



# Wine Industry Newsletter

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Like the rest of the WA wine industry, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development's wine research team have come off a fast and furious harvest, racking up 7,000 km by travelling to 59 different sample sites across the Margaret River and Great Southern wine regions!

The 2024 harvest saw the final vintage of winemaking activities for the provenance project and third full season of demonstrating the influence of Cabernet clones.

## Project: Understanding the intricacies of provenance in Western Australian wine regions

This project aims to build on previous and upcoming works investigating how the variability of the elements (geology, soil and climate) can impact wine attributes within the Margaret River and Great Southern wine regions. The varieties of focus are Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon in Margaret River and Shiraz and Riesling in the Great Southern as these are the 'hero' varieties for their respective regions.

The first pick of Margaret River Chardonnay occurred on 18 January and the last Cabernet site

was picked on 12 March. A total of 750 kg of fruit was harvested across the 38 different Margaret River sites.

The first pick of Great Southern (Frankland River) Riesling was on 7 February and the last Shiraz site (Porongurup) was on 14 March. In all, 380 kg of fruit was harvested from 19 Great Southern sites.

Funding for the Provenance project is received via the Wine Export Growth Partnership of which Wines of WA is a partner and supported by Margaret River Wine Association and Great Southern Wine Producers' Association.



*Photo: Yu-Yi Liao, DPIRD technical officer, plunging 10 kg red ferments*

## **Project: Demonstrating how clonal selection can influence Cabernet Sauvignon wine quality**

This project aims to understand the characteristics of 14 different clones and selections across multiple vintages, focusing on field performance and wine qualities.

The Margaret River trial block was established in 2019 onto grafted vines at the Howard Park Leston vineyard.

In the context of the previous 2 seasons, we observed a considerable advancement in vine growth and berry development from this season as shown in the table below. The dates show averages across the different clones and selections.

Comparison of vine growth and berry Development between seasons	2021-23	2023-24
Budburst	29 September	3 October
Flowering	3 December	4 November
Veraison	9 February	9 January
Harvest	8 April	22 February

The trial is part of a DPIRD collaboration with Howard Park Wines, Wines of WA, Wine Australia WAVIA and ARM Nursery.

All the 2024 trial wines are expected to be bottled by July this year, followed by chemical and sensory analysis, and featured in industry tastings based on the outputs of the respective projects.

For further information contact **Richard Fennessy**.

## Australian Cabernet symposium insights available

This year for the first time, the Australian Cabernet Symposium included a satellite venue in Margaret River. The event successfully simulcast presentations and tastings between Coonawarra and Margaret River and was attended by around 120 delegates between the 2 venues.

Speakers from France, Hawke's Bay, the Napa Valley, Scotland, Adelaide, Coonawarra and Margaret River shared their insights in Cabernet in the fields of research, viticulture and winemaking.

The program centred on the theme 'Supporting Cabernet Sauvignon into the Future' with topics such as international trends on managing the impact of climate change in vineyards, irrigation scheduling technologies, advancements in supporting winery self-sustainability, rootstock influence on wine composition, market trends and masterclass tastings demonstrating the influence of clonal selection and exploring wine style diversity.

The event was held on 1 February which in most seasons would have timed well with the beginning of vintage in the Margaret River wine region, but with unseasonably warm and dry conditions the harvest started a month early, making it difficult for local producers to attend.





*Photo: The Margaret River audience at the 2024 Australian Cabernet Symposium*

The 2024 Australian Cabernet Symposium was presented by Coonawarra Vignerons in conjunction with Wines of WA.

## Upcoming WA Sparkling wine symposium

An exciting event is nearing its final stages of planning.

Wines of WA, Wine Australia and DPIRD will be holding a Sparkling Wine Symposium at the RAC Karri Valley Resort within the Southern Forests region on 7 August 2024.

The event aims to improve WA producers' technical knowledge of premium sparkling wine production (méthode champenoise and non-traditional methods) and explore the opportunities across WA's diverse wine regions.

Over the last 5 months DPIRD's Richard Fennessy has been working with an industry-based committee to develop the program of technical topics related to the growing and making of premium sparkling wine.

The program will feature 5 interstate expert speakers across the disciplines of market analysis, grapegrowing and winemaking, and will be joined by another 5 local speakers sharing their experiences and expertise. The day will also include a number of themed wine tastings.

The event will consist of a full day of presentations followed by a dinner for those wishing to continue the discussion over locally prepared dishes with accompanying regional wines.

Further details and ticketing information will be included in the next edition of the Wine Industry Newsletter and correspondence through Wines of WA and the regional associations.

