

CHINA'S CHANGYU NAMES NEW CHAIRMAN

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China's oldest winery, Changyu Pioneers, has announced a major leadership change, appointing its vice-chairman Zhou Hongjiang as its new chairman, the first change at such a high level in 20 years.



Changyu Moser IV in Ningxia province

Sun Liqiang, who has held the position for 20 years, officially retired last December but his replacement was not announced until 10 January, reported Chinese media [National Business Daily](#).

The change was hailed by the newspaper as “a new era” for the state-owned Chinese winery, as the company tries to reach a wider global audience while competing with a growing number of domestic boutique wineries from Ningxia, Xinjiang in northwestern China and the even more ambitious wine project in Yunnan by LVMH.

The oldest winery in China founded by Zhang Bishi in 1892, Changyu under the leadership of Sun has cranked up its production volume, expanding its vineyards from its original base in Shandong peninsula in eastern China to Beijing, Liaoning, Xinjiang, Ningxia and Shaanxi to a total of more than 30,000 mu (20,000 hectares).

Internationally, the winery has been championing Cabernet Gernischt (Carmenere) with its flagship 'Noble Dragon' label. The wine reportedly sold over [100,000 bottles](#) during its first 10 months on sale in Spain, reported *China Daily*.

With fierce competition from imported wines, the Chinese winery has rolled out ambitious plans and purchased a few overseas wineries in Chile, Spain, France including one of Spain's biggest producers, the Marques del Atrio winery in Rioja, hoping to sell the imported wines in the Chinese market.

The same month that Sun announced his retirement, Changyu announced yet another purchase with an [80% stake](#) in Australian winery Kilikanoon, eyeing Australian wine's growing lure in the domestic market.

Sun's replacement, Zhou, joined Changyu in 1988, and over the years has served as the company's general manager and vice chairman. In the meantime, Sun Jian will take over from Zhou as the company's new general manager.