resorts, B&Bs, restaurants, retail stores, tour operators, nature centers, state parks, convention centers, golf courses, and a range of indoor and outdoor attractions.

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