For further information contact **Richard Fennessy**.

## DPIRD surveillance blitz for *Diaporthe ampelina*

The disease **Phomopsis cane and leaf spot (PCLS)** is caused by *D. ampelina*, which can cause significant yield loss in areas where weather conditions are favourable, and if the disease is not effectively controlled.

*Diaporthe ampelina* was confirmed on grapevines (*Vitis* spp.) in Western Australia for the first time in May 2023, at the Manjimup DPIRD research station.

The main source of spread of *D. ampelina* to vineyards is via planting material, with only localised spread occurring within vineyard blocks via natural movement.

After the detection in Manjimup, a Pest Control Notice (PCN) was placed on the grapevine blocks at the research station, preventing movement of grapevine material from the site.

DPIRD is conducting pruning and management activities at the research station, including removal and disposal, of infected vine material.

PCLS is present in all other Australian grape-growing regions and all grapevine varieties grown in WA can be infected, but differ in their susceptibility.

Characteristic symptoms of PCLS include small dark leaf spots with yellow halos that appear during spring, and black cane lesions on the lower internodes.

The disease is favoured where the vines remain wet for extended periods, so early season rain events, high humid conditions and prolonged dew periods all assist in infection. Rainfall is particularly important, as it disperses the spores via rain splash onto new growth.

In early November, more than 14 DPIRD staff were involved in a surveillance blitz for PCLS. Over 200 hectares of vines were inspected in the Manjimup and Pemberton growing regions, using a sampling design from a plant disease epidemiologist, that would result in a 95% confidence in detection of PCLS.

A total of 25 samples were taken from vineyards outside of the research station. Of these, the majority included leaf spot symptoms, with a portion of them being contact herbicide damage. Three isolates were *Diaporthe*, but both morphological and molecular analysis determined these to be *D. australafricana*, a different species to *D. ampelina*.

*D. australafricana* has been known to occur on grapevines in WA for a long time and is not considered a pathogen. Other fungi isolated from the leaf spots included *Alternaria* and *Pestalotiopsis* species.

**No *D. ampelina* was isolated from any of the samples collected or observed in the surveillance activities.**

At present, *D. ampelina* has not been detected outside of the research station in WA and the PCN will remain in place at the research station, with no vine material to leave the site.

*D. ampelina* is currently declared a prohibited organism in WA and anyone with suspect symptoms of *D. ampelina* are encouraged to report them via MyPestGuide through [mypestguide.agric.wa.gov.au](https://mypestguide.agric.wa.gov.au) or the MyPestGuide® Reporter app or through the Pest and Disease Information Service email: [padis@dpiird.wa.gov.au](mailto:padis@dpiird.wa.gov.au) or phone: 08 9368 3080.

## Impact on WAVIA orders

Unfortunately, the detection of *D. ampelina* will again impact WAVIA's ability to collect and distribute propagation material.

WAVIA will be unable to access both the Germplasm collection and Variety Trial Block at DPIRD's Manjimup Horticulture Research Institute (MHRI) for the 2024 cutting season or to be able to store material at MHRI in their coolrooms.

This is the same as last year and follows from the previous year when Grapevine Red Blotch Virus was detected in the Germplasm collection.

The Pest Control Notice placed on the grapevine blocks at the research station prevents the movement of grapevine material from the site.

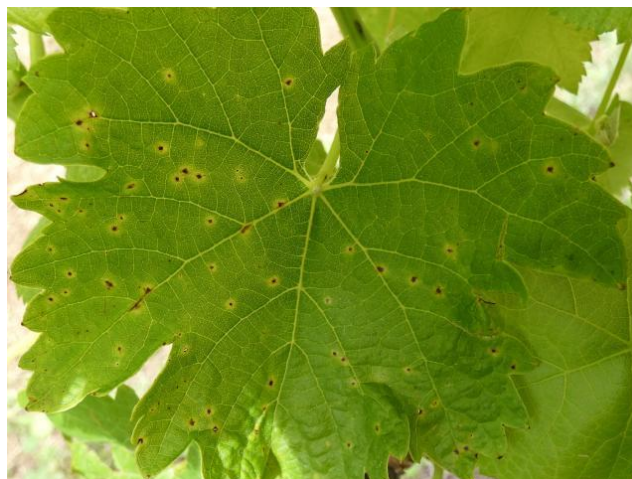
The impact of *Diaporthe Ampelina* prevents WAVIA from collecting and distributing any cuttings in 2024.

