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Constellation Brands Increases Investment in Tennessee Whiskey Maker Nelson's Green Brier™ Distillery

First venture capital investment to be fully integrated into Constellation's wine and spirits portfolio

VICTOR, N.Y., May 02, 2019 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Constellation Brands, Inc. (NYSE: STZ and STZ.B), a leading beverage alcohol company, announced today it acquired a majority stake in Nelson's Green Brier™ Distillery, marking Constellation's first ventures investment to be fully integrated into the business. Nelson's Green Brier is a craft Tennessee whiskey distillery, co-founded by brothers Andy and Charlie Nelson, that produces a variety of award-winning offerings under the Belle Meade™ Bourbon brand and is set to release a Tennessee Whiskey later this year. The majority stake by Constellation allows for Nelson's Green Brier to continue to operate with its existing management team led by Andy and Charlie Nelson, and its employees running the day-to-day operations.

Through Constellation's venture capital group, an initial minority investment was made in Nelson's Green Brier in 2016. After more than three years of collaborating, sharing consumer insights, and gaining deeper knowledge of two of the top trends in the spirits category – craft and whiskey – Constellation further solidified its goal of broadening its higher-end spirits portfolio by increasing its interest in the Nashville, Tenn. based distillery.

"Our ventures group was created to identify up-and-coming brands, and we're excited about one of our first ventures investments being folded into our portfolio," said Constellation's President and Chief Executive Officer Bill Newlands. "Whiskey is a red-hot category, and Tennessee whiskey fills a white space for us. Once integrated into our wine and spirits division and benefitting from our market reach, distributor partnerships and consumer insights, we see Nelson's Green Brier scaling even further in the next few years."

Originally established by Charles Nelson in 1860, Nelson's Green Brier became one of the most successful distilleries in the U.S. until 1909, when Prohibition became law in Tennessee and the distillery was forced to close. Nearly 100 years later, Charles's great-great-great grandsons, Andy and Charlie Nelson, rebuilt the distillery and began producing the soon-to-be released Tennessee Whiskey using the original recipe Charles Nelson used prior to Prohibition.

"Our family distillery was one of the largest producers of whiskey and spirits in the country prior to Prohibition," said Charlie Nelson. "Ever since we revived the company, our dream has been to return the Nelson's Green Brier profile to the national, and even international, marketplace. The relationship we've enjoyed over the past several years with Constellation has made it clear they're the ideal partners to help us achieve the kind of growth we've been moving toward all along, while honoring the principles our customers have come to appreciate."

“We are so thankful for the community of supporters and fans who have been with us since the beginning,” said Andy Nelson. “One of the things that’s really attractive about Constellation is that they understand the value we, as family members and founders, have. Working together, we are committed to taking Nelson’s Green Brier beyond our region.”

Terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

About Constellation Brands

Constellation Brands (NYSE: STZ and STZ.B), a Fortune 500® company, is a leading international producer and marketer of beer, wine and spirits with operations in the U.S., Mexico, New Zealand, Italy and Canada. Constellation is the No. 3 beer company in the U.S. with high-end, iconic imported beer brands such as the Corona and Modelo brand families and Pacifico. Its high-quality wine and spirits brands include the Robert Mondavi and The Prisoner Wine Company brand families, Kim Crawford, Ruffino, Meiomi and SVEDKA Vodka. The company’s portfolio also includes a collection of highly-rated wine brands such as SIMI and Mount Veeder Winery wine brands, High West Whiskey and Casa Noble Tequila, as well as new wine innovations such as Cooper & Thief and Spoken Barrel.

Based in Victor, N.Y., the company believes that industry leadership involves a commitment to brand building, our trade partners, the environment, our investors and to consumers around the world who choose our products when celebrating big moments or enjoying quiet ones. Since its founding in 1945, Constellation’s ability to see, meet and stay ahead of shifting consumer preferences and trends across total beverage alcohol has fueled our success and made us the No. 1 growth contributor in beverage alcohol in the U.S.

To learn more, follow us on Twitter [@cbrands](#) and visit www.cbrands.com.

About Nelson’s Green Brier Distillery

With a proud history reaching back well over a century, Nelson’s Green Brier Distillery was revived in 2014 by brothers Andy and Charlie Nelson, whose great-great-great-grandfather’s company was one of the largest producers of Tennessee whiskey in the United States in the pre-prohibition era. Now anchoring Nashville, Tennessee’s colorful Marathon Village, the distillery offers a portfolio of award winning small-batch Belle Meade

Bourbons, both in classic labels as well as innovative varieties within the Special Cask Finish line of Cognac, Sherry, and Madeira finishes, and the limited release Craftsman Cask Collection. Their Tennessee Whiskey, developed from the original family recipe, can be enjoyed in various age varieties through the White Whiskey and First 108 labels. The highly anticipated reincarnation of the family’s flagship spirit, the four-year aged Nelson’s Green Brier Tennessee Whiskey will be launched in 2019. Louisa’s Liqueur honors the Nelson’s great-great-great grandmother, and is the first offering of their line of liqueurs. The Nelson’s hand-crafted products have received praise from dozens of media outlets, and multiple Double Gold medal accolades from the San Francisco World Spirits Competition.

To learn more, please visit www.greenbrierdistillery.com, or Instagram at [@NGBDistillery](#). For specific questions on Nelson’s Green Brier Distillery please contact Publicist Simone Rathle at simone@simoneink.com or 703-534-8100.

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