

CHINA UPDATE

Inland Wine Region Alliance

Inland/Commercial Wine Regions are defined as Murray Darling/Swan Hill, Riverina and Riverland. The three grower organisations from these regions are represented by the Inland Wine Regions Alliance Inc. Together these three regions produced approximately 1.1 million tonnes of winegrapes with 560,000 tonnes of reds and 530,000 tonnes of whites in 2020. This represents approximately 73% of Australia's total winegrape crush.

Summary

Wine exports to China are predominantly 95%* red wine and, although affected, the three Inland regions only rely on China for about 9%* of the total red wine sales derived from red wine grapes grown in those areas. The Inland regions only rely on the Chinese bottled market for about 50,000** tonnes from a total red grape production of approximately 560,000t**. Total white wine sales volumes will not be affected by the Chinese tariffs, as the volume exported there is minimal. Despite this relatively small percentage, for the Inland regions, there will be some impact on the price that winemakers can pay for red grapes as it is a higher margin market than the alternatives.

While market indicators suggest that there is some justification for a reduction in prices of about 10% for red grapes from the Inland regions, those same indicators suggest that white grape prices should increase by 10-15%, and that robust demand could push them even higher than that.

Commentary

While China does account for nearly 40%* by value of Australia exports, only about 10% by volume of Australia's average wine production goes to China. Australia exported approximately 175,000t* equivalent of wine to China from the 10-year average crush of approximately 1.75* million tonnes. Due to the low tonnage produced in 2020 Australia

was going to have to reduce sales by the equivalent of about 240,000** tonnes on the previous 12 months sales due to lack of supply.

In 2020 Australia produced 1.52* million tonnes of winegrapes, but in the year ending October 2020 had sold the wine equivalent of 1.1** million tonnes on the export market, and 660,000***tonnes on the domestic market for a total of 1.76** million tonnes.

The top four consumer countries in 2019-20 are Australia at 660,000** tonnes, United Kingdom at 365,000** tonnes, USA at 185,000** tonnes and then China at 175,000** tonnes.

Inland sourced wine is predominantly exported in the below \$5/L Free on Board (FOB) for bottled wine and below \$2.50/L FOB for unpackaged wine, commonly referred to as the commercial wine sector. This sector accounts for approximately 82%* by volume of all exports of Australian wine.

If Inland wine producers can spread the commercial wine that was destined for China through the other 116 countries it exports to, at the current UK prices, the outcome is not as dramatic as some are predicting.

We must remember that most of the difference in price between the bottled and unpackaged wine is the cost of the packaging. The value of the wine is similar whether it is bottled or unpackaged.

Despite the problems with China and Covid-19, commercial, unpackaged export wine prices are on average, 7%* above where they were in October 2019 and bottled commercial wine is only 1%* down

- despite a 33%* reduction in the volume of exports to China from what they were in the October 2019. This is primarily due to winemakers' success in their exports to the UK. The UK market has risen by 12% in volume, with a corresponding rise in prices of 14% for bottled and 12% for unpackaged wine. The challenge will be in convincing our other markets to take the wine and will require a concentrated industry effort. There may be an opportunity for this through Wine Australia diverting any unspent portion of the \$50 million marketing funds toward the rest of the world away from the scheduled Chinese promotions.

Sensibly the majority of commercial winemakers who source fruit from the Inland regions have maintained their relationships with markets in the other export destinations and are not dependent on China to a great deal. Interestingly many of the major destinations have seen an increase in the volume of commercial wine sold, which has increased demand from Australia.

The major risk is for the smaller wine producer who had no choice but to go to

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Notice Board

Congrats MVWI Chair, Chris Dent

Congratulations to MVWI Chair, Chris Dent, on being shortlisted in the Young Gun of Wine - Top 50 Finalists in the Inaugural Vineyard of the Year Awards. Good luck Chris!

Welcome on board Antoinette

We are pleased to welcome Antoinette McAlinee to MVW as our newly appointed Finance & Administration Officer.

You will be greeted by Antoinette's pleasant disposition when you phone or call into the office – we are sure that she will be a valuable asset to MVW.

Please make yourself known to Antoinette at the various functions we hold throughout the year.

MVW Annual General Meeting

The Murray Valley Winegrowers Annual General Meeting was held on December 17th. Thank you to those who were able to attend, and a special thanks to Jim Caddy, Chair, Inland Wine Regions Alliance for his industry presentation.

MVW Business Directory

We are compiling a list of vineyard contractors, suppliers and services for the MVW business directory. If you want to recommend any business please contact the MVW office or ask the business to contact us direct. We are aiming to include this directory on our website in the new year.

MVW Forum

Due to government restrictions on public gatherings through most of the year and availability of speakers due interstate travel restrictions as a result of COVID 19, we have cancelled our 2020 MVW Forum.

MVW is still looking to hold some smaller shed meetings to update growers on what is happening in the wine industry and re-unite with industry colleagues in an informal environment.

We still intend to hold a forum in 2021 during the months of May or June.

Grapes for Sale Register

A friendly reminder the 2021 Wine Grapes for Sale Register is now open for listings.

Wineries are seeking fruit for next vintage & they often contact MVW for leads on fruit availability and that is when the register becomes very useful.

The Wine Grapes for Sale Register is a free service that simply connects growers with buyers. MVW advises wineries of the varieties available in the Murray-Darling and Swan Hill regions, based on the information on our register.

We do not inform wineries of details of registered growers without your permission or advise them of total available tonnes.

Dog Book

Available at the MVW office or use the AWRI App

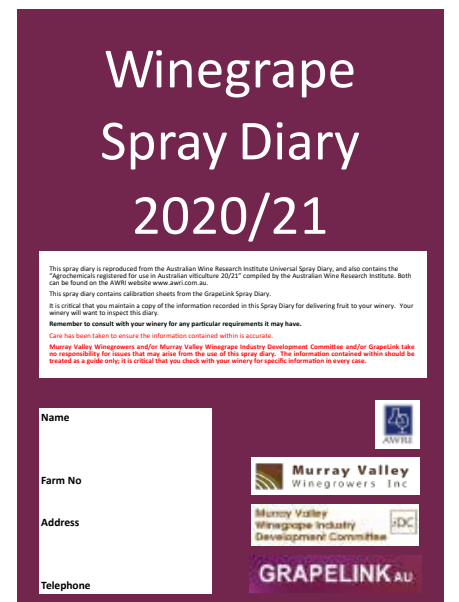
The 2020-21 edition of the Agrochemicals registered for use in Australian viticulture ("the Dog Book") is now available – it can be viewed online at awri.com.au or via the Agrochemical App. A hard copy is also available at the MVW office.



Dog Book

Spray Diary

The 2020-21 Wine Grape Spray Diary is now available; pick one up at the MVW office (54 Lemon Ave.) or phone the office 03 5021 3911 or email mvw@mvwi.com.au to arrange a copy to be mailed to you.



