Murray Valley Winegrowers

MVW News & Views

Representing the Murray-Darling and Swan Hill wine regions NSW-VIC

February 2024
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Unprecedented industry challenges require updated priorities

By Christine Webster

A directional strategy for the grape and wine sector through to 2030 is being developed in consultation with its stakeholders.

The first draft of the One Grape & Wine Sector Plan was released in January after Independent advisory firm ACIL Allen, Australian Grape & Wine, and Wine Australia conducted an industry wide consultation.

The plan's aim is to update the priorities of the industry since the release of Vision 2050 by Australia Grape & Wine in 2020.

In the introduction of the draft One Grape & Wine Sector Plan, Australian Grape & Wine chairman John Hart and Wine Australia chair Dr Michele Allan said over the past four years so much had changed for the industry.

"Our sector has faced unprecedented challenges that continue to impact grape and wine businesses all over Australia," they said.

In the joint statement, Mr Hart and Dr Allan said refocussing the industry's collective efforts and getting the sector back on track to achieve long-term goals in Vision 2050 was "the driving force behind the One Grape & Wine Sector Plan".

"We're stronger when we work together towards common goals rather than going it alone," they said.

"While this is a One Grape and Wine Sector Plan, there is strength in the diversity of our sector.

"It's important that this plan celebrates the differences in our sector while uniting us in our national goals."

The draft document said the consultation process from July 2023 to October 2023 involved the Australian Grape & Wine's Research Advisory Committee working closely with the sector's state and regional associations from across the nation to consult with value chain stakeholders.

It said 400 people responded to a survey, 17 workshops were conducted with 500 participants, and 42 in depth interviews were undertaken.

A briefing was also provided to the Wine Industry Suppliers Association.

Feedback on the draft document was then sought and submissions closed on 5th of February.

The draft plan said the industry representatives involved in the consultations for the plan expressed that the sector needed to attract new people, retain skills and talent, address the supply/demand imbalance, and enhance the quality, value, and image of their wine.

They also outlined the importance of collecting timely, high-quality data to make informed business decisions.

The One Grape & Wine Sector draft plan's recommendations for attracting and retaining suitable people highlighted the importance of creating "an inclusive community" and welcoming diverse leadership that supported pathways for career longevity.

It said the sector needed "people with the knowledge and skills to operate resilient businesses".

The draft plan also identified the importance of addressing the industry's consumer, customer, and community needs.

It said by 2030, the Australian wine sector should be adaptive and responsive to the needs of their consumers, customers, and community.

"Keeping our focus on our consumers will help us transition to a more sustainable sector." the document said.

The sector also indicated it needed to focus on its image and examine ways of better promoting its place and products.

INSIDE

	Page
Inland Overlooked	3
Vintage Vagaries	4
Calendar of Events	5
Extreme weather predicted	8
GrowCare & GrapeWatch	12 & 13
Robotic tractor trial	14
Regional Roundup	16
AAVWS results	20
Export Report	22

"By 2030, the Australian grape and wine sector will have embedded practices that safeguard our viticultural assets and increase our resilience," the draft plan recommended.

"The latest market and consumer insights informs innovation and helps to position quicker responses in our businesses that set global benchmarks while supporting regional distinctiveness."

The need to further develop the industry's environmental, social, and governance (ESG) priorities was also highlighted.

The draft One Grape & Wine Sector plan recommended that by 2030, the Australian grape and wine sector would have made "significant progress towards being globally recognised as the world-leading sustainable grape and wine sector".

"It and ESG practices will be embedded to strengthen the resilience, profitability, and sustainability of our community," the plan said.

The first draft of the plan is available at agw.org.au/about-australian-grape-and-wine/the-grape-and-wine-sector/one-sector-plan

Notice Board

Grapes for Sale Register – Vintage 2024

Listings of fruit on the Grapes for Sale register for 2024 are significantly higher than those for the disease-affected 2023 vintage. See the summary below;

	Vintage 2024 Tonnes	%	Vintage 2023 Tonnes	%
Growers listed	**67**		49	
Tonnes – Whites	**14,055**	53%	6,370	(46%)
Tonnes – Reds	**12,575**	47%	7,591	(54%)
Tonnes – Total	**26,630**		**13,961**	

Financial Benchmarking Project

The MVW Benchmarking of the financial performance of winegrape growers in the Murray Valley is almost complete.

Working with Rural Financial Counselling Service, Victoria West, and using data from around 20 winegrape growers to create a de-identified benchmark data set, the project will deliver a report describing the key profitability standards and three de-identified case studies derived from the benchmarking data set.

This can be used to understand the capacity of winegrape businesses in the region to continue to adopt new research outcomes and subsequently continue to develop their business. It will also provide a valuable tool for MVW when dealing with state and national industry bodies, and government.

Individual growers may wish to measure their financial performance against the information contained in the report - keep an eye open for the launch of the report through MVW's communication channels.

Ciatti – Global Wine Reports

The Ciatti Global Wine Report is a monthly report for those wanting to keep up to date with global and domestic wine markets - each month's update is posted to the MVW website,

Read the "Key Takeaways" under each market segment in the report, then read the full article in the section above if you require more comprehensive information.

The Ciatti Reports can be found at mvwi.com.au/industry/ciatti

Murray Valley Winegrowers

iDC Murray Valley Winegrape Industry Development Committee

Murray Valley Winegrowers MVW News & Views

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

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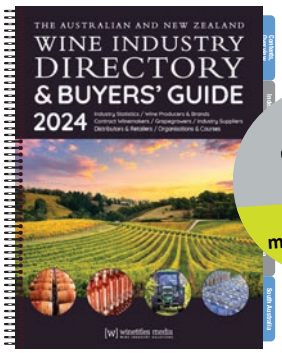

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Draft plan overlooks inland regions *By Christine Webster*

Murray Valley Winegrowers is concerned that inland regions have been overlooked in the first draft of the One Grape and Wine Sector Plan despite being involved in consultations.

MVW Chair, Chris Dent said the Murray Darling, Swan Hill, Riverland, and Riverina wine grape industry representatives (the Inland Wine Regions Alliance) all provided input into the process that was coordinated by the Australian Grape & Wine's Research Advisory Committee.

But he said he felt the draft plan seemed to be mainly focused on the cooler premium wine grape growing regions.

"The photos in the whole document hardly featured one from the inland wine grape growing regions," Chris said.

"Collectively, we are such a powerhouse for the whole industry, regularly producing around 70 percent of the national crush," he said.

"There still seems to be a focus on the romance of the cool premium regions."

"But obviously we are the regions who are most impacted at the moment, with the current downturn in the industry."

Future planning welcomed

In the inland wine regions growers are calling for more research and development support.

Murray Valley Winegrowers is concerned that 65 percent of the income Wine Australia receives is the Research and Development levy, but this has not been specifically addressed in the draft plan.

Chris said more needed to be done to increase the market suitability of wine from warmer regions, especially in the unpackaged and below $5/L FOB bottled sector.

Inland wine growers were also sceptical about the lack of new ideas for the Australian wine sector to boost and strengthen its domestic and overseas markets.

Chris said he wondered how it would be possible for the wine and grape sector to quickly create more markets, but measures needed to be developed to achieve this.

"There would be a ceiling to that, and I can't imagine that we have not already tried building more in recent times" he said.

"Some of the Asian countries offer opportunities which would obviously take time and so we need to put some focus and investment into that.

"We also need to maintain and strengthen some of our key markets such as the United Kingdom, the United States, and hopefully China, if it comes back on board."

Chris said succession planning in the wine and grape industry was another important area that needed to be explored and he welcomed the recommendations included in the draft plan.

"We provided a fair bit of feedback about succession in the whole industry," he said.

"Growers need to obtain good labour and preserve communities that we are in, we support, and build as members of the community," he said.

"Supporting local businesses is super important to everyone in the community."

Chris said the draft plan also needed to consider measures to assist those who wanted to exit the industry.

Chris Dent

Environmental, Social, and Governance priorities

Inland wine grape growers have also indicated the first draft of the One Grape and Wine Sector Plan also focuses too much on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) priorities.

"It is obviously important, customers value it, and people in the community value it," Chris said.

"But we must be careful not to overcomplicate the whole process and do it in small steps and do it slowly without too much interruption and upheaval," he said.

"Some industry people may be pushing to achieve world-leading gold standard ESG objectives, but we may never be able to obtain this, especially if the goalposts keep moving.

"It is pretty hard to be green when you are operating in the red."

Vintage Vagaries

Harvest is well ahead of where we have been in recent years. The growing season has presented its difficulties, with significant rainfall events in some parts of the region but nowhere near the widespread misfortune of 2023 which resulted in major crop losses due to disease issues.

