

The Nelson Wine and Food Festival has been Cancelled

The Richmond Rotary Club, which has been organising the annual Nelson Wine and Food Festival, has decided to cancel the event this year. The festival was to be held at the Middle Earth Vineyard, Brightwater on Sunday 17 February.

The decision came after discussions with Civil Defence and Emergency Management and Fire and Emergency NZ officials this morning.

Club President Kevin Gear said that the organising committee had been considering the merits of going ahead or not ever since the scale of the Tasman forest fires became evident.

“Following the meeting this morning the consensus among us was that we should cancel the event for this year”, he said.

“There are two issues really - the heightened risk of a fire at the event and the demands of the event on already fatigued volunteers and the wider community.”

“ On balance we think with the increased risk of fire and the stretched professional and volunteer resources, that it would be unfair on the community to go ahead. The volunteers include our own members who have been near the fire ground serving food and working with the animal rescue team”. Kevin said.

“Everyone needs certainty, our stall holders, artists and attendees. Above all we are thinking of the community and would not want the resources that they are relying on to fight the fire and provide for their welfare to be taken away if something goes wrong at our event”.

“Can we also apologise to the many people who were planning to come to the festival. The club hopes that they understand why we have taken this decision in circumstances that are beyond our control.”

“The full proceeds of ticket presales, which are non-refundable, will be donated to the Nelson Hospice Trust which was to be the main recipient of the festival fundraiser for 2019”.