Murray Valley
Winegrape Industry
Development Committee
www.mvwi.com.au

Murray Valley Winegrowers MVW News & Views

DECEMBER 2020

Published by: Murray Valley
Winegrowers Inc

Editor: Paul Derrico

Email: paul@mvwi.com.au

Representing winegrape growers in the Murray Valley region within the Shires of Wentworth and Balranald, and Rural Cities of Mildura and Swan Hill.

Murray Valley Winegrowers Inc
54 Lemon Avenue, Mildura 3500
PO Box 2745, Mildura, Victoria
3502

Phone: (03) 5021 3911

www.mvwi.com.au

China update *continued from cover*

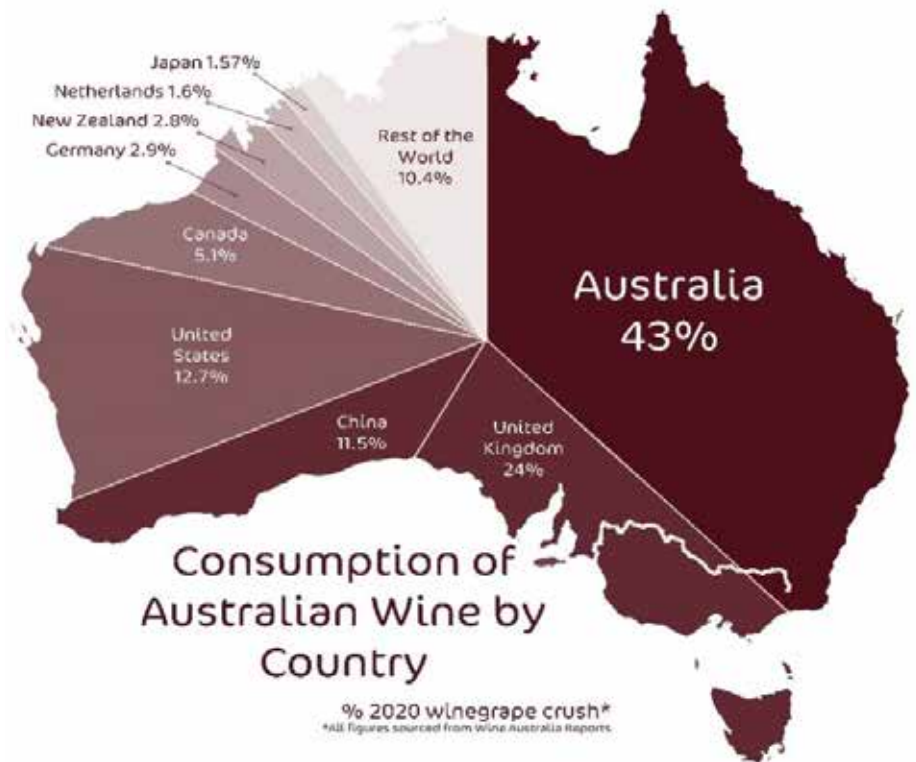
China as they needed the higher returns in order to pay the increased grape prices to secure fruit. Some of these producers may have to lower prices for wine to get rid of it, creating downward pressure on prices for red wine, or they may pull out of the industry all together. Pre COVID-19, many of these wine producers would have been able to travel to alternate markets to promote their wine, however due to travel restrictions they now must try to sell from a distance.

Due to the below average harvests of 2019 and 2020, and good sales volumes to date, the stock of Australian wine is relatively low. This is demonstrated by the depletions of 2020 wine being well ahead of 2019 depletions at the same time last year. This indicates that stock levels of wine are even lower than last year, which were well below the 10-year average.

The commercial wine sector is in a relatively good position to weather this disruption. Whilst some smaller grape buyers will not be buying fruit due to their reliance on China, the majority of winemakers who purchase fruit from the Inland regions have strong domestic and export sales that will need to be supplied.

Unfortunately, we are already seeing some major retailers trying to pressure winemakers to lower their prices for commercial wine, despite increasing sales in the commercial sector. There will be some small winemakers who will sell wine at distressed prices due to a myriad of reasons, however, the majority of larger wine companies have relatively low stock levels and will need to resist this predatory action.

Our major competitor countries on the export markets have only had average to slightly below average vintages, so will



Percentage of Australian Wine Consumption by Country

not have excess wine to compete with us. They will also expect to increase sales into China as a replacement for Australia, which will open opportunities in their previous markets.

The major implications of the Chinese tariffs are for the cool climate regions, where a larger percentage of their production has been sold, and there are few opportunities to sell elsewhere. This may encourage wine producers in these regions to lower their prices to try and increase sales, which will not be good for the industry as a whole.

The commercial wine sector will need to not panic and resort to discounting as this

only leads to problems in the future when trying to improve prices. We need to have confidence that the product produced is of a quality and style that will hold up at current prices, and resist the predatory advances of wine retailers. A 50,000t** reduction of sales in the red sector which currently sells about 560,000t** is not a problem, and can be overcome with some good planning and execution.

Considering that Australia has sold the equivalent of 1.76 million tonnes over the past year, we were going to have to reduce these sales by approximately 240,000 tonnes due to the low vintages of 1.72* million tonnes in 2019 and 1.52* million tonnes in 2020.

As there is very little stock due to the below average grape crops of the last two years and good sales volumes over the past 12 months commercial industry producers are in a much stronger position than during the last time we had problems. The one thing we do not need is for panic to be the main driver of wine and wine grape prices.

* All figures are sourced from Wine Australia (W.A.) reports

**Conversion Rate of 703 Litres/tonne as per W.A. 2018-2019 Production Sales Inventory Report.



Winemakers urged to sign up to amended Code *By Christine Webster*

Australian Grape & Wine is calling on all winemakers to become signatories to the amended Code of Conduct for Australian Winegrape Purchases prior to vintage.

It is placing particular emphasis on encouraging wineries with a processing capacity of more than 10,000 tonnes to sign up.

The revised code of conduct is in response to the ACCC's study on the wine grape market, which was released in September last year.

Australian Grape & Wine launched the amended Code of Conduct for Australian Winegrape Purchases in October this year.

It contains considerable improvements over the previous version.

The revised code calls for greater levels of transparency around harvest and delivery arrangements and the indicative pricing requirement has been removed.

Australian Grape & Wine Chief Executive

Tony Battaglione said the amendments also requires pricing mechanisms to be transparent, but the code maintains appropriate flexibility as to how price may be determined.

He said some new rules regarding quality assessment for the purpose of affecting price have been introduced and the dispute resolution procedure has been improved and expanded.

"A voluntary code, developed for industry by industry, compared to a mandatory code, enables industry to retain a desirable level of flexibility," Mr Battaglione said.

