



Wine Industry Newsletter

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Celebrating sparkling symposium success

A year of planning resulted in a successful WA Sparkling symposium, an event for aspiring and current producers of sparkling wine. The symposium, held on 7 August at the RAC Karri Valley Resort, featured national and local expert speakers who shared technical insights and experiences in producing premium sparkling wines.

The program commenced with Wine Australia's market insights manager Peter Bailey who provided information on global sparkling wine production, the largest and fastest growing markets and key trends in the domestic market.

South Australian viticulture consultant Nick Dry started the viticulture session by detailing key varieties and clones suitable for premium sparkling production in Western Australia. Nick stressed the importance of site suitability, diversity of genetics across plantings and the potential quality and yield benefits through rootstock selection.

Victoria-based viticulturalist Mick Griffith reflected on his experience growing sparkling wine grapes in

Tasmania and the Yarra Valley to highlight the key elements of selecting suitable sites for establishing sparkling wine grape vineyards. Some of these considerations included temperature, frost, soil fertility, water availability, aspect and row orientation.



Mick Griffith presenting at the symposium

After the morning break, Mick talked through vineyard management, encompassing pruning techniques, canopy management, pest and disease management, irrigation, vine nutrition and harvest considerations.

The winemaking session was the feature of the second half of the day.

Pernod Ricard Group white and sparkling winemaker Trina Smith provided a '101' in sparkling wine production methods.

As well as describing carbonation, tank/charmat, transfer/bottle ferment and traditional method, she gave insights into the pros and cons of each of the methods. After the presentation the audience was treated to a tutored tasting of 4 wines which were examples of the production methods.

Nic Bowen, chief winemaker at Howard Park Wines gave an indepth description of a range of styles across the sparkling spectrum focusing on oxidative, reductive, oak influenced, Blanc de Blanc, rosé and extended aging.

A tasting flight featuring 6 wines that were examples of the different styles presented was then held. This impressive selection of wines were sourced from producers in Champagne, Tasmania and the Adelaide Hills.



A selection of the wines tasted during the symposium

Local winemaker Yuri Berns from Sittella Wines gave an insightful presentation of sparkling winemaking across diverse climatic regions followed by Mick Langridge of Idée Fixe sharing experiences in sourcing packaging materials from domestic suppliers and designing a bespoke bottle shape.

The last presentation of the day was from Kate Laurie, co-owner and winemaker of Adelaide Hills producer Deviation Road. Kate gave an in-depth account of her journey of establishing a small sparkling wine producing business. Kate generously shared some of the experiences that brought challenges and success to the business.



Symposium presenters: Yuri Berns, Mick Langridge, Nic Bowen, Kate Laurie, Trina Smith, Nick Dry, Mick Griffith and Lee Haselgrove

Following the symposium was a dinner at the venue's lakeside restaurant where delegates continued the conversation on the opportunities of sparkling wine production in WA.

Video recordings of the presentations will be available via the [**Wines of WA YouTube channel**](#).

This event was achieved through the partnership between Wines of WA, DPIRD and Wine Australia (Regional Program) with sponsorship from Business Events Perth.

Trial wines bottled

Wines from the department's research projects 'Understanding the intricacies of provenance in Western Australian wine regions' and 'Demonstrating how clonal selection can influence Cabernet Sauvignon wine quality, were bottled by the Bunbury-based wine research team over a week in July. These projects were previously described in the March edition of the Wine Industry Newsletter.

The team analysed over 70 individual parcels across the 2 projects for free and total sulphur dioxide, pH and titratable acidity. Each parcel then received a sulphur dioxide addition, racked and dissolved gases adjusted and filtered. Each bottle was painstaking filled by hand, volume adjusted, gassed, screwcapped and labelled before being placed in temperature controlled storage.

A short video of the process was posted on the [DPIRD Facebook page](#) for those interested in viewing.

These wines will be stored for at least 2 months before undertaking chemical profiling, sensory analysis and presenting at industry tasting workshops.



Richard Fennessy and Yu-Yi Liao bottling at DPIRD's Bunbury wine laboratory

Acknowledgements

Funding for the Provenance project is received via the Wine Export Growth Partnership of which Wines of WA is a partner. The Cabernet clone activity is funded via the Wine Australia Regional Program (administered by Wines of WA).

Regional Program activities

The Wine Australia Regional Program is an initiative that provides regions with funding to support research and innovation. The program aims to help grape growers and winemakers adopt new tools and research findings to support a competitive Australian wine sector.

Western Australia is considered a single region within this annual funding stream. Wines of WA (WoWA) administers the program on behalf of the state wine industry. DPIRD's Richard Fennessy manages the program and works closely with the WoWA technical committee to develop and endorse the activities each year.