Despite the usual array of challenges, wineries have indicated that vintage 2024 has been one of the more stable in terms of managing intake – fruit has generally been harvested at its optimum following a relatively mild summer, allowing fruit to ripen naturally. Winemakers are very pleased with the quality of fruit processed to date, with Pinot Gris and Sauvignon Blanc being the standouts, both displaying excellent varietal characters.

It seems that vintage will be finished much earlier this year, with some wineries advising they will finish mid-March, as very few Reds will be processed compared to a typical year.

The demand for Whites started relatively slowly, but as wineries commenced crushing it became evident the crop was lighter than anticipated in most circumstances. Despite there being solid demand for most White varietals this did not translate into markedly improved prices.

Most Reds on the other hand have been sadly disregarded, with nearly all uncontracted Reds unsaleable (unless you have volumes of in-demand whites to accompany them), whilst many contracted Reds have had yield caps implemented or wineries have paid growers modest amounts to not produce and/or deliver the crop. Red grapes prices are at rock bottom and are well below the cost of production - this sad situation aligns with MVW's and the broader industry messaging in recent years and should come as no surprise.

The volume of uncontracted fruit on the MVW V2024 Grapes for Sale Register is quite high, and is on par with V2022 (V2023 had lower volumes due to the widespread crop losses due to disease issues) – the total volume of fruit registered for V2024 is approximately 27,000 tonnes. Whites account for 14,000t and Reds 13,000t. At the time of writing only a small amount of the Whites remain unsold, and the vast majority of Reds cannot find a home.

MVW issued an initial *Price Watch* report for Vintage 2024 on the 6th of February; it has been updated in the table below:

Average market prices* as at 20th February 2024

Variety	Average* $/tonne
Chardonnay	$360
Colombard	$290
Gordo	$320
Pinot Gris	$503
Prosecco	$624
Sauvignon Blanc	$521
Semillon	$315
Cabernet Sauvignon	$174
Merlot	$192
Pinot Noir	$680
Shiraz	$154

- **Average market prices calculated from reports of winery prices for fruit purchases in the Murray-Darling & Swan Hill regions (equalised for delivered to winery price)*
- **Average market prices are not weighted and should be regarded as a guide*
- *Some growers will have fixed minimum prices which are not included in the prices detailed above but will have a positive impact on the weighted district average prices when they are released mid-year by Wine Australia*
- *Out-of-district price offers have been adjusted to reflect an equivalent local delivered price where applicable*

Price Watch is compiled by MVW as a guide - to give you a sense of how your winery offer compares to other grape prices being offered in the Murray Darling & Swan Hill regions. All of the data used to compile this report is provided to MVW confidentially by growers and wineries.

If you have more details on pricing please feel free to contact MVW discreetly, which will add more data and consistency to our report. The Price Watch figures can alter considerably throughout harvest, as wineries and growers negotiate final prices.

If you receive a price offer for your grapes and you believe the offer does not reflect the marketplace then it is important that you advise your winery – if you don't object then nothing will change (most Grape Supply Agreements have dispute mechanisms which allow you to challenge the offer price); if the winery you are dealing with is a signatory to the Code of Conduct for Australian Winegrape Purchases you may wish to lodge a Notice of Dispute - if you need any guidance with price disputes please contact the MVW office for further details and/or assistance.

Pricing Dashboard & QR Code

By Christine Webster

A new free online tool indicates market conditions for commercial wine grapes and indicates grape price direction for next vintage

Check out the new Grape Price Indicators Dashboard – an easy, direct way to see what is happening with winegrape prices in the inland regions.

The dashboard is a practical, free online tool that gives a clear picture of the market conditions for commercial wine grapes.

The Grape Price Indicators Dashboard provides an up-to-date summary of the key drivers of inland winegrape prices in Australia, as well as an overall directional arrow, which indicates the forecast direction for grape prices for the major red and white varieties ahead of the next vintage.

Follow the link or scan the QR code, or go to the Wine Australia website and find 'dashboards' in the Market Insights menu.

https://marketexplorer.wineaustralia.com/grape-price-indicators

SCAN ME

Calendar of Events

MVW – Regional Planning Roundtable

23rd April 2024

A biennial roundtable bringing together up to 35 growers, wine industry people, and key researchers in a facilitated session to identify key knowledge, skills, industry development and research investments required for the future progression of the Murray Darling and Swan Hill wine regions.

This project will use simple and effective facilitation processes to help this key group of Wine Industry people identify and prioritise potential investments - the focus will be on those specific to the sustainable development of the industry in this inland region. Presentations from one or two highly respected viticultural research leaders will be used to set the scene for the event and promote discussion about the future possibilities of the region.

Sustainable Winegrowing Australia (SWA) training

1st & 2nd May 2024

Australian Wine Industry Standard of Sustainable Practice (AWISSP)

Either Wednesday, May 1, or Thursday, May 2 at the Mildura Golf Club.

FREE of charge to MVW members - complimentary lunch and refreshments are provided.

Attending this training is essential to receiving SWA viticulture certification.

Contact Stephen Kelly on ph. 50213911 or email: stephen@mvwi.com.au for more information.

You need to be a registered member of SWA to participate in the training program - if you are not a member of SWA yet, you can start the process at:

https://member.sustainablewinegrowing.com.au/answers/details/create

Vine Health Workshops & AgTech Demonstration

Swan Hill

Thursday 16th May
(Venue to be confirmed)

Vine Health Workshop
8.30 am – 12.30 pm

Mildura Field Days:

Friday 17th May

Vine Health Workshop
8.30 am – 12.30 pm

AgTech Demo
2.00 pm – 5.00 pm

In the current economic environment, wine growers are faced with the challenge of producing the best quality grapes at a minimum cost. Key areas to be addressed at this year's Vine health workshop will be effective fertiliser programs and their interaction with soil health, Disease (Disease alerts, fungicide resistance, and Downy Mildew resistant vines), do I grow or not next year, and an introduction to Robotics and Agtech.

Agtech Demo

A diverse array of interesting technology, ranging from driverless tractors and robots to UV light banks to control disease will be demonstrated on Friday afternoon at the Mildura Field Days

Regional Grower's Forum

12th June 2024

This is MVW's premier event of 2024, bringing the most appropriate local, national, or international representatives to the region to interact with growers.

This event will focus on;

- Issues affecting the Australian Wine industry, with keynote speakers from our national representative bodies and government (China market access, One Grape & Wine Sector Plan, Government support, etc.)
- Understanding the wider market, regulatory, and research influences on winegrape growing in this region
- The business decisions available for individual wine-growing businesses

Further updates will be available closer to the event.

Keep track of the evolving agendas for these events through the MVW "Easy Update" email service or contact the MVW office on ph. 5021 3911

Grape Spillages - A Shared responsibility

Most wine grapes crushed at wineries are transported by heavy vehicles using public roads. During the vintage season this means a lot of trucks are moving from vineyards to wineries.

A number of parties including wineries, transporters, wine grape growers, vineyard contractors and other participants in the wine industry have legal Chain of Responsibility obligations under the Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL), to ensure the safe transportation of goods.

It is a shared responsibility and if you exercise control or have the capability of exercising control then you have a responsibility to ensure that the law is complied with. This amongst other things, includes ensuring that goods are not overloaded, that they are secured properly, and that drivers are not pressured or encouraged to speed or drive whilst fatigued.

To ensure a consistent approach to Chain of Responsibility across wine-growing regions of Australia and assist businesses to meet their obligations, a new Registered Industry Code of Practice (the Code) is being developed by the South Australian Wine Industry Association (SAWIA) in partnership with Australian Grape & Wine Inc (AGW).

Development of the Code is possible thanks to funding from the 2020-21 Heavy Vehicle Safety Initiative, supported by the Federal Government and administered by the National Heavy Vehicles Regulator (NHVR).

SAWIA and AGW have completed the initial consultation phase of the project and have worked with the NHVR and an industry reference group to draft the Code. Once drafting is completed it will go out to industry and other stakeholders for consultation.

A key hazard that has been identified and will be addressed in the Code, is the issue of grape spillages. We know that grape spillages unfortunately occur and that NHVR has warned of potential prosecutions of parties responsible for grape spillages.

Grape spillages pose a hazard to the public. Vehicles can lose traction on a grape spill, spills are difficult to clean up, residue can make roads sticky and gluey and many of the spills are happening at night or in the early morning, when they are more difficult to see.