"This also means that winemakers and growers can enter into mutually beneficial commercial arrangements without undue regulatory barriers."

Australian Grape & Wine is also seeking a significant improvement in the number of winemaker signatories to retain the advantage of an industry owned code.

More information about the amendments to the Code of Conduct for Australian Winegrape Purchases can be found at wineindustrycode.org.

Here is a link to a recording of a webinar, which was held in October, which further explains how the code has been improved. You can watch the recording of the webinar "Code of Conduct Q&A Webinar_8 October 2020", which was held in October, which further explains how the code has been improved on Australian Grape & Wine YouTube channel.



Tony Battaglione

MVW views on Code *By Christine Webster*

The amended Australian Winegrape Purchases Code of Conduct still doesn't adequately address the needs of growers, according to MVW Executive Officer, Paul Derrico.

Australian Grape & Wine Incorporated (AGWI) released the new voluntary code, in October.

Paul Derrico and Riverina Winegrape growers Chief Executive Officer, Brian Simpson were both observers on the Australian Grape & Wine Incorporated code of conduct review committee.

Paul Derrico said while the Inland Wine Region's Alliance (IWRA) were represented on the review committee, some of their concerns were not addressed.

"Growers have been consulted via our (IWRA) representation on the Code committee," he said.

"However, given the Code is a winery document they have decided to "defer" some of our requests and suggestions."

Mr Derrico welcomed the improved clauses relating to quality and colour assessments.

The new code has introduced new rules regarding the assessment of grape colour and brix based on industry endorsed

standard procedures.

Mr Derrico also acknowledged there had been some improvement to the dispute resolution process, but said it still needed to better address critical/time sensitive issues.

Changes have also been made to the code, in an attempt to make pricing mechanisms more transparent.

The indicative pricing requirement has been removed.

However, Mr Derrico said the changes still mean growers are only informed about the price wineries will pay for their grapes, on the second Wednesday of December prior to vintage.

Mr Derrico said this still didn't help growers, and it should be possible for wineries to release price offers much earlier before vintage.

"Growers put time, effort and cost into producing a crop and are only finding out just before harvest what they might be paid."

I would still like to see improvement with pricing transparency, to enable growers to know who is paying what, for comparative purposes," he said.

Mr Derrico said the code still needed to include better payment terms for growers.

The amended code of conduct is still recommending growers should still at least be paid their payments in thirds, despite acknowledging it isn't best practice.

Under this system, the first payment is received 30 days after delivery, the second by June 30, and the balance by the end of September.

Mr Derrico said the code should be amended to follow the ACCC's recommendation that long- term payment terms be phased out and growers be paid within 30 days.

"Although it is good to see a few wineries in our region providing improved terms as a point of difference to attract fruit," he said.

Mr Derrico is urging growers ahead of vintage to consider whether the winery they are dealing with is a signatory to the Code, even though it has its shortcomings.

"It is better to be protected by the Code than not at all," he said.

"You also need to consider buyers who are offering a fair and reasonable price, don't always accept the first deal, unless you are satisfied it is a good price.

"Hopefully, the payment terms are also an improvement on the standard 1/3 x 3."

Devoted to controlling plant diseases *By Christine Webster*

Plant pathologist Peter Magarey who is based at Loxton, in the Riverland, has devoted his career towards trying to combat vine diseases.

He compiles the GrowCare e-News, a disease and pest information service to alert grape growers of the risk of vine diseases in the Murray Valley and Riverland.

Peter's intention when he started studying an Agricultural Science Degree at the University of Adelaide's Waite institute was to return to work on his family's pear orchard, at Coromandel Valley in the Adelaide Hills.

But he was encouraged by his mentors and peers to apply for a Plant Pathologist job with the then Department of Agriculture at Loxton, which he was appointed to in 1976 and remained in the role for 33 years.

"As a Christian, the Lord had other ideas for me," Peter says.

His first contact with the viticultural industry and the fungal disease, downy mildew, came not long after taking up his posting in the Riverland.

Downy mildew arrived in Australia in 1917 and began slowly spreading in the 1950s. However, Peter says record rainfalls across Australia in the 1973-1974, and 1974-1975 seasons meant it spread like wildfire, when little was known about this devastating disease.

"People were bereft of knowing what to do, and in my course of study in the Riverland, I visited vineyards, which were completely defoliated by downy," he says.

Peter's predecessor, Peter Dry had done some initial research on downy mildew before he left to become a lecturer in viticulture, at the University of Adelaide's Roseworthy Campus.

"I came into a slot that was readied for me with thousands of questions," Peter says.

"I was answering, I don't know, or I am sorry I will find out for you," he recalls.

But Peter was determined to help growers find ways to get on top of downy mildew and using his school boy French, which he failed in year 10, and teaching himself some German he began to understand the research European pathologists had done on downy.

"It was before the days of the internet and even faxes," he says.

"The way I learnt was by going to the journals and publications, which in those days scientists in Germany and France published in their own languages."

He was then better able to conduct his own research and field experiments in the Riverland using the best methods to control downy mildew.

It wasn't long before Peter became an internationally recognised expert himself on vine diseases such as downy and powdery mildew.

His dedication to plant pathology and the Riverland community earned him an OAM in 2017.

"My research determined that downy mildew is likely to occur, to put it simply, if there is 10 millimetres of rain or more, at a temperature of 10 degrees or more over a 24-hour period," Peter says.

Peter realised to help growers improve their disease control, information was needed in a format that was quick and easy to understand.

In 1992, he joined forces with his cousin Roger, who was also a plant pathologist based in Irymple with the Victorian Department of Agriculture, to write "The Downy Mildew Rap."

This became widely used in the grape industry as a guide for when to spray their

vines with fungicides, enabling growers to keep the downy mildew disease at bay.

Peter and his plant pathology colleagues also studied the epidemiology of powdery mildew and black spot, which can also cause headaches for growers in Sunraysia and the Riverland.

Peter and Roger then wrote two more songs for wine grape growers "The Pirates of Powdery Mildew," and "The Black Spot Blues."

After being made redundant in 2009, Peter and his wife set up Magarey Plant Pathology.

They co-founded GrowCare, which now provides growers in the Murray Valley and Riverland with much more precise information on the risks of downy and powdery mildew and other plant diseases. Peter who was a Churchill Fellow in 1991, has with international colleagues, also played a key role, in having Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) installed in vineyards of the Riverland and Sunraysia. These assist wine grape growers in identifying when downy or powdery mildews pose a danger.

The first AWS were installed in vineyard monitoring sites in the Riverland and Sunraysia in the 1980s.

MVW now owns 11 AWS in the Murray Darling and Swan Hill regions, it recently replaced nine of the original ones and purchased two new ones.