Jim Campbell-Clause, WAVIA Chairman

Photographs of symptoms of *D. ampelina* are included below for reference.



*Photo: Infection is usually more evident in spring with longitudinal lesions on the first three internodes*



*Photo: Black spots with yellow halos are seen in spring*



*Photo: Lesions on dormant or lignified wood which are the source of new season infection.  
Note these can be confused with garden weevil damage.*



## WAVIA Chairman's report

By all accounts 2023 was a nice vintage, with strong yields and great fruit being produced for winemaking. The higher tonnage and continued low international demand for wine resulted in high volumes of stored wine and low demand for fruit.

Grape sales have been difficult recently, impacting demand for propagation material except for alternative varieties.

WAVIA continues to rely on a team of dedicated volunteers and assistance from the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD). I want to thank those on the committee from industry and DPIRD. Particular thanks to Chris Harding, who has done a lot of work for WAVIA this year, including updating the order form, revising the source block register, setting up new bank accounts and helping DPIRD with records of material distribution as well as the day to day running of the Association. Colleen Gillespie has again done most of the work, collecting propagation material and keeping the WAVIA books. Steve Partridge has WAVIA informed of many national projects and vine propagation association work. Thanks to Jock Riddel, Clint Robertson and Matt Trent for contributing to the management committee. We welcomed Rob Johnson to the committee this year representing the Perth Hills.

We thank Richard Fennessy from DPIRD and staff for their support and assistance. Richard continues to assist on the committee and has continued research and development in vine improvement. Many thanks to Ian Guthridge, Manager of the Horticulture Research Institute, for his team's work with the Germplasm collection.

Unfortunately, another detection of an exotic disease impacted the ability of WAVIA to collect and distribute propagation material. *Diaporthe ampelina*, a fungal trunk/cane disease, was picked up by Andrew Taylor (DPIRD) in the Germplasm collection and resulted in WAVIA being unable to access both the Germplasm collection and Variety Trial Block at Manjimup for the 2023 cutting season, or to be able to store material at MHRI in their coolrooms. It has not been found in the Trial block at this stage but is widespread in the Germplasm block. Fortunately some material was able to be sourced from source blocks.

Only a few orders could be filled from source blocks. This year, we could only source and supply the alternative varieties, including Barbera, Carmenere, Graciano, Pignoletto, and Tannat. Steve Partridge and Patrick Bertola did a great job of collecting and packing the cuttings, with Colleen Gillespie dispatching all the material for the orders.

The long-term importance of the WA Germplasm collection continues to be discussed by the NGC Project as an important National Genetic Repository. The level of virus testing that has been and is continuing to be conducted presents validation of the overall high-status quality of the collection. Following the removal of the vines identified as infected with GRBV, further extensive broad-spectrum testing has resulted in a handful of individual vines of other varieties being identified for removal. These were vines of Early Madeleine WA, Chardonnay I10V3, Touriga E6V12, Grüner Veltliner, Sauvignon Blanc F4V6. WAVIA has agreed to fund 50% of the costs required to conduct the additional broad-spectrum virus retesting of some 100+ vines in the Germplasm collection for the NGC Project to confirm indeterminate previous results. *Diaporthe ampelina* delayed the collection and virus testing.

Grapevine varieties and clones DNA were collected for the 'Protecting Australia's wine-grape germplasm through the genomic testing project' from MHRI and Wokalup. The



project aims to develop a database for DNA identification of specific variety/clones for the industry.

All WAVIA samples were identified as expected, with three samples needing to be resampled or reviewed, including (Pinot 18 GM, Sauvignon Blanc 14V9 and Chardonnay I10V3). Unfortunately, a funding cut has delayed the project, but we hope the work will still be done in time.

In August, industry was able to see and assess wines from the Howard Park Cabernet Clonal trial at the DPIRD workshop run by Richard Fennessy. These wines will also be presented at the February 2024 Australian Cabernet Symposium.

WAVIA continues to keep in touch with state and national issues. WAVIA continues to be a member of VINA and, through Steve Partridge, keeps in touch with issues that affect WA and WAVIA. WAVIA has also been involved with developing a national grape-industry strategy for implementing a national standard for grapevine certification.

WAVIA sits on the Industry Advisory Committee, helping the industry form a position to preserve grapevine varieties and clones. WAVIA continues to be supportive of re-establishing a national vine improvement peak body.

WAVIA continue to seek new people interested in vine improvement to join the committee. The WAVIA committee wishes everyone all the best for the vintage and the coming year.