Several potential controls to prevent grape spillages have been discussed and explored, this includes:

- Closely consider the type of vessel that fruit will be transported in to minimise the risk of spillages, e.g., bins vs tip trailers, require baffles in tip trailers, use lids, high-sided tip trailers with less fruit or other design modifications
- Use a weighing device at the vineyard, on trailers, forklifts, and/or harvesters
- Ensure the correct storage of plastic bins to minimise physical and exposure-related damage
- Consider different fill levels taking different factors into account. e.g., depending on grape varieties and travel time – the greater the time travelled the more juice levels increase
- Selecting transports with experience in the wine industry and
- Transporters to inform drivers of low-risk behaviour relevant to minimise spillages

Overall, in order to manage your Chain of Responsibility obligations, consider the following:

- Understand what your transport activities are
- Identify the risks of your activities
- Identify which transport activities you can influence and control, and which ones you can't
- Ensure collaboration between wine grape growers, vineyard contractors, transporters, wineries in relation to how each one can play their part in the Chain of Responsibility
- Read relevant guides and Codes, including the Master Code and Load Restraint Guide recommended control measures
- Participate and encourage the sharing of ideas and best practice and
- Subscribe to safety bulletins, education and training updates from NHVR.

For more information on the Chain of Responsibility Project, please contact the South Australian Wine Industry Association's Business Services Manager, Henrik Wallgren via email henrik@winesa.asn.au or telephone 08 8222 9270.

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More extreme weather predicted

By Christine Webster

Research by the Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO has indicated that the nation's climate has warmed by an average of 1.47°C since records began in 1910.

The two organisations have released their joint State of the Climate 2022 report.

The Bureau of Meteorology's Senior Extended Prediction Specialist Dr Jannatun Nahar said in the past decade Australia had experienced many record-breaking climate events.

She said "these range from drought, bushfires, heatwaves to storm, and flooding."

"We already know that Australia's climate has warmed since the 1970s as the anomalies are constantly positive," Dr Nahar said.

"This means we are continuously observing above average temperatures."

Dr Nahar said in the last three decades, the extreme temperature days were continuously increasing.

"The longest spike was in 2019 and we all remember that," she said.

Dr Nahar said one of the most significant impacts of climate change was the decline in rainfall especially during the cooler months.

She said less rain during this period was impacting on primary producers.

"We know that cool season rainfall for the southern part of Australia is very important for agriculture," Dr Nahar said.

She said in the 22 years period of 2000-21 the average April to October rainfall in the south of the country had significantly decreased.

Dr Nahar said in the North, there had been some increase in rainfall during the wet season.

"That's probably less significant than the decrease in cool season," she said.

The State of the Climate 2022 report shows that sea surface temperatures have increased by an average of 1.05°C since 1900.

It said this has led to an increase in the frequency of extreme heat events over land and sea.

The report said since 1970, rainfall in the southwest of Australia had declined by about 15 per cent in April to October.

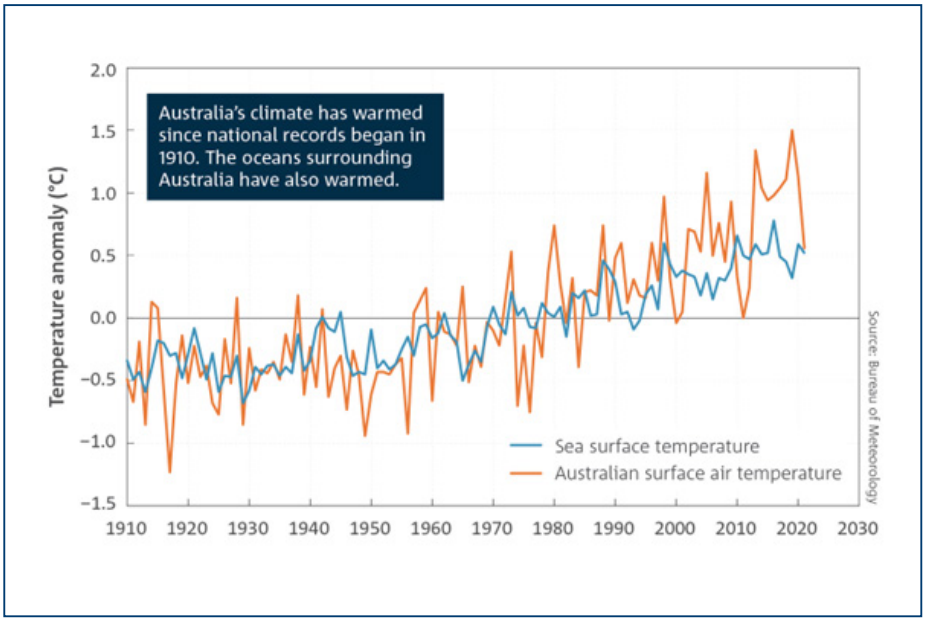
The State of the Climate 2022 report said the streamflow at most gauges across Australia had decreased since 1975.

Dr Nahar said to address climate change, industries such as the wine grape sector needed to accommodate climate change in their planning.

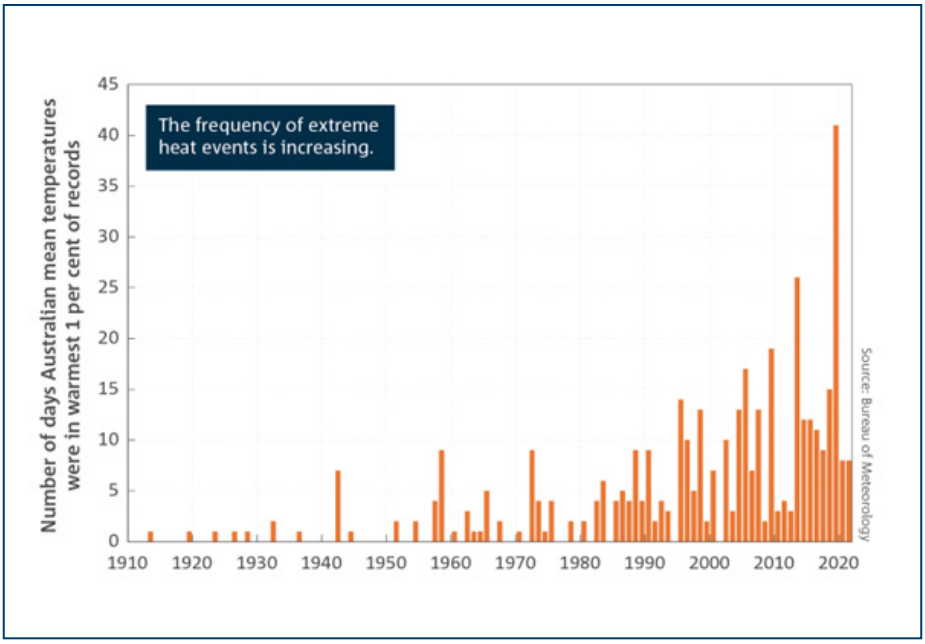
"The bottom line is, we cannot completely stop climate change," she said.

"Of course, emission reduction pathways are there, but we must accommodate climate change in our planning.

Australia is forecast to experience an increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme events like heatwaves, fire weather, and heavy rainfall.



Anomalies in annual mean sea surface temperature, and temperature over land, in the Australian region. Anomalies are the departures from the 1961–90 standard averaging period. Sea surface temperature values. **Source: Bureau of Meteorology**



Number of days each year where the Australian area-averaged daily mean temperature for each month is extreme (extremely warm days). Extremely warm days are defined as those where daily mean temperatures are the warmest 1 per cent of days for each month, calculated for the period from 1910–2021. **Source: Bureau of Meteorology.**

More extreme weather predicted *continued..*

Viticulturists must prepare

Dr Nahar said Australia would be among one of the most adversely affected regions of the world to be impacted by climate change.

According to a Climate Council of Australia's report, 'Compound Costs: How Climate Change Is Damaging Australia's Economy' released in 2019, climate change was expected to reduce agricultural production and exports.

The report said cumulative damages to agricultural and labour productivity from climate change were expected to reach $4.2 trillion by 2100.

It said by 2050, climate change was projected to halve the irrigated agricultural output of the Murray-Darling Basin region.

According to the report the Basin currently accounted for 50 per cent of Australia's irrigated agricultural output by value (about $7.2 billion per year).

The Climate Council of Australia also predicts up to 70 per cent of Australia's wine-growing regions with a mediterranean climate (including iconic areas like the Barossa Valley and Margaret River) will be less suitable for grape growing by 2050.

In its 'Feeding a Hungry Nation: Climate Change, Food and Farming in Australia' report, the Climate Council of Australia said higher temperatures would continue to cause earlier ripening and reduced grape quality, as well as encourage expansion to new areas, including some regions of Tasmania.

Climate view tool

A new website tool has been developed to enable primary producers to explore climate information relevant to their location and commodity, wherever they are in Australia.

My Climate View allows the producer to put in their location or postcode and access a wide range of past climate data and future predictions for their area of interest.