Peter says the AWS placed in the canopy of vines, measure temperature, humidity, rainfall and leaf wetness providing information to precisely assess the risk of downy and powdery in Sunraysia from his office in Loxton and prepare them with regular e-news updates.

Wine grape growers in the Murray Valley can also remotely access this information. "If you are a grape grower in Mildura, you can go to the cricket at the MCG and still check your weather data from down there," he says.

"You can then know whether you should be home spraying, or you can watch the cricket for a bit longer."



Peter Magarey

MVW Weather Stations

Murray Valley Winegrowers recently installed a network of 11 new mini Weather Stations between Ellerslie, NSW and Lake Boga, VIC. This network expands on two smaller networks through Sunraysia that were also supplied by MEA and installed by Jeff from Mitchell Agronomy, who provides ongoing local support. Other networks through the region include 10 Weather Stations that were funded

by Lower Murray Water (<https://www.awnetwork.com.au/lower-murray-water>), and another 3 in-canopy stations through Dried Fruits Australia.

Each of these Weather Stations are linked to GrowCare's disease alerting service, and now also to the GrapeWatch App that offers a smartphone app to do the same thing (currently under trial).

The Murray Valley Winegrowers network is the latest in a series of Weather Station networks that MEA has supplied throughout Australia, including over 175 sites in Western Australia and 85 sites in South Australia covering the Riverland, Murraylands, Mallee, and South East. MEA has also deployed smaller networks into key wine grape growing regions including Langhorne Creek (4 sites), McLaren Vale (9 sites), Barossa Valley (28 sites, 6 of which are publicly available), Mudgee (5 sites), Riverina (10 sites), Southern Highlands, Tumbarumba, Canberra and the Hilltops region (8 sites).

Wherever permissible, MEA facilitates the sharing of weather station data from these networks with growers who are using Green Brain for soil moisture monitoring. Any of these Weather Station networks where the data is also hosted in Green Brain has optional API access for 3rd party add-ons. This allows local weather data to be shared to other providers. The Murray Valley weather stations have been linked to GrowCare (and to the recently released GrapeWatch App) in order to provide alerts for common fungal diseases that impact vines.

About MEA

Measurement Engineering Australia Pty Ltd (MEA) is an Australian manufacturer of on-farm monitoring technology that was founded in 1984. MEA designs and builds hardware and software products to support irrigation scheduling decisions through the use of soil moisture monitoring, local weather measurement and irrigation system monitoring.



New weather station



MVW weather stations network in the Murray Valley

Proud to be showcasing Murray Darling Wine

The owners of Sunraysia Cellar Door, Greg and Suzanne Christensen are passionate about supporting Murray Darling wine producers.

In 2013, the husband and wife team opened the doors of Sunraysia Cellar Door after spending 12 months working on a concept plan to house wines from the Murray Darling region under one roof.

On offer to taste and buy are more than 250 wines from 22 Murray Darling wine producers.

The central cellar door in 2016 won the NSW, Victoria Inland Regional Tourism Awards' Tourism, Wineries, Distilleries and Breweries category.

Greg says he is proud to showcase the wine produced in this wine region and dispel the myth from some interstate consumers, that it only produces cask wine.

"The Murray Darling Wine region produces high quality fruit at affordable pricing per tonne, which allows the wineries to produce quality wines and be price competitive in the world market," he says.

Greg says Murray Valley wine growers have a reputation globally, for producing high quality grapes, in mainstream varieties

such as shiraz, cabernet sauvignon, and chardonnay.

He says they also should be proud of their alternative varieties, which include Sangiovese, Tempranillo, and Vermentino.

Lifetime in liquor

Born and bred in the region, Greg has spent all his working life in the liquor industry and his first job after leaving school was pouring beers at the Mildura RSL Club.

Greg grew up on the family's wine grape, almond and citrus property at Nangiloc, but when he turned 18, decided to leave Sunraysia.

"I said to Mum and Dad, I am sick of this, I am going around Australia, I will come back in five years' time," he recalled.

"I only knew one person in another part of Australia and that was my Uncle in Hervey Bay, in Queensland."

So off he went and returned to Mildura 13 years later!

Greg gained valuable experience in Queensland working for Carlton United Breweries, firstly as a bar manager and then in hotel management.

He worked for the company for ten years in Cairns, Katherine in the Northern Territory, Tasmania, Perth, Melbourne, and Adelaide. Greg has also worked in key sales management roles for Metcash, one of Australia's largest independent supermarket wholesalers and for fruit packer and processor, the Irymple Group, which was sold in 2005.

He developed a valuable insight into the wine industry, working for one of Australia's top ten family owned wineries, Andrew Peace Wines for eight years.



Owners of Sunraysia Cellar Door, Greg and Suzanne Christensen.

He sold wine all over the world from his home office in Mildura, as well as looking after the Australian distribution.

Greg then came up with the idea of setting up Sunraysia Cellar Door.

He has transformed the former family owned funeral parlour on the corner of Mildura's Lime Avenue and Tenth Street into a vibrant cellar door business and a Friday night wine bar.

Melburnian influx

The relaxing of COVID-19 travel restrictions in Melbourne and regional Victoria at the end of October, means business has started to boom at the cellar door in Mildura's CBD, with tourists eager to sample and buy wine from the Murray Darling region.

"Everyone is here to spend at the moment, the Melburnians are here to spend, which



Sunraysia Cellar Door has more than 250 wines from the Murray Darling wine region on offer.

Proud to be showcasing Murray Darling Wine continued

is good," Greg told MVW News & Views in early December.

The six-month closure caused by COVID-19, didn't impact too much on Sunraysia Cellar Door's business, as people were still keen to order from the online store.

Greg was also looking forward to South Australians visiting again after the COVID-19 border restrictions were lifted on December 1, as they also enjoy purchasing Murray Darling wines.

Greg said Victorian cellar door operators have been severely disadvantaged during the pandemic by having to close during the lockdown period, while major supermarket liquor outlets remained open.

"The little licensed outlets like ours all had to shut down, that is what the Premier said we must do," he said.

"The message was that people were likely to get the virus if you visit a cellar door, but Coles and Woolies remained open and had free rein in every business they owned."

"Their businesses have gone through the roof and ours were shut down for six months, which I just think was the most ridiculous thing to ever happen in this country, but that is how much power Coles and Woolworths have."

Ensuring wine from the Murray Valley is better represented and more readily available is one of Sunraysia Cellar Door's major achievements.

Greg's model has also attracted interest from other regional areas, including the Riverland.

Greg said 85 per cent of all wine for the domestic market in Australia is sold by Coles and Woolworths.

"If you are not part of this, then you don't have a route to market," he said.

Greg believes other wine regions such as the Riverina in NSW or the Yarra Valley would benefit from having a central cellar door like his.

"There are a lot of wine producers that don't have cellar doors, so if you could get every winery under one roof in those regions, that is how they could get a route to market," he said.

