



Biography

John Casella, Managing Director, Casella Wines

John comes from a long line of Italian winemakers. His father, Filippo Casella moved the family from Sicily to Australia in 1962 and he created Casella Wines in 1965. John grew up at the winery in Yenda, outside Griffith in regional New South Wales where he learned many skills from his father. Wine was part of the family culture and from a young age, John demonstrated a passion and talent for winemaking.

When he graduated school he went on to formally study the art of winemaking at Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga, not far from the family winery. He graduated with a degree in Oenology in 1982 following which, he moved back to his home town of Griffith to take the role of winemaker and manager at Riverina Estate in 1983. During his time at Riverina Estate, the winery grew from a 4,000-tonne grape crush in 1983 to 25,000 tonnes in 1995.

In 1994, John joined the family business and became Managing Director of Casella Wines. In his first year, he managed a crush of 2000 tonnes under the Casella Estate label.

John's vision has always been to produce great quality Australian wine for the world. He created [yellow tail] in 2001 and selected the iconic kangaroo for the label. The Australian image had great appeal for overseas consumers.

The forecast for [yellow tail] in 2001 was 25,000 cases. Actual sales sky-rocketed to 230,000 cases. Today, Casella Wines exports 12 million cases of [yellow tail] to more than 50 countries around the world every year. It is the number-one imported wine in the US and Canada, and more than two million glasses of [yellow tail] are enjoyed around the world each day.

John celebrated the 10th anniversary of [yellow tail] in 2011. In just over ten years, he has grown the brand to be the Most Powerful Australian Wine Brand in the World and fourth Most Powerful Wine Brand globally*. The launch of [yellow tail] is considered to be the most successful launch of a wine brand in Australian history.

The winery has also won many awards. In 2004, Casella Wines won Australian Exporter of the Year and in 2005, the company was inducted into Australia's Export Awards Hall of Fame. *Impact Magazine USA* awarded Casella Wines the Hot Brand Award for [yellow tail] for seven consecutive years, 2001 to 2007.

In 2005, John was nominated as the 27th most influential person in the International Wine Industry by *Decanter* magazine, and in 2007 was nominated in *Business Review Weekly's* Top 100 Thinkers list. In 2010, *Drinks Trade* named him one of the 21 Most Influential Members of the Australian Drinks Industry.



Everything John does with Casella Wines and [yellow tail] is aimed at demystifying wine and making it easy to enjoy. By combining a passion and understanding of his heritage with a relaxed and modern Australian attitude, John has crafted wines that are extremely accessible and have wide appeal.

Casella Wines remains 100% family owned and operated. Three generations of the Casella family remain actively involved in the company and are based at the winery in Griffith, New South Wales.