My Climate View is a collaboration between Australia's national science agency CSIRO and the Bureau of Meteorology, and has been designed together with Australian farmers as part of the Climate Services for Agriculture program.

It has been funded through the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund and is also supported by FarmLink Research and data management and change evaluation company, Coutts J&R.

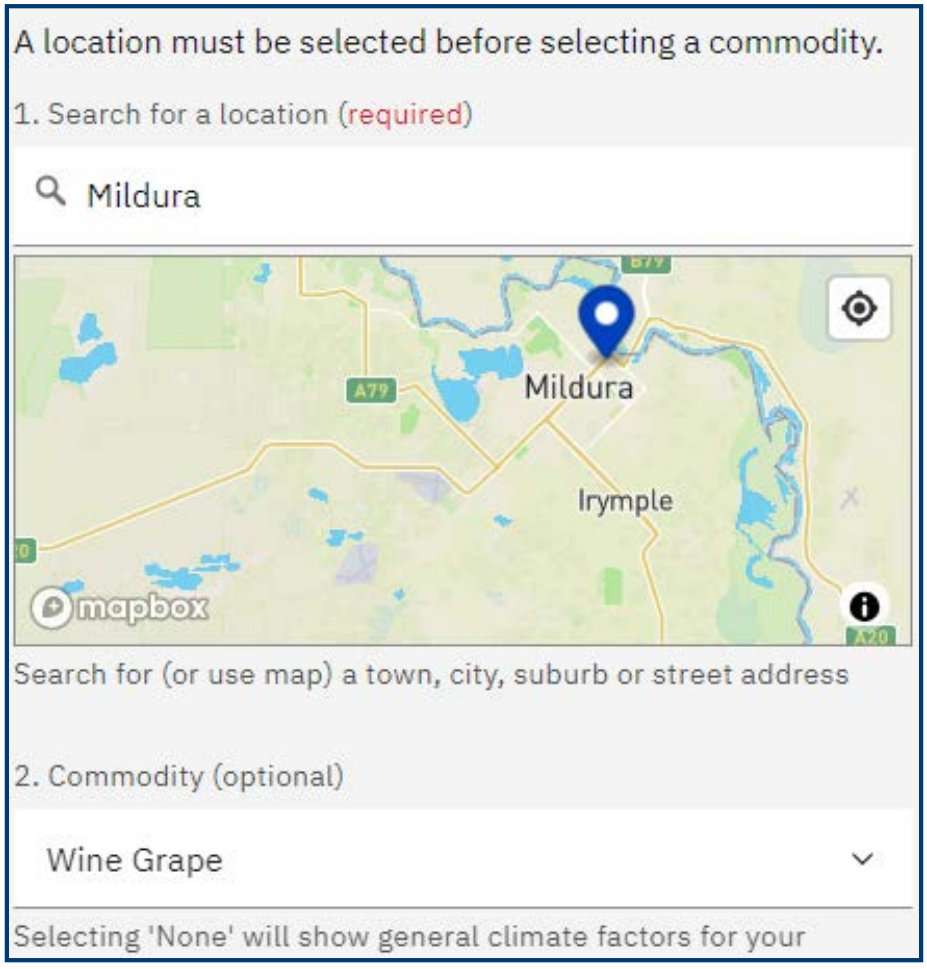
Climate information includes:

- Past data from 1964 to now
- Seasonal Forecasts for the upcoming 1-3 months
- Climate projections for the 2030s, 2050s, and 2070s

Wine grape growers are encouraged to use the Bureau of Meteorology's My Climate View tool in developing strategies for their future and assessing weather conditions.

The tool includes location specific information that helps with strategic, tactical, and operational decisions.

The program can be accessed by visiting myclimateview.com.au



Wine grape growers can access the latest climate information using the My Climate View tool for their town.
Source: My Climate View: Bureau of Meteorology and CSRIO.

mallee
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Aerial surveys for salinity management in the Mallee

Mallee Salinity Survey 2024

Salinity is a naturally occurring part of the Mallee landscape, but the best data possible is needed to manage it appropriately to protect the environment and irrigation industries. To get this data, aerial surveys of the Murray River flood-plain will be undertaken during 2024.

The survey work

An airborne electromagnetic (AEM) survey will be undertaken from March-June 2024 to map subsurface saline groundwater in the Murray River corridor in Victoria, from the South Australian border to Nyah. There will also be samples taken from the region's bore monitoring network. This is the third time the region has been surveyed using this method, and the first since 2007. The 2024 survey is being undertaken using improved technology to better understand how groundwater and salinity is changing over time.

The research area

The survey will cover a 770km stretch of the Murray River. The survey corridor stretches, at most, approximately 25km into Victoria and approximately 5km into New South Wales.

Figure 1 (see over page) provides an indication of the survey area.

How it happens

AEM surveys are undertaken by a low-flying helicopter with a transmitter and receiver coil below it. The helicopter will fly at around 90m above ground, while the frame holding the transmitter and receiver coil will be about 35-40m above ground. The signals received through this non-invasive testing technique provide data that can be used to model groundwater to around 40 metres below the surface.

What to expect

The survey team will avoid flying over built-up areas, such as towns, although the helicopter may pass nearby at times. It's likely you will hear the helicopter before you see it. You may hear it when it is up to 1km from you, and you may see it pass over and near you two or three times within around 15 minutes as it collects data. The electromagnetic signal is similar to that emitted by a mobile phone, and safe for people and animals. The sound of the helicopter will

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be at a level similar to a tractor motor, lawn mower or leaf blower.

Horse and livestock owners

AEM surveys cause no harmful effects to horses and other livestock, but the low flying helicopter may cause some annoyance for a short period of time.

Horse/livestock owners are encouraged to plan how best to care for their animals while the AEM survey is flown in their immediate area. When planning, it may be helpful to consider:

- How your animals usually respond to drones, low-flying aeroplanes or helicopters;
- If containment or relocation options are suited to your animals and circumstances during survey periods.

Information on where and when surveys will be flown will be provided weeks in advance and confirmed closer to the date.

How survey data will be used

The final data will show salinity and groundwater trends over time at a regional scale. For the first time, the survey data will include information on how salinity is impacting the floodplain as well as the Murray River channel.

This will help support the protection of the environment and our important horticultural industries from the negative impacts of salinity over the next 20 years.

Above: A helicopter with a transmitter and receiver coil beneath it undertaking a salinity survey.

To find out more

Visit the online information hub at: malleecma.com.au

This is where you will find facts about the survey, frequently asked questions, videos showing surveys being undertaken, and this is where the latest information will be available.

Follow us

Updated information on the Mallee Salinity Survey will be posted regularly on Facebook and Instagram.

Talk to us

Phone 0428 516 233

A number of community drop-in sessions will also be held. Keep an eye on social media and our website for more information. We are also working with industry bodies to share project information with their members.

Send us an email

info@malleecma.com.au

Figure 1: Indicative survey area

Challenging year provides lessons

The climatic challenges of last year's wine grape growing season has helped improve an online tool being used to assess fungal disease risks in vineyards in the Murray Darling, Swan Hill, and the Riverland.

This GrowCare website-based system has evolved from the GrapeWatch app developed in 2021 to better control downy and powdery mildews.

It is expected to be officially launched by next vintage and is presently in trial form.

The vine disease monitoring service is the result of many years of research on downy mildew, started by the Riverland's Loxton-based plant pathologist, Peter Magarey, in the 1970s.

Peter was then based at the Department of Agriculture's Loxton Research Centre.

When his position ended in 2009, he established his own plant pathology business.

Peter was instrumental in developing CropWatch, a vine disease monitoring service established in 1995.

The GrapeWatch app was then developed and trialled by Riverland wine grape growers in 2020/21, and Murray Valley growers in 2021/22.

The website, as the app did, uses data from weather stations throughout the Murray Valley and the Riverland.

Levies paid to the Murray Valley Wine Grape Industry Development Committee (IDC) have been used to fund 15 weather stations throughout the Murray Darling and Swan Hill area.

Dried Fruits Australia has also funded two weather stations in the region through their growers' levies, which are used in the GrowCare modelling platform.