Show success in challenging times

Despite a year of adversity, from bushfires to travel bans and border closures, the Australian Alternative Varieties Wine Show (AAVWS) stayed true to their reputation of innovation and 'more than just a wine show' by presenting their 20th Show in November.

By locking in regional Victorian judges and stewards and creating a safe working environment the Show went ahead and were buoyed by the response from sponsors and exhibitors. The local wine industry stepped up to provide the majority of judges, all of whom belonged to the AAVWS judging alumni. These included Jonathan Creek, Zilzie Wines; Elizabeth Marwood, Lenologa Wines/Treasury Wines; Donna Stephens, Cappa Stone Wines; Shane Kerr formerly

of Trentham Estate, Tennille Chalmers, Chalmers; Pia Merrick, Qualia Wine; Aidan Menzies, Duxton along with Stefano de Pieri, Stefano's Restaurant.

Judges worked their way through over 560 wines, representing 95 unique varieties from 137 exhibitors across 55 wine regions resulted in 59 Gold, 94 Silver and 205 Bronze medal winning wines.

Chief of Judges, Sophie Otton, was online for the entire Show, beamed in on a large screen, supporting the judging and trophy process, according to Ms Otton.

"2020 AAVWS has been an interesting exercise in adaptability with my supervising the show from NSW, while our talented judges do all the heavy lifting. Despite this unusual scenario, it has proven a success in

that the judges have argued for the top wines through rigorous and convincing discussion.

The opportunity to glean a fascinating snapshot of the alternative varietal wine scene sets this event apart from all the regional and capital shows in Australia.

On Friday 6 November at 6pm the AAVWS team and judges participated in a live streaming award presentation with guest speakers beamed in from Adelaide, Sydney and New York.

Results include

Best Wine of Show: Hahndorf Hill Winery 2020 White Mischief Gruner Veltliner

Best Murray Darling Region Wine: Trentham Estate 2020 The Family Sangiovese Rose

The Show continued with [All] Talk & [No] Taste, a series of Facebook live events which took place on 24 November at 8pm where Celebrity Cook & AAVWS co-founder Stefano de Pieri sat down with Winemaker Elizabeth Richardson, who holds a Masters of Gastronomy from the University of Gastronomic Sciences in Italy, to create and share a meal, where the fare on the table and in their glasses was sourced locally.

Full Results and upcoming events at www.aavws.com



2020 AAVWS Judges

Wine Australia Regional Program

Apps on the move to support Murray Valley growers

The Murray Valley Regional Program is going hi-tech with the development of two apps to support growers.

The first app aims to provide growers with real-time, localised disease control alerts and strategies; while the second app will assist growers with irrigation scheduling and budgeting.

The Vine Disease Alert System aims to deliver information directly to growers in a form that is simple, timely and easy to manage.

'A beta version of the app will be available during the 2020-21 season. We will then undertake a period of ground-truthing and refinement based on the feedback of growers during the season,' said Paul Derrico, Executive Officer of Murray Valley Winegrowers Inc.

A final version of the app is expected to be available for the beginning of the 2021-22 season.

The roll out of the app will be driven by accompanying extension activities, a forum to demonstrate the system and accompanying fact sheet and publicity through the Murray Valley Winegrowers website.

The second app, an irrigation scheduling and budgeting app, aims to provide growers with daily recommendations regarding water applications.

It is part of a research project led by Dr Vinay Pagay, a lecturer in viticulture and vineyard engineering at the University of Adelaide, who is developing a tool that will allow growers to schedule irrigation precisely based on real-time measurements of vine water status in conjunction with UAV-based remote sensing.

The app will be supported by data provided by the Murray Valley Winegrowers Weather Station network, which consists 11 units in the Murray-Darling & Swan Hill regions.

Murray Valley also has a number of innovative projects slated, including a project to raise awareness of the opportunities presented by warm region grape varieties.

'Many traditional varieties sourced from warm regions in Spain, Portugal and Italy have recently shown great promise under the Murray Valley's warm growing conditions,' said Paul. 'While production is currently very limited, the resultant wines have been very well regarded, including in wine shows.'

Paul said the next step was to take a strategic approach and raise the awareness of the opportunities of the varieties to the Region's stakeholders, including growers and larger wineries.

'We aim to hold a seminar for industry stakeholders with presentations from a range of growers and winemakers with experience with the varieties. This will also include comparative wine tastings.'

This activity will be coordinated with Riverland Wines, with similar programs

being run sequentially in both regions. In other activities:

Sustainable Wine Growing Australia regional workshops

A series of four Sustainable Winegrowing Australia (SWA) workshops will be rolled out across the Murray Valley in the next 12 months. The workshops will focus on promotion of the SWA program and sustainable management practices such as soil health, water, and integrated pest management.

Vine Health Workshop

Pest and disease pressures remain constant in the Murray Valley and growers require ongoing updates on changes to agrochemical registrations, control strategies and spray practices. An annual workshop/video conference or series of webinars to update growers is proposed.

Building resilience to drought and a water constrained future

The prolonged drought across much of south eastern Australia has resulted in a much smaller annual harvest that has been observed for more than a decade. The ongoing low inflows into the Murray Darling Basin will mean that growers will be faced with production pressures for growing season in future years. Activities will focus on workshops that can assist grape growers and winemakers manage with reduced water and adapt to a water constrained future.

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Preparing for a high Qfly year

Growers may experience more serious problems with Queensland fruit fly (Qfly) this season, with a La Niña event underway and affecting south eastern Australia.

Higher than normal rainfall and warmer nights over summer, along with increased soil moisture, higher relative humidity, weed growth and other conditions that come with La Niña, are favourable to the survival and spread of Qfly.

Entomologist Andrew Jessup anticipates more Qfly problems in 2020–21, and more problems in home gardens and commercial blocks in 2021–22, unless timely and adequate Qfly management options are in place.

“Fruit flies may become out of control if not monitored at least weekly, even if it is raining,” Andrew said.

“Monitoring means using traps to check for the presence and severity of Qfly, checking fruit for signs of infestation, and checking around your property for fruit fly host plants that should be managed by removal or protection.”

Andrew has put together a guide on the effects of La Niña on Qfly, which is available from the Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area (GSPFA) website: <https://www.pestfreearea.com.au/newsletter>



Queensland fruit fly

GSPFA regional coordinator Narelle Beattie said in years with high Qfly pressure, crop loss may be experienced by industries that aren't normally impacted, such as wine grapes.

“The Hunter Valley experienced this in 2007 to 2008 due to elevated Qfly populations as a result of mild and wet winters,” Narelle said. Narelle also reminded growers not to forget

about the non-commercial fruit trees on their properties.

“Do you have fruit trees on your property – around the house, at the back of the shed, or near the pump or pickers hut? It could be these trees that shelter fruit fly from the cold and dry conditions during winter, and the fruit can be infested from spring to autumn,” she said.