Jim Campbell-Clause

WAVIA Chair

## Queensland fruit fly (Qfly) Bayswater

### Industry update #9, 12 March 2024

DPIRD is pleased to announce that Queensland fruit fly (Qfly) has been eradicated from Bayswater and surrounding suburbs.

Thanks to the collective efforts of affected residents, growers of Qfly host fruit and DPIRD, Qfly eradication was achieved on 11 March 2024, just over 12 months after the incident was declared.

The Quarantine Area Notice has been lifted with businesses and growers no longer subject to quarantine movement controls on host fruit and vegetables. Western Australia's (WA) area freedom for this pest has now been reinstated.

Qfly is one of the most serious pests of fruit and fruiting vegetables in Australia, attacking over 300 species of fruit and vegetables and impacting a range of horticulture industries and access to valuable markets.

### Incident overview

Qfly was first detected in Bayswater in February 2023 through routine monitoring of traps in WA's early warning surveillance network. A Quarantine Area was declared in early March 2023 and the Bayswater Qfly eradication program was declared.

During the eradication program, more than 90,000 property inspections were conducted across about 5,500 properties in the Bayswater area. Almost 50,000 host plants were inspected and the necessary surveillance, baiting, and trapping activities undertaken.

### Impact on industry

The Bayswater response was the first time a Qfly Quarantine Area has impacted a growing area.

To support industry stakeholders, DPIRD worked closely with the Swan Valley table grape growers to pilot an auditable, on-farm certification assurance procedure to facilitate intrastate movement of host product during a Qfly outbreak while maintaining strict biosecurity protocols.

DPIRD is now adapting the certification assurance procedure option for other commercial host produce to support growers and producers prepare for and be ready in the event they are affected by a fruit fly outbreak in WA.

DPIRD also worked closely with the Nursery and Garden Industry of Western Australia to spread the good home garden hygiene message to support the response by providing free tree care tags to nurseries for citrus, stone and pome fruit trees. This work will continue.

### Ongoing Qfly surveillance and reporting

DPIRD manages a permanent Qfly surveillance trapping array as an early warning system for the pest and to provide evidence to our trading partners that Qfly is not present in the state.

As part of this program, about 2,300 traps, are hosted by residents and producers across metropolitan Perth and the WA regions of Kununurra, Geraldton, Carnarvon, Bunbury, Donnybrook, Manjimup, and Albany.

In addition to this ongoing surveillance, growers of Qfly hosts such as strawberry, citrus, avocado, stone fruit, and tomato should regularly check for signs of Qfly and plan how to

treat and move produce if affected by a fruit fly outbreak, even if harvest is several months away.

If you suspect you have seen Qfly, call DPIRD's Pest and Disease Information Service (PaDIS) on 08 9368 3080 or email [\*\*padis@dpird.wa.gov.au\*\*](mailto:padis@dpird.wa.gov.au).

Alternatively you can send photos via the department's MyPestGuide™ Reporter app ([\*\*Google Play Store\*\*](#) and [\*\*Apple iTunes Store\*\*](#)), or email [\*\*padis@dpird.wa.gov.au\*\*](mailto:padis@dpird.wa.gov.au)

### **Incident closure**

The Qfly Bayswater incident has now officially closed and DPIRD thanks growers and residents for their support of this successful eradication campaign.

There will be no further industry updates provided.

## Strong interest from Wine Industry businesses in Round 5 of the Voucher Program

Sixty-one Western Australian Food and Beverage manufacturing businesses have shared 69 Vouchers worth a total of \$470,000 in Round 5 of the WA Agrifood and Beverage Voucher Program.

The WA wine industry had 8 businesses succeed with 10 vouchers, to a total of \$59,000, with a co-contribution of \$79,000. Recipients were spread across the Swan Valley, Geographe, Margaret River and Great Southern wine regions.

The vouchers will be used to bring expertise into the successful wine businesses for business planning, financial health, e-commerce, market expansion, development approvals and production expansion planning projects.

Summary details of vouchers for the WA wine industry in the table below, congratulations to the recipients!

Business name	Voucher amount	Region	Voucher type
A And J Arbel T/As Bella Ridge Estate	\$2,640	Perth	Sales and Marketing
A And J Arbel T/As Bella Ridge Estate	\$4,375	Perth	Business Planning
Chalari Wines	\$5,000	Great Southern	Sales and Marketing
E Parker & R Parker T/As Vallee Du Venom	\$2,355	South West	Manufacturing for Business Growth
E Parker & R Parker T/As Vallee Du Venom	\$5,000	South West	Sales and Marketing
Odyssey Creek Estate	\$5,000	South West	Sales and Marketing
Passchendaele Ridge Pty Ltd	\$10,000	Great Southern	Sales and Marketing
Planetwines Pty Ltd T/As Plantagenet Wines	\$10,000	Great Southern	Sales and Marketing
The Wild Fig Company Pty Ltd T/As Mazza Wines	\$5,000	South West	Sales and Marketing



Business name	Voucher amount	Region	Voucher type
Wills Domain Pty Ltd	\$10,000	South West	Business Planning



Photo: Emma and Rhys Parker, Vallee Du Venom.