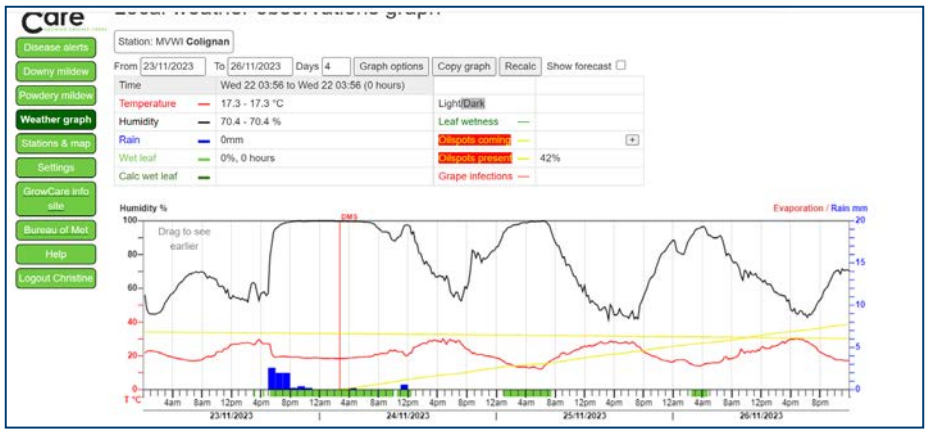
In the Riverland, the weather stations are funded by Landscape South Australia Murraylands and Riverland.

"The downy mildew disease simulator processes the weather data and calculates and displays disease alerts," Peter said.

"The semi-automated system then advises growers of when primary or secondary infections have occurred and when oil spots will appear," Peter said.

The system enables growers to access data from their closest weather station(s).

"Users can then have much more detail to make valued judgements about disease management" Peter said.



This weather graph from 23-26 November 2023 from Colignan on the GrowCare website shows rain (in blue), leaf wetness (green), temperature (red) and humidity (black). The yellow line shows oil spots are present and the red vertical line shows conditions have been suitable for downy mildew to spread (secondary infection). Source: GrowCare

Peter said because an app is a fixed system downloaded to a mobile device, any improvements or modifications would require the user to reload the app.

To avoid this, it was decided to continue only with the web-based system which had provided the foundation for the app.

As a result, any modifications become immediately available to all users.

Peter said season 2022/23 was a challenge for trialling the GrapeWatch system.

"We had a system that was still being developed and was not well publicised in a high disease-pressured year."

Wet year caused disease

The Murray River flood and high rainfall increased the risk of mildew diseases last vintage.

"That triggered a lot more infection cycles for downy and powdery mildew than in recent years," Peter said.

"That level of severity usually occurs only every nine or ten years," he said.

Peter said the increase in infection highlighted areas of the GrapeWatch system that needed further improvement.

"We have a much better system now, it is more precise, and we are now more able to communicate disease outcomes to growers," he said.

More comprehensive tool

Peter said the data about managing the mildews gathered during the wet season of 2022/23, enabled the team to devise improvements in automating how the management advice was provided to growers via the website.

"The system can now semi-automatically provide information on when or when not to spray," he said.

Peter said growers involved in testing the system in 2022/23 had recommended some modifications, and as a result, lessons were learned and improvements were made for season 2023/24.

Along with Eric Love, the computer programmer for GrapeWatch, Murray Valley Winegrowers Industry Development Officer (IDO) Stuart Putland was instrumental in helping develop the GrapeWatch system into a more effective communication service on the GrowCare website.

Peter likened the website to flying a plane on autopilot.

"A user can automatically receive information about the risk of disease, but the system still needs the user," he said.

"As a result, we have a much better system for Murray Valley and Riverland growers, and this means we will have a much better outcome than before."

Riverland plant pathologist, Peter Magarey, examining data from a vineyard using the GrowCare website.

GrowCare website trial *By Christine Webster*

Growers in the Murray Darling and Swan Hill regions over the 2023/2024 season have been involved in testing the new GrowCare website monitoring system for downy and powdery mildews.

Murray Valley Winegrowers IDO, Stuart Putland, said Adelaide-based AgriTech monitoring company Green Brain collects data from the weather stations in the region and the Riverland and transfers it to the GrapeWatch website.

Instead of having to consult an app, growers now receive a text message when a downy mildew event has occurred, that directs them to the GrowCare website if they are logged on.

“The modelling to gauge if there has been a weather event conducive to a downy mildew outbreak runs live on the website,” Stuart said.

“You can start to see it calculating and if the modelling reaches a trigger point, it indicates if the vineyard has experienced a primary or secondary infection,” he said.

Stuart said the website also provided information to growers when weather events have increased the chances of downy mildew.

Murray Valley Winegrowers had invited growers with weather stations on their properties to test the new website system.

“We wanted to see if the messages were making sense,” he said.

Murray Valley Winegrowers still emails growers with Disease Alerts to inform them when weather conditions are likely to result in a downy or powdery mildew outbreak.

But Stuart said once the system is fully functional this would not be necessary.

He said it would hopefully save growers from spending thousands of dollars on preventative control measures.

“The model will tell growers when a weather event conducive to downy mildew has occurred,” Stuart said.

“It will then advise growers when they are likely to see oil spots.”

Stuart said this would provide growers with a timeframe of when to spray their vineyards to stop an outbreak of downy mildew.

He said instead of always implementing preventative measures, growers would be able to use the website tool to use eradication methods instead.

The GrowCare website can be found at growcare.com.au

MVW IDO, Stuart Putland

Fruit fly taking the bait

Bait spraying is an effective way to control Queensland Fruit Fly in vineyards, according to Fruit Fly Murray Valley (FFMV) Regional Coordinator Jarad Hill..

"Applying a regular bait spray not only helps to protect your fruit, it also helps to lower the fruit fly population in your area,” Jarad said.

"The bait attracts hungry fruit flies, and it kills them when they feed on it.
Only a very small amount of bait is needed to control fruit fly, but it needs to be applied correctly to be effective."

Bait spray should be applied – according to the label directions – while there is fruit on the vine and for about three weeks after harvest.

"Bait is applied to the bark or foliage and should not come into contact with the fruit" Jarad said.

"To make sure baiting has been effective, monitor your traps and check fruit for signs of fruit fly throughout the season. You may need to use other control methods.

It’s easy to overlook the non-commercial fruit trees around the farm. So, integrating them into your commercial pest management processes is a great idea” Jarad said.

For more information on bait spraying, contact your local agriculture supplier or agronomist.

Scan QR code to watch a video on bait spraying.

For more information call (03) 5022 0327 or visit **fruitflymv.com.au**

VICTORIA State Government

The Fruit Fly Murray Valley program is supported by the Victorian Government

FruitFly MURRAY VALLEY

Duxton Vineyards, Wine Australia and Smart Machine collaborate on Australia-first trial of the latest robotic tractor technology

Duxton Vineyards expansive Euston vineyard in Sunraysia is hosting an Australian-first trial of the autonomous multi-function vineyard tractor OXIN by Smart Machine.

OXIN is the world's first fully autonomous, multi-tasking robotic vineyard tractor, with the trial at Duxton Vineyards being the first time that the technology has been used in Australia following Smart Machine's success in its home market of New Zealand.

Supported by Wine Australia's agtech innovation program, the trial will put the OXIN robotic tractor to the test under Australian conditions at Duxton's 900 ha vineyard, demonstrating newly automated tasks while providing valuable insights into vineyard operations through advanced data analysis.

The partnership between Duxton Vineyards, Wine Australia and Smart Machine combines expertise and resources, helping the local grape and wine sector to be at the forefront of agtech trends and innovation.

Speaking on the partnership, Duxton Vineyards' General Manager Wayne Ellis said, "As one of Australia's largest vineyards holders and a leader in sustainable agriculture and wine production, Duxton Vineyards is committed to implementing innovative technology that positively contributes to the environment. By being the first local wine producer to trial the OXIN by Smart Machine, we are continuing our sustainability journey and doing our part to evolve farming and viticulture practices in Australia."

Designed by Smart Machine engineer Walter Langlois and product designers Andrew Kersley and Nick Gledhill, OXIN can complete tasks including mowing, mulching and trimming, as well as weed and canopy spraying with the aid of robotics and artificial intelligence – all while being managed by a single operator with a user-friendly tablet software.

In addition to improved precision, efficiency and safety, OXIN also reduces some of the environmental impact usually seen in tractors, with the machine requiring fewer row passes, making less soil compaction and an overall reduction in emissions.

The technology complements the existing workforce, enabling the vineyard team to focus on higher value tasks.

Commenting on OXIN's first trial in the Australian market, Smart Machine CEO Andrew Kersley said, "We are committed to delivering innovative solutions for the agriculture industry and are excited to take this important step towards achieving that goal with Duxton Vineyards and Wine Australia. This partnership presents an opportunity to showcase OXIN's capabilities and how it can revolutionise the way that we approach viticulture. The OXIN machine being trialled by Duxton Vineyards has been designed to do different tasks to the original machines developed for the NZ market, accommodating for the differences in landscape and climate, which is also really exciting."