“If your neighbours are growing stone fruit, citrus, avocados, or table grapes, you are supporting them and your community by removing any non-commercial host trees from your property.

“You can also reduce the risk by putting nets over them or spraying them.”

If you would like more information on managing Qfly, the Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area are here to help. Visit the website www.pestfreearea.com.au or contact : (03) 50 220 327 or gspfa@mildura.vic.gov.au



Manage your **water** & keep up to date

Step 1. Visit www.lmw.vic.gov.au and click on Manage your water/Water ordering.

Step 2. An information box will appear, click **continue**.

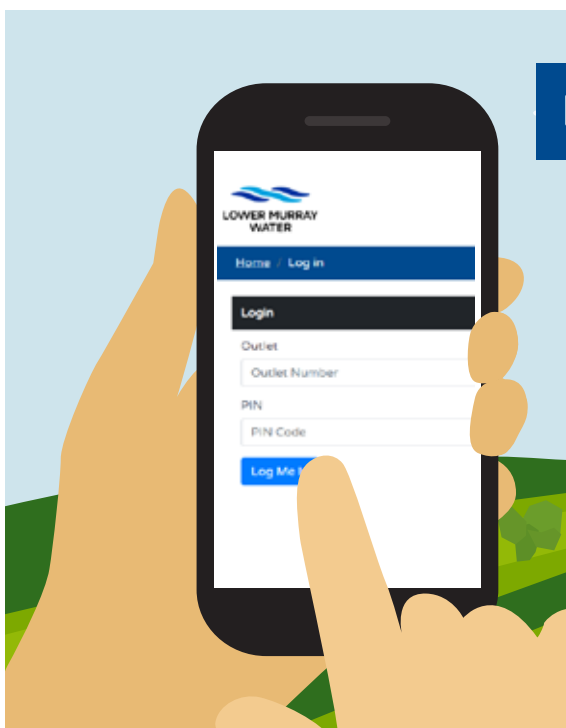
Step 3. To log in you will need your **outlet number** and **PIN code**. You can find this information on the back of your bill.

Step 4. If you need to update your contact details to receive SMS or email notifications, click on the **update info** button on the main page.

Step 5. Your **Allocation Account (ABA)** must always have a **positive balance**. Click on **assessment** at the top of the page to check your ABA.

Your **ABA summary** shows your current balance. You should allow for any usage since your last meter reading. To calculate this usage, go to the bottom of the page and enter your current meter reading.

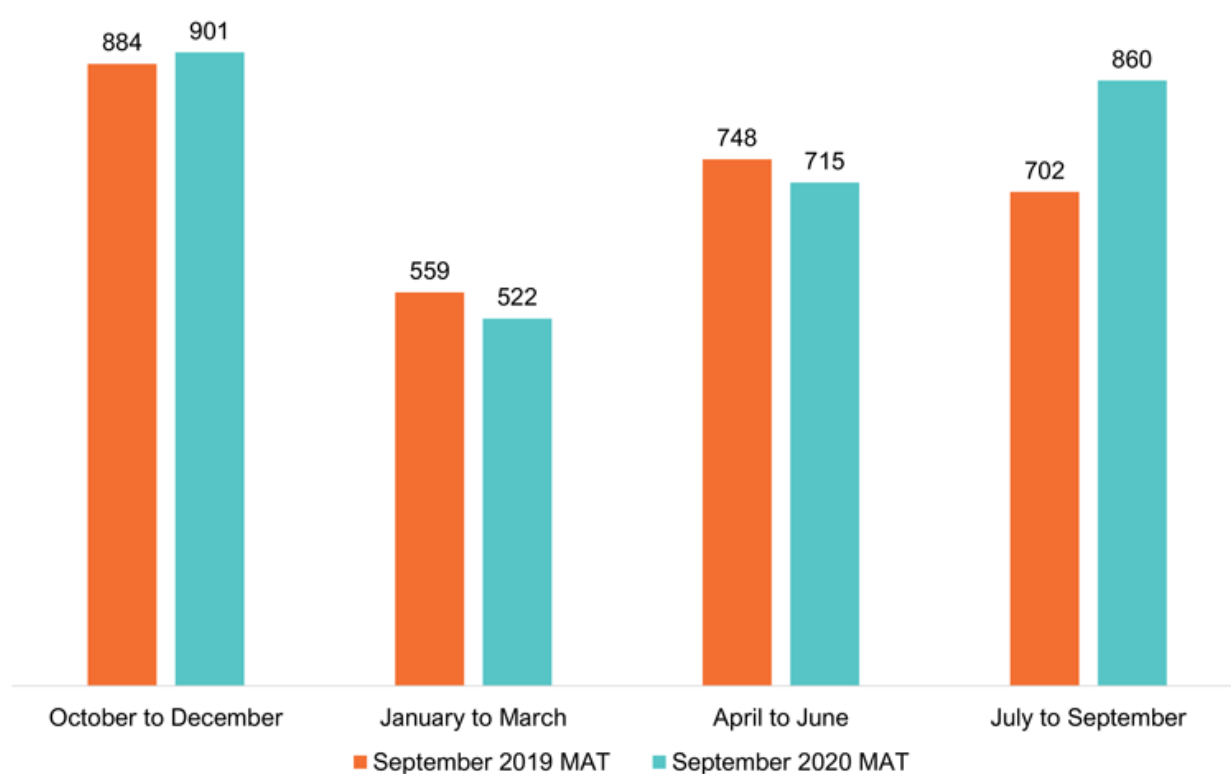
For more information visit www.lmw.vic.gov.au/manageaba



Wine Australia - Value of Australian wine exports grows

Value is at the highest level since exports hit the \$3 billion mark in the second half of calendar year 2007. The growth in value was predominantly driven by growth in exports to the United Kingdom (UK) and mainland China. And the growth has been particularly strong in the last quarter of the 12-month period (see Figure 1). In July to September 2020, the value of exports increased by 23 per cent compared to the same period in 2019. This comes after declines of 4 per cent in the April to June quarter and 7 per cent in the January to March quarter.