Rhys Parker of Vallee Du Venom said that as a small producer in the ultra-competitive wine industry, they greatly appreciate the assistance provided by DPIRD.

"(DPIRD's) Voucher Program was the single most significant factor in our decision process of investing in both a brand-refresh and the engagement of a local planning consultant to assist us in opening a new cellar door in the Margaret River wine region.

The voucher will allow us to fast-track our cellar door opening (scheduled for June this year) as well as upgrading our branding, signage and advertising," he said.

Round 6 is anticipated for mid-2024.

## Support for agrifood and beverage businesses in WA

Are you an agribusiness or food and beverage manufacturer investing in value-adding, or planning for your next investment?

Individual grants of \$15,000 to \$1 million are available to drive food and beverage business growth and jobs.

You could be eligible for a share of \$6 million in funding from the WA State Government as part of the Value-Add Investment Grants Round 3.

The Value Add Investment Grants program is divided into two streams:

- **Capital Investment stream**, which targets businesses looking to expand, diversify or relocate their value adding and processing operations in WA
- **Feasibility stream**, which provides financial support to assist businesses with planning, feasibility and other de-risking activities to support future capital investment decisions.

To find out more about the program and how to apply, register below for the Information Webinar on either:

- **Tuesday 9 April at 11:30am**
- **Thursday 11 April at 9am**

For more information, Agribusiness Food and Trade on 08 9368 3853, email [aftprograms@dpird.wa.gov.au](mailto:aftprograms@dpird.wa.gov.au) or visit the **Value Add Investment Grants** webpage.

## Future events

### Chardonnay symposium

Renowned UK wine writer Will Lyons will headline the second Chardonnay Symposium Australia 2024, being held at Stones of the Yarra Valley on Wednesday 8 May 2024.

In 2019, Wine Yarra Valley hosted the first Chardonnay Symposium Australia and over 180 attendees from Australian industry, trade and media came together to listen to a stellar list of speakers on all things growing, making, and selling Chardonnay.

In 2024, we will investigate what has changed for Chardonnay since then and engage in a conversation about 'What's Next?' for Australian Chardonnay. The program features informative and engaging presentations from industry, trade and media such as Richard Hemming MW, Jamie Goode, and Michael Brajkovich.

Further details and ticketing available at **Chardonnay Symposium Australia**.

National EcoVineyards Program: vineyard ground covers seminar and hydroseeding demonstration

Join agroecologist/viticulturist Dr Mary Retallack, Retallack Viticulture Pty Ltd and Regional On-ground Coordinator, Rebecca Archer who will host a National EcoVineyards ground covers seminar and hydroseeding demonstration.

Special guest presenters to include:

- Anthony Quinlan, Soil Dynamics - cover cropping in southwest vineyards.
- Mark Stidwill, PGG Wrightson's Seeds - leading supplier of ground cover seed and DuraVeg products (which are used for hydroseeding).
- Brayden Hill, GHEMS Revegetation Environmental - demonstration of hydroseeding in the vineyard.

**When:** 8:45am, Thursday 23 May 2024

**Where:** Juniper Estate, 98 Tom Culty Drive, Cowaramup, WA 6284

Further details and registration at **Events | Ecovineyards**

## Turning the Dial

Turning the Dial supports the WA food and beverage sector's transition to a circular economy within 3 core themes; ESG, food waste and sustainable packaging. You are invited to take advantage of the early bird ticket pricing by purchasing your ticket prior to 30 April.

Hosted by DPIRD, this year's event will be held on Thursday 30 May at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre. Early bird tickets available at

**<https://events.humanitix.com/turning-the-dial-2024>**

## Sparkling Wine Symposium

This full day event will feature interstate and local experts presenting in-person and virtually technical elements of premium sparkling production (méthode champenoise and non-traditional methods) across the areas of viticulture & winemaking and feature market insights into the category.

**When:** Wednesday 7 August 2024

**Where:** RAC Karri Valley Resort

Further details to be announced soon.

## Important Disclaimer

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