Dave Gerner, Program Manager – Regional Innovation at Wine Australia said on the collaboration, "With a key focus on investing in research and innovation for the local wine sector, Wine Australia is delighted to be a part of the OXIN trial in partnership with Duxton Vineyards. By contributing to the exploration of new technologies, we are further advancing our mission to keep Australia's wine business both profitable and sustainable. We look forward to reviewing the results of the trial and how Smart Machine's technology will be of benefit to further producers across Australia's wine regions."
The Australia-first OXIN trial will continue into 2024.

For more on this article, scan the QR code

SCAN ME

ALTSA
ANALYTICAL LABORATORIES & TECHNICAL SERVICES AUSTRALIA

STANDARD 5 WORKING DAYS TURNAROUND TIME FOR MRLS
URGENT IN 1-2 WORKING DAYS

GRAPE FOCUSED MRL TESTING

- NATA Accredited MRL Pesticide Scan for 280+ chemicals
- Phosphorous Acid Testing
- Spray Seed / Glyphosate Testing
- Local Lab (former CSIRO site at Merbein)

OTHER TESTING

- Drinking and Irrigation Water - Chemistry and Microbiology Testing
- Plant Disease Testing
- Non-Structural Carbohydrate Testing
- Soil and Vine Nutrition and Microbiology Testing

Adequate Vine Nutrition (Test) » Higher Winery Grade » Higher Return

NATA WORLD RECOGNISED ACCREDITATION
ASPAC A member of the Australasian Soil and Plant Analysis Council. Membership no. CMA-1802.
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admin@altsa.com.au altsa.com.au

Regional Roundup

Please see the articles below which summarise the Annual General Meetings and outcomes from our regional bodies

MVW Annual Meeting "Done and Dusted" for another year

Murray Valley Winegrowers Inc. (MVW) held its Annual General Meeting on the 30th of November 2023 at the Mildura Golf Club, which included a solid turnout of members.

The MVW 2023 Annual Report was delivered, which included the report of the Chair, Chris Dent; Paul Derrico's CEO report; and the annual accounts for the year ended 30 June 2023 (showing a surplus of approximately $30,000 for the year).

Following the adoption of the updated MVW constitution in 2021, Committee of Management appointments are for a term of two years, albeit to promote rotational efforts half of the Board is required to stand for re-election annually.

Nominations to join the MVW Committee of Management were advertised before the AGM, although no new candidates were received and the following current sitting members were re-elected unopposed – Simon Karatsas, Lindsay McClelland, Frank Tassone, and Dean Taylor

The MVW Committee of Management for 2023-24 consists of:

- Chris Dent (Chair)
- Steven Frasca (Deputy Chair)
- Phillip Englefield
- Simon Karatsas
- Lindsay McClelland
- Jan O'Connor
- Dean Taylor
- Frank Tassone

Yet again MVW has a full contingent of Board members, which is pleasing given that many industries and regions have difficulties recruiting Committee and Board members.

The MVW Committee of Management has a significant range of skills, extensive knowledge and is well-versed to represent winegrowers in the region.

The Committee of Management is openly available to all MVW members should the need arise.

After the AGM formalities, there was an open conversation on wine industry issues and the outlook for vintage 2024.

Sandy Hathaway and Angelica Crabb, both Senior Analysts at Wine Australia, gave a presentation on the recently launched Grape Price Indicators Dashboard - a new tool that has been added to Wine Australia's Interactive Insights platform.

The Grape Price Indicators dashboard brings together 12 different data sources and displays 21 charts in a user-friendly layout to provide greater price transparency for inland winegrape growers. The presentation was well received and created good discussion and participation of the audience.

After the meeting, the MVW Board, staff, members, and guests enjoyed light refreshments in a casual environment

Sandy Hathaway & Angelica Crabb presenting the Grape Price Indicators Dashboard at MVW's AGM

IDC AGM & Projects Poll Results

The Murray Valley Winegrape Industry Development Committee (IDC) held its Annual General Meeting at the Mildura Golf Club on the 30th of November 2023, prior to the Murray Valley Winegrowers Inc. AGM.

IDC Chair, Jan O'Connor presented the IDC's 2023 annual report, including her Chair's Report, and the usual AGM formalities were adopted.

Jan O'Connor and her IDC team continue to oversee the regional collection and expenditure of grower levies. We are thankful that our industry is in good hands, with the collective expertise and experience of the IDC members, measuring value and outcomes for growers at the forefront of their decisions.

IDC Chair, Jan O'Connor

The IDC comprises:

Non-grower Representatives:
Jan O'Connor and Anne Mansell

Grower Representatives:
Brent Farnsworth, Justin Kassulke, Selina Wilson, Tony Mathews, and Fred Frasca (appointed November 2023)

Very few people offer their time to impact and develop their industry, we are most appreciative of the IDC members' commitment to our industry and fellow growers.

IDC Projects

The growers' poll results for the proposed MVW/IDC projects for 2024-25 were announced, and pleasingly all projects received significant support (the lowest approval rate for any project was 95%, with most projects being supported unanimously).

The 2024-25 projects are similar to those being delivered this year by MVW and the table below details the 2024-25 project costs approved by growers in the poll:

Project Name:	2024-25 $
Grower Communications	37,747
Industry Development Officer	49,701
Information Collection & Database Management	38,412
MD/SH Winegrape Crush Report & Pricing	9,405
Production Support	23,364
Project preparations, development & delivery	6,160
Support regional wine shows	1,100
Weather Station Network	21,307
Winegrape Industry Development (incl. the Inland Wine Regions Alliance)	49,918
TOTAL	**$237,114**

Regional Roundup *continued*

Chris Dent, MVW Chair / Swan Hill Region Grape Growers Association Inc. President

MVW IDO, Stephen Kelly

Swan Hill Grape Growers Association – AGM

The Swan Hill Region Grape Growers Association Inc. held its Annual General Meeting at the Nyah & Nyah West Football & Netball Club, Nyah on the 7th of February 2024; the small but committed group discussed several topics affecting the wine industry, the effect of rainfall and the difficult growing season and the saleability of wine grapes, Reds in particular, for the coming harvest.

Chris Dent presented his 9th President's Report.

Chris Dent was re-elected as President, Colin Free was re-appointed as Vice-President, and long-time Secretary/Treasurer, Marg Lucardie was confirmed in her roles. Other committee members elected for 2024 were John Ward, Rex Oswin, and Andrew Flanagan.

Guest speakers included;

- MVW CEO, Paul Derrico, provided an update on regional and national wine industry issues and the outlook for vintage 2024
- Stuart Putland, MVW Industry Development Officer (IDC funded), discussed the findings of the Financial Benchmarking project for wine grapes production in the Murray Valley and industry projects that he is working on. Also calling for ideas to be addressed at this year's upcoming vine health workshops and project concepts for Wine Australia's Regional Program
- Stephen Kelly, MVW Industry Development Officer (Wine Aust. funded) advised that since he commenced with MVW in August 2023, much of his time has been spent on the Sustainable Winegrowing Australia (SWA) program – assisting with training and one-on-one support for growers who are preparing for an audit.

Stephen detailed MVW's program of events for growers that are scheduled through to June 2024

- Ashley Kuhl, Counsellor - Rural Financial Counselling Service Victoria West (Mildura), gave a brief overview of his role and that of the RFCS - he noted the impact of the downturn in the wine industry and the increased uptake of RFCS services during this period, notably for those growers needing assistance with applications with the Victorian Government's Flood & Disaster Assistance Package.

RFCS Victoria West
Wellbeing support
on farm & in business
Through your local Rural Financial Counselling Service
RFCS Victoria West
1300 735 578
RFCSVictoriaWest.com.au
Australian Government
VICTORIA State Government

Affinity Labs

New Merbein laboratory to benefit local growers and winemakers

Affinity Labs is excited to announce the opening of their new regional laboratory at Merbein. As the leading supplier of laboratory services to the grape and wine sector, the new facility will process grapevines, grapes, juice and wine samples, and transport them to the main laboratory in Adelaide for analysis.

Led by Technical Services Officer, Farimah Arshadi, the laboratory will also offer a free sample courier service for the Murray-Darling region. Producers can organise collection of their samples for processing at the Merbein laboratory. This free, easy-to-use service is available Monday to Friday by calling or texting 0437 151 010.

Analysis can be ordered through the Affinity Labs web order forms, which will also supply any required biosecurity declarations. https://affinitylabs.com.au/wine-lab-analysis-web-order-form

More information is available on the Affinity Labs website or contact Merbein customer service on merbein@affinitylabs.com.au.