Figure 1: Value of exports by quarter (A\$ million FOB)

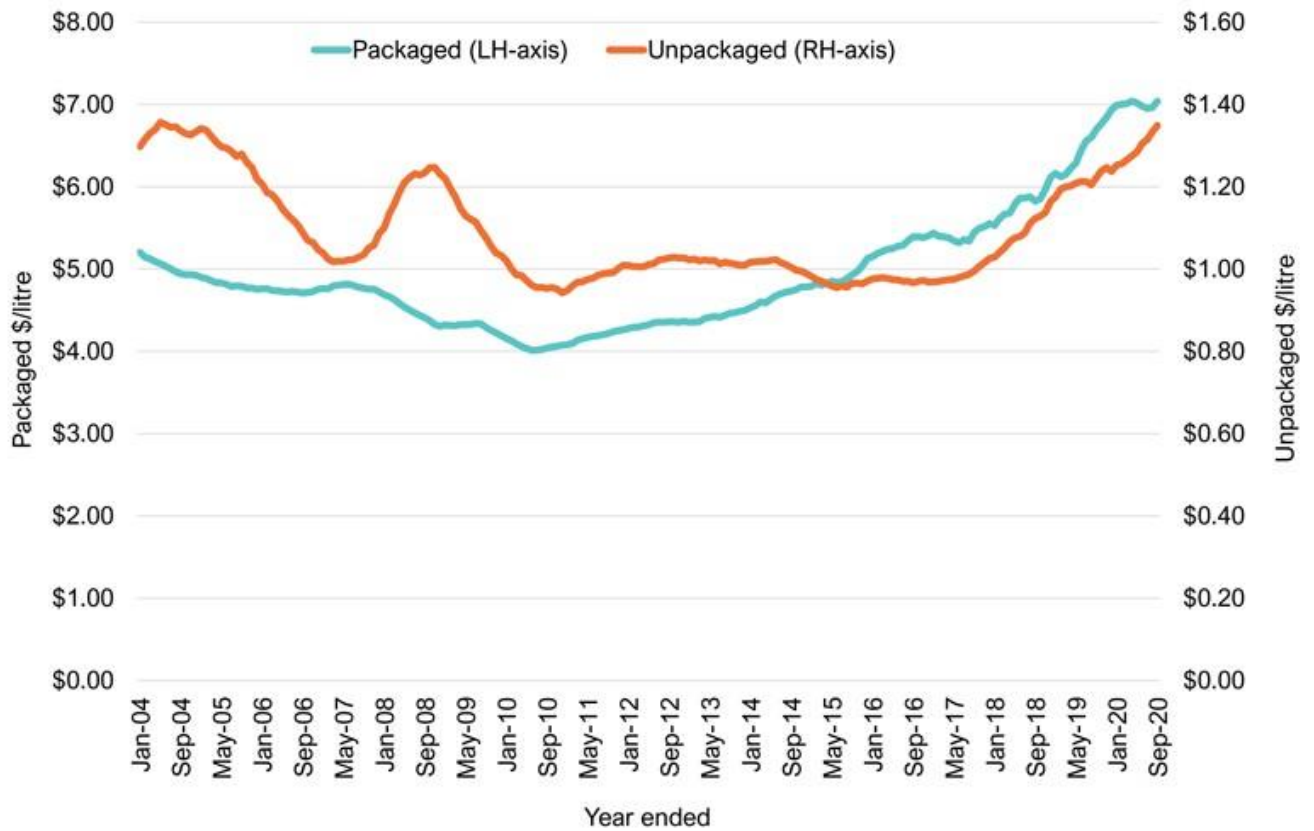


Exports in glass bottles increased by 2 per cent in value to \$2.4 billion and decreased by 3 per cent in volume to 336 million litres (37 million 9-litre case equivalents). This translated to 5 per cent increase in the average value of bottled exports to an equal record \$7.14 per litre (also achieved in the 12 months ended April 2020). This rise in average value is due to an increase in exports at high end of the price spectrum (see price segment section below).

Unpackaged wine exports increased by 13 per cent in value to \$576 million and 2 per cent in volume to 427 million litres (47 million 9-litre case equivalents). The average value of unpackaged wine exports increased by 10 per cent to \$1.35 per litre. The average value of unpackaged exports has remained high, at levels not seen since late 2004, due to the relative short supply of Australian wine in an already constrained global supply situation (see Figure 2).

The average value of unpackaged wine exports has grown consistently year-on-year since mid-2017, while packaged exports have largely been in growth since early 2011.

Figure 2: Average value per litre, packaged vs unpackaged exports



Price segment

There was growth in most price segments, but the growth was particularly strong at the low and high ends. This is consistent with trends in major wine markets around the world throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, with growth in premium wines continuing but also a resurgence in commercial and value wines.

Figure 3: Total exports by price segment (\$ million FOB)

Price segment (A\$/litre)	MAT September 2020	Value change	Growth rate
\$2.49 and under	\$528	\$40	8.1%
\$2.50 to \$4.99	\$829	\$11	1.3%
\$5.00 to \$7.49	\$385	\$10	2.7%
\$7.50 to \$9.99	\$162	-\$0.6	-0.4%
\$10.00 to \$14.99	\$230	-\$37	-13.9%
\$15.00 to \$19.99	\$87	\$8	10.3%
\$20.00 to \$29.99	\$204	-\$43	-17.4%
\$30.00 to \$49.99	\$135	\$5	4.0%
\$50.00 to \$99.99	\$313	\$92	41.6%
\$100.00 to \$199.99	\$59	\$3	5.5%
\$200.00 and over	\$66	\$16	32.6%
Total value	\$2,998	\$105	3.6%

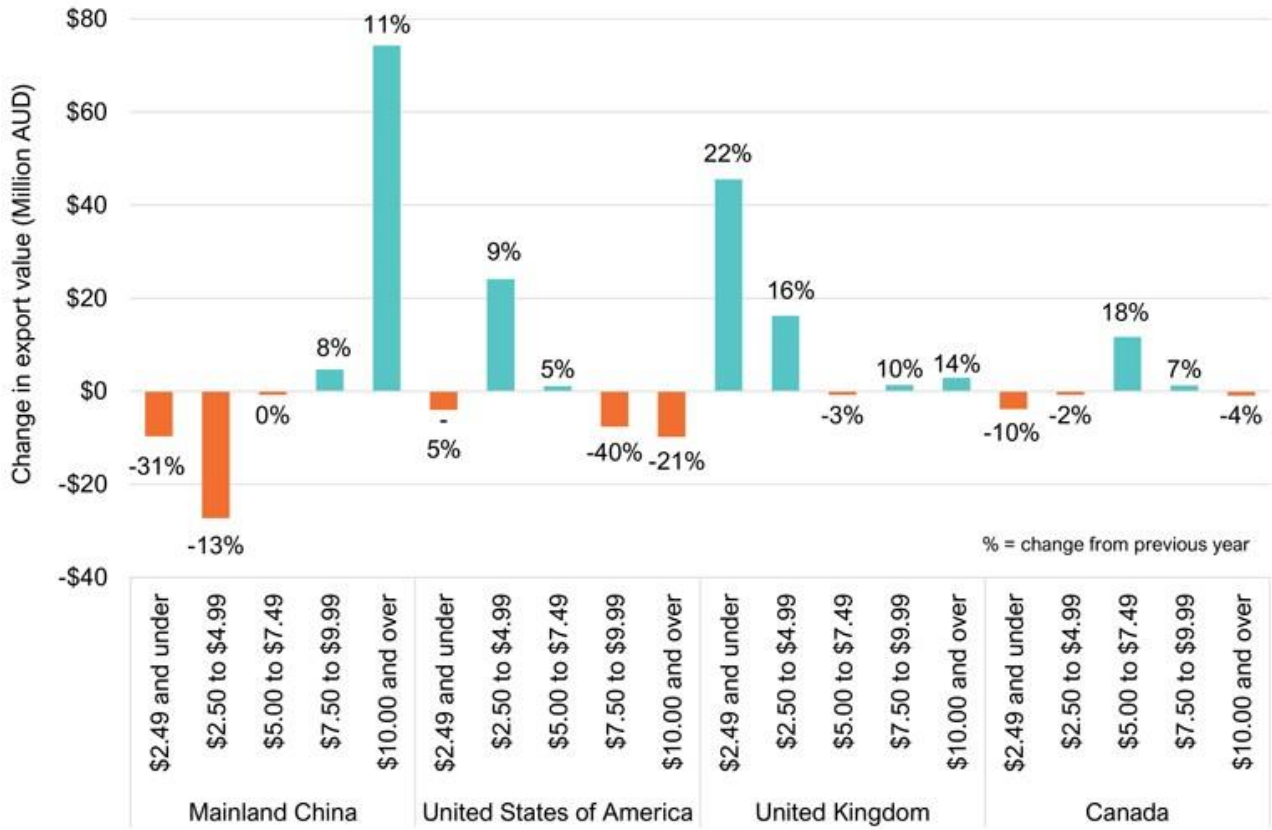
Exports below \$2.50 per litre increased by 8 per cent, driven by growth in unpackaged exports to the UK and other European destinations such as Germany and Denmark. There was also solid growth at \$5.00 to \$7.50 per litre.

