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## Thistle Hill the top organic wine

AMID a boom in the number of wineries going organic, one of Mudgee's pioneers has won the inaugural award for Best NSW Organic Wine, at the NSW Wine Industry Awards.

Thistle Hill won the title with its 2009 Riesling, already well regarded after winning the coveted trophy for the Best Wine of the Show and the trophy for the Best White Wine at the 2009 Australia-New Zealand Organic Wine Show in June.

Thistle Hill 2009 Riesling, which retails for \$30 a bottle was a step ahead of its competitors, beating a field of 34 organic wines from 10 NSW wineries.

Thistle Hill has been at the forefront of the industry, growing grapes organically in Mudgee for more than 30 years, making it one of the oldest organic wine labels in Australia.

The enterprise has been producing organic wines since 1993, and is a certified Grade-A organic wine producer with the National Association for Sustainable Agriculture.

Deputy Director-General of State and Regional Development and Tourism, Barry Buffier, presenting the award, said Thistle Hill "is now one of Australia's best-loved organic wineries and a respected brand around the

world, exporting to several international wine-loving regions".

"This is the first time the best NSW organic wine has been included in the wine awards, but the success of the award and the high quality of the wines on offer means the organic industry is slowly but surely creating its own identity," Mr Buffier said.

The NSW Wine Awards were created in 1996 to build awareness of the quality of wines produced in the State.

The awards have become an indicator of the growth and diversity of the NSW industry, and recognises the potential of new regions.