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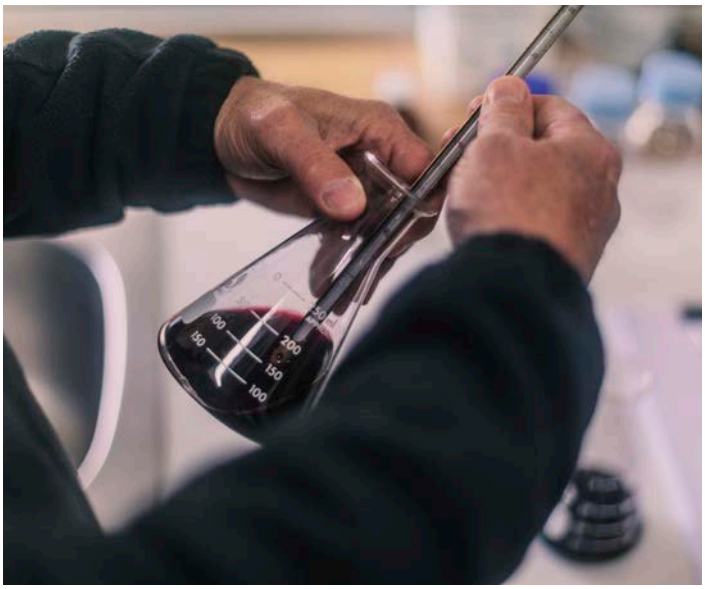


Credit: Wine Australia

KEEPING THE PEACE

The most common complaints from farm neighbours are about the noise made by machinery, scare guns, and frost fans, even when operations are legitimate and complying with regulations.

TRUCK NOISE AND DUST

- Transports using local roads, left idling on blocks or being loaded during the night can cause dust and disturbance

FROST FANS

- People have very different tolerance levels to noise, and sleep deprivation can contribute to health problems and anxiety
- Make sure fans are running only in the event of frost
- Talk to neighbours who might be affected by the noise and explain when, where and why you will be needing to use frost fans

NIGHT-TIME HARVESTING

- Let neighbours know that you understand the disruption. Explain how long you expect the activity to occur so that they are informed and are prepared

LIGHTS

- Noise and light from spraying and harvest operations can disturb nearby residents.
- Incorrectly positioned security lighting that may be in breach of residents' privacy - position lights so they don't shine into neighboring homes and properties

DRONES

- Drones or Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) are used for soil and field analysis, crop spraying and vine management - but they have safety and privacy implications
- Some basic rules and guidelines for flying drones are available from www.droneflyer.com.au

RUBBISH

- In most local government areas, leaving mud, clay, dirt piles or debris like posts, wire or netting on any part of a public road or roadside is classed as littering and stiff fines are applicable.

Check with the CFA or NSW RFS before burning off, including burning farming debris on roadsides.

If a neighbour makes a noise complaint, councils are obliged to investigate - even when the operations being complained about are legitimate.

A greater level of noise associated with agricultural activities is allowed in Farming Zones, such as night harvesting. But growers are still bound by laws and regulations relating to noise and are expected to minimise noise wherever possible.

BIRD SCARERS

Environment Protection Authority noise control guidelines guide the use of scare guns

- A scare gun must not be used within 300 metres of another house
- The scare gun must not emit more than 70 blasts per day
- The scare gun must not be used earlier than 7am or later than sunset. (Earlier starting times can be agreed with neighbours)
- The total time of operation of a scare gun must not exceed 12 hours in any one day. However, the time of operation may be divided into two separate periods, provided the interval between blasts is not less than six minutes.
- Wherever possible, the use of the scare gun shall be minimised

Tonon Vineyard & Winery shines a spotlight on Sangiovese at the 2023 Australian Alternative Varieties Wine Show

The winners of this year's Australian Alternative Varieties Wine Show (AAVWS) in Mildura were announced at the AAVWS Awards Long Lunch on Saturday 11 November 2023.

The Dr. Rod Bonfiglioli Best Wine of Show, sponsored by Chalmers, was awarded to Tonon Vineyard & Winery for its 2022 Sangiovese. This wine was also awarded trophies for Best Red Wine, sponsored by Chr. Hansen and Best Red Italian Variety Wine, sponsored by Stefano's Restaurant.

Tonon Vineyard & Winery, situated in the Perth Hills wine region in Western Australia, is the brainchild of winemaker, Dan Tonon. Tonon's single vineyard in the Carmel-Bickley valley, established in 2012, boasts a number of alternative grape varieties that are perfectly suited to the terroir of the Perth Hills GI, including Vermentino, Fiano, Tempranillo, Malbec and, of course, Sangiovese. This small, independent winery has become synonymous with estate grown, artisan produced, award-winning wines.

Chief of Judges, Leanne Altmann, led the judging panel comprising 14 judges, including International Guest Judge, USA based Wine Writer, Sommelier and Educator Jeff Porter.

Western Australian representatives, Nina Throsby (Group Sommelier, Kailis Hospitality Group and 2023 AAVWS judge) and Cassandra Charlick (wine writer/presenter and the 2023 AAVWS Fellowship Recipient) are both passionate ambassadors of alternative varieties.

Nina reflects, "What a truly wonderful result both for the AAVWS and Western Australia - it was my first year judging in Mildura and the first year a WA wine has taken out wine of show! The Tonon Sangiovese is a true beacon of what the show endeavours to do - uncover great wines made by alternative varieties throughout Australia. A beautiful ethereal ideation of the variety defined by its tension and poise."

Cassandra also added, "The AAVWS is one of Australia's most exciting wine shows, providing an insight into the future of Australian wine and the varieties that we have and will see make their way into mainstream Australian wine culture.How fantastic to be in attendance in Mildura to see Tonon take home multiple trophies, including the Dr. Rod Bonfiglioli Best Wine of Show. This is a major milestone for the Western Australian wine industry, and I hope it encourages more producers to explore alternative varieties and strive to craft expressive wines from them. Tonon's Sangiovese shone with vitality and a real lightless of touch amongst its peers in what was a highly competitive class."

The AAVWS juggernaut continues into its 22nd year with a focus on sustainability, 802 entries, 115 different varieties, 67 unique regions, a plethora of incredible sponsors, AAVWS family and volunteers making the show a benchmark for the celebration of alternative varietals- dare I say-worldwide!" (AAVWS President, Corrina Wright)

From left: Chief of Judges, Leanne Altmann; Fellowship recipient, Cassandra Charlick; Sponsor of Best Wine of Show, Chalmers' Bruce & Jenni Chalmers and 2024 Judge Nina Throsby. Photo Credit: AAVWS

Dan Tonon, Owner/Winemaker
Photo Credit: Tonon Vineyard & Winery

2023 Australian Alternative Varieties Wine Show *continued*

2023 Trophy Winners

Trophy	Winery	Wine	Vintage	Class
The Dr. Rod Bonfiglioli Best Wine of Show	Tonon Vineyard & Winery	Sangiovese	2022	18A
Best Red Wine	Tonon Vineyard & Winery	Sangiovese	2022	18A
Best White Wine	d'Arenberg	The Sun Surfer Fiano	2023	4A
Best Red Italian Variety Wine	Tonon Vineyard & Winery	Sangiovese	2022	18A
Best White Italian Variety Wine	d'Arenberg	The Sun Surfer Fiano	2023	4A
Best Red Iberian Variety Wine	Chalk Hill	Small Batch Release Graciano	2022	28
Best White Iberian Variety wine	Artwine	The Real Thing	2023	11
Best Red French Variety Wine	Skillogalee Estate	Skillogalee Small Batch Cabernet Franc	2022	32
Best White French Variety Wine	Rutherglen Estate	Shelleys Block	2022	16
Best of the Rest	Arila Gardens	Gardens of Moppa	2022	35
Chief of Judges Wine to Watch	Ros Ritchie Wines	Sandy Creek Vineyard	2023	3A
International Judge's Wine to Watch	Chalmers Project	Aglianico Bambino	2023	22
Provenance Award	Chalmers	Fiano	NV	40
Viticulturist Award	Troy McInnes			
Best Blend	Battle of Bosworth	Heretic	2023	37A
Best Rosé	rokkwell	Nebbiolo Rosé	2023	17
Best Sparkling Wine	No Winner Awarded			
Stewards Choice Award	Stefano Lubiana Wines	Amphora Malvasia	2022	6
Tony Mangan Memorial Award for Best Organic Wine	d'Arenberg	The Sun Surfer Fiano	2023	4A
Best Murray Darling Region Wine	Trentham Estate	Reserve Noble Taminga	2016	38
Best Label Artwork	Ravensworth	Hilltops	2022	23A

The Code of Conduct for Australian Winegrape Purchases

The Code of Conduct for Australian Winegrape Purchases has been developed as a foundation for building relationships between growers and winemakers that are fair, equitable and mutually beneficial as well to provide as a quick and cost-effective dispute resolution mechanism. The Code sets minimum standards relating to grape purchasing including mechanisms for determining price, quality assessment for the purpose of affecting price and payment terms. Additional recommendations relating to 'best practice' in successful partnerships are included as a supplement to the provisions of the Code.