The strongest growth came at the high-end. Exports at \$50 or more per litre increased by 34 per cent in value to \$438 million.

The overall \$10 or more segment increased by 4 per cent to \$1.09 billion.

Looking at the top four markets below provides more detail on which markets are driving the trends at each end of the price spectrum. Exports to China above \$10 per litre grew by 11 per cent during the year, while exports to the UK below \$2.50 per litre grew by 22 per cent. Meanwhile, the growth in the United States of America (USA) and Canada is driven by exports in middle price tiers.

Figure 4: Change in value of exports by price segment in top 4 markets



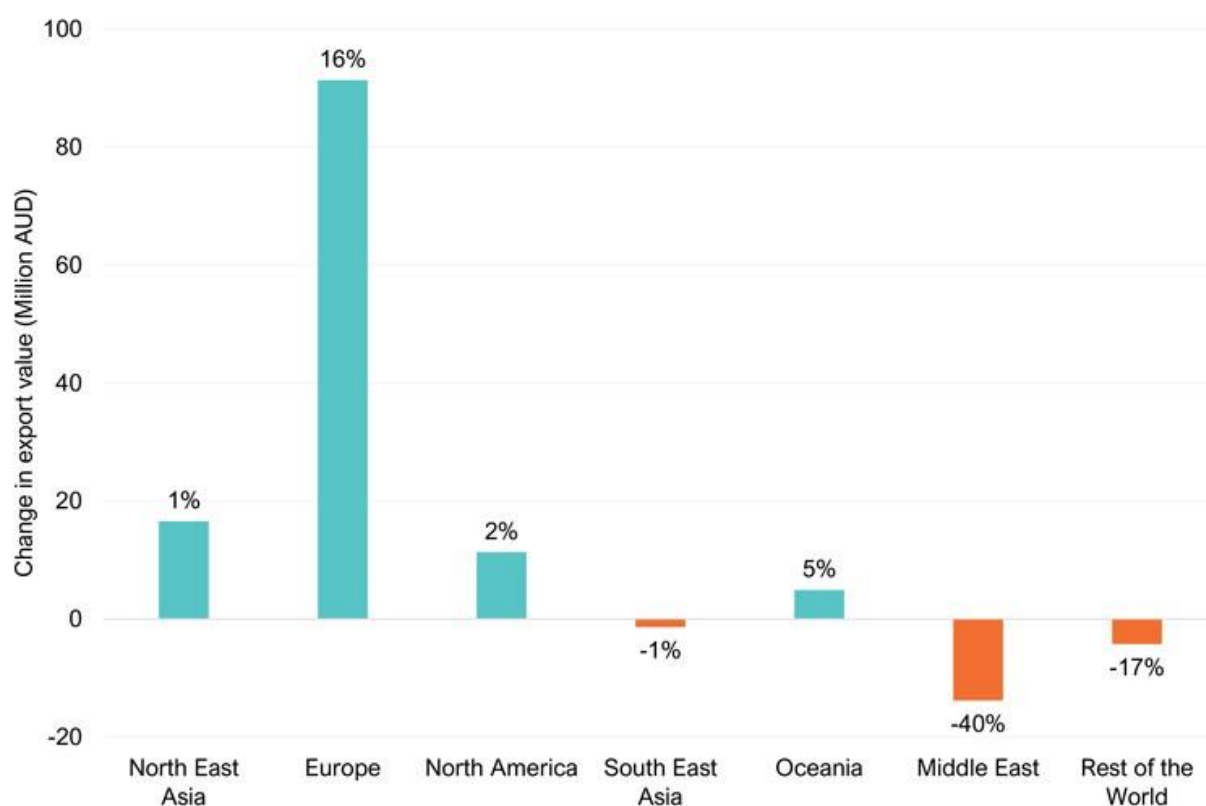
Destinations

In the 12 months ended September 2020, Australian exporters shipped wine to 117 destinations (down from 123 destinations in the same period in 2019).

The most significant growth came in exports to Europe, up 16 per cent to \$678 million and over-taking North America in value terms for the first time since 2011. Most other major regions also recorded value growth:

- North East Asia, by 1 per cent to \$1.4 billion
- North America, by 2 per cent to \$636 million, and
- Oceania, by 5 per cent to \$111 million.

Figure 5: Change in value of exports by region



The top five destinations by value all recorded growth. They were:

- Mainland China, up 4 per cent to \$1.2 billion
- USA, up 1 per cent to \$439 million
- UK, up 18 per cent to \$430 million
- Canada, up 4 per cent to \$196 million, and
- New Zealand, up 9 per cent to \$103 million.

New Zealand is back in the top 5 markets by value for the first time since 2011. Singapore dropped one place to sixth after the value of exports declined by 1 per cent.

The top five destinations by volume were:

- UK, up 10 per cent to 256 million litres
- USA, down 4 per cent to 141 million litres
- Mainland China, down 12 per cent to 123 million litres
- Canada, down 7 per cent to 56 million litres, and
- Germany, up 7 per cent to 35 million litres.



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