Signatories

Accolade Wines
All Saints Estate Pty Ltd
Australia Food and Beverage Group Pty Ltd
Australian Vintage Ltd
d'Arenberg Pty Ltd
Balancing Heart Vineyard
Balnaves Vineyard Services Pty Ltd t/as Balnaves of Coonawarra
Berton Vineyards
Bleasdale Vineyards Pty Ltd
Brown Brothers Milawa Vineyard Pty Ltd
Calabria Family Wines Pty Ltd
Campbells Wines Pty Ltd
Cape Jaffa Wines
Casella Wines Pty Ltd t/as Casella Family Brands
Cheviot Wine Group
Colbinabbin Estate Vineyard Management Pty Ltd
Constellation Australia Ltd
Coonawarra Jack Winery Pty Ltd
Cumulus Wines Pty Ltd
Difabio Estate Wines Pty Ltd
Domaine Chandon Australia Pty Ltd
Dorrien Winemaking
Down To Earth
Eagle Bay Brewing Co
Eden Road Wine Company t/as Eden Road Wines
Feathertop Winery
First Creek Wines
Fleurieu Vintners Pty Ltd t/as Boar's Rock
Four Winds Vineyard
Fowles Wine
Fox Gordon Pty Ltd
Gemtree Vineyards Pty Ltd t/as Gemtree Wines
Green Door Wines
Growers Wine Group
Hallman Pty Ltd t/as Eden Hall Wines
Heartland Wines Pty Ltd
Henry Holmes Wines Pty Ltd
Henschke
Hill River Estate Wines (formerly Ramco Wine Group)
J & M Innes Pty Ltd
Jeir Creek Wines
Kirrihill Wines Pty Ltd
La Kooki Wines (Margaret River Wine Solutions)
Lark Hill Wine Co
Limestone Coast Wines Pty Ltd
Montalto
Nashdale Lane Wines
Oakridge Wines Pty Ltd
Obelisk Wine Co
Paradigm Hill
Pernod Ricard Winemakers
Pipers Brook Vineyard
Rathbone Wine Group Pty Ltd
Rusden Wines
Samarkan Pastoral Co Pty Ltd t/as Coombe Farm
SA Wine Co.
Seppeltsfield Wines Pty Ltd
Serafino Wines
Shaw and Smith Pty Ltd
Shaw Family Vintners Wines
Shingleback Wine Pty Ltd
Sirromet Wines
Smallwater Estate
Tahbilk Pty Ltd on behalf of The Tahbilk Group
TarraWarra Estate Pty Ltd
Tinja Pastoral / Lowe Family Wine Co
Tinlins Wines Pty Ltd
Treasury Wine Estates
Trentham Estate
Tyrrell's Vineyards Pty Ltd
Vineyard 28
Voyager Estate (WA) Pty Ltd
Wirra Wirra Vineyards
Yalumba Wine Company
Zilzie Wines Pty Ltd

Wine Australia Export Report

Export results reflect challenging global trends

Australian wine exports declined by 2 per cent in value to $1.90 billion and 3 per cent in volume to 607 million litres in the 12 months to December 2023, according to Wine Australia's Export Report released today.

Although these figures are an improvement on than those reported in the September 2023 Export Report, the results are still well below long-term averages.

Wine Australia Manager, Market Insights, Peter Bailey said that Europe and North America drove the reduction in Australia's export value over the year, declining by 7 and 12 per cent respectively.

"In Europe, exports to the top 15 markets declined in value as the region suffers through higher inflation rates than North America and Asia, as well as supply chain issues. This includes the United Kingdom (UK), Australia's largest export market by volume. Pleasingly, Australia's exports to the UK grew in volume for the first time since mid-2021," Mr Bailey said.

"Both the United States (US) and Canada contributed to North America's decline in value. In 2023, packaged shipments to these markets continued their decline and unpackaged shipments, which were growing strongly, have started to ease off.

"The decline in exports to Europe and North America has resulted in their share of export value dropping to 29 and 27 per cent respectively. Meanwhile, Asia's share of export value has grown to 37 per cent.

"Hong Kong and Singapore were stand out destinations for Australian wine in Asia, driving the growth of value to the region. Further, the number of exporters to Hong Kong also grew – up 138 export businesses to a total of 531 in 2023. Hong Kong and Singapore are key trading hubs in the Asian region and, as such, some of the wine is on-shipped to other markets," Mr. Bailey said.

The top five markets by value were:

- US (down 7 per cent to $364 million. 19 per cent share of total export value)
- UK (down 3 per cent to $361 million. 19 per cent share of total export value)
- Hong Kong (up 74 per cent to $290 million. 15 per cent share of total export value)
- Canada (down 24 per cent to $143 million. 8 per cent share of total export value), and
- Singapore (up 1 per cent to $133 million. 7 per cent share of total export value).

The top five markets by volume were:

- UK (up 2 per cent to 220 million litres. 36 per cent share of total export volume)
- US (down 5 per cent to 134 million litres. 22 per cent share of total export volume)
- Canada (up 7 per cent to 73 million litres. 12 per cent share of total export volume)
- New Zealand (down 2 per cent to 29 million litres. 5 per cent share of total export volume), and
- Germany (down 7 per cent to 27 million litres. 4 per cent share of total export volume).

The decline in Australia's exports comes at a time when most wine producing countries are reporting decreasing sales. The global alcohol market is softening and impacting the entire wine category, especially in mature markets. This trend has been attributed to a combination of global economic tightening resulting in less discretionary spending and consumers being more conscious of their health.

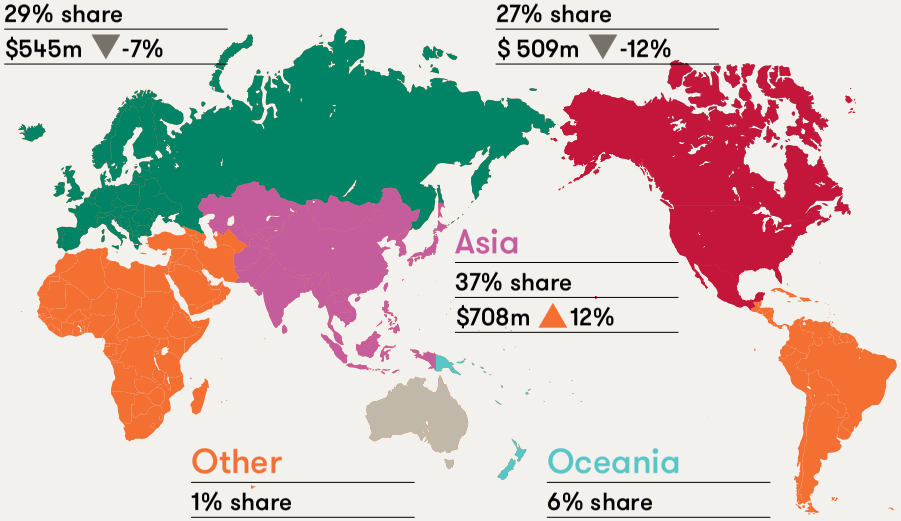
IWSR research conducted in the first half of 2023 indicated a "significant negative shift" in spending on all alcohol, with all regions except Asia trending negative. Consumers cited "economic moderation" as the main reason. Furthermore, 2023 was the worst performance for the alcohol market in the United States since 1991, declining by 5 per cent in total servings according to research by bw166.

Wine Australia

Export Report

1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023

Total value	$1.90b	▼	-2%
Total volume	607m litres	▼	-3%
Average value	$3.13/litre	▲	0.2%



Exports by price point (value)

$10.00 +	$690m	▲	11%
$7.50–$9.99	$99m	▼	-18%
$5.00–$7.49	$172m	▼	-19%
$2.50–$4.99	$487m	▼	-8%
< $2.50	$450m	▼	-2%

Top 5 export destinations (value)

United States	$364m	▼	-7%
United Kingdom	$361m	▼	-3%
Hong Kong	$290m	▲	74%
Canada	$143m	▼	-24%
Singapore	$133m	▲	1%

Top 5 export varieties (litres)

Chardonnay	148m	▼	-9%
Shiraz	140m	▼	-8%
Cabernet Sauvignon	87m	▲	2%
Pinot Gris/Grigio	47m	▲	21%
Merlot	40 m	▲	3%

58% of wine produced is exported

112 export destinations

1,298 active exporters

18,024 different products exported

15.5 million glasses of Australian wine enjoyed overseas each day

Murray Valley
Winegrowers

iDC

Murray Valley
Winegrape Industry
Development Committee