The activities endorsed for the 2024-25 period are:

'Demonstrating the influence of clonal selection on Southern Forests Pinot Noir vineyard performance and wine quality'

In 2021 a trial block of 14 Pinot Noir clones was established by grafting onto existing mature vines within the Pemberton wine region. With these vines now achieving commercial yields, viticultural performance data will be observed and collected over the current growing season. In addition, standardised small-lot wines will be produced from each of the clones to present at future industry workshops.

This activity aims to build new knowledge that will benefit producers decision making when considering which clones best suit specific sites and targeted wine styles.

'Advancing technical insights of pruning techniques and strategies'

This activity has been completed and summarised in this newsletter edition.

'Demonstrating the influence of clonal selection on Margaret River Cabernet Sauvignon wine quality'

Since 2022, viticultural performance data and small-lot wines have been produced from a randomised and replicated trial site of 14 different clones and selections of Cabernet Sauvignon. This will continue into the coming growing season to build upon the data collected in previous seasons. Additionally, current and past small-lot wines from this trial will undergo analysis to investigate the potential diversity of tannin profile and composition across the clones and selections.

'Supporting the adoption of winery wastewater best practices'

Through a survey of WA wineries, this activity aims to understand specific challenges producers face when managing wastewater to comply with applicable regulations and meet stakeholder expectations. The second phase of this activity will be reactively constructing an activity that supports producers in addressing one or more of these

challenges which may include demonstration sites, technology installations or information packages.

For further information contact [Richard Fennessy](#).

Summary of clone and wild fermentation workshops

The Western Australian Vine Improvement Association (WAVIA) in collaboration with DPIRD and Wines of WA (via the Wine Australia Regional Program) recently supported a series of workshops in Margaret River and the Great Southern focused on biosecurity, wine grape clones and wild fermentation.

WAVIA chair and AHA Viticulture Director Jim Campbell-Clause started proceedings with an update from WAVIA and the issues surrounding the ability of WAVIA to supply propagation material to industry over the next few years. This led into the importance of biosecurity, highlighting high priority threats, potential tools and management strategies that vineyards can adopt to ensure implementation of best practice biosecurity plans.

Dr Anthony Borneman, research manager of molecular biology at the Australian Wine Research Institute (AWRI) gave 2 presentations, 'Getting what you paid for: grapevine clonal identity testing' and 'Bringing science to wild wine: wine yeast microflora and wild fermentation'.

Within the clonal presentation, Dr Borneman gave a background into genetic diversity of wine grape varieties down to a clonal level and the principles of sequencing clones and identify lineages of clones within a single variety. The Gingin clone of Chardonnay was used as a real-world example of how genetic sequences can mutate over time and how closely or distant clones can be to one another. Other varieties featured included Riesling, Cabernet Sauvignon and Pinot Noir.



Dr Anthony Borneman presenting in the Great Southern region

Dr Borneman also provided an update on a national project using genetic sequencing to define Australia's wine grape germplasm and the prospect of upcoming clonal testing services from the AWRI.

DPIRD Research scientist Richard Fennessy followed-on from these presentations with a practical demonstration of the impact of clonal selection with Cabernet Sauvignon through a wine tasting of 12 different clones of Cabernet grown on a trial site in Margaret River. Further to the tasting, viticultural observations across 3 seasons were presented showing clear trends in some of the clones in terms of yield, berry and bunch weight and vegetative growth.



DPIRD researcher Richard Fennessy presenting in Margaret River

The wild fermentation workshop was held directly after Dr Borneman's presentations.

Attendees were shown how diverse populations of yeasts can be in wild fermentations and how the proportions change through the stages of the ferment.

The compositions of wild ferments from samples across Australia were shown and also the composition of ferments from the same winery over 4 vintages. The presentation touched on winemaking interventions that can shape yeast composition and particularly the impact of sulphur dioxide and aeration.

The take home messages were:

- potentially hundreds of non-*Saccharomyces* species can be observed in wild ferments
- these vary based on winery, vintage and region providing variation compared to inoculated ferments
- interventions will change microbial composition and can provide flavour diversity

- numerous non-*Saccharomyces* starter cultures are commercially available
- these can be used to increase colour, aroma complexity and mouthfeel and to protect from spoilage pre- and post-fermentation.

The organisers wish to thank the Margaret River Wine Association for supplying glassware for the Margaret River workshop and Alkoomi Wines for hosting the Great Southern event.

Contact [Richard Fennessy](#) for further information or copies of the above presentations.

SIMONIT&SIRCH pruning workshop

SIMONIT&SIRCH Australia and New Zealand representative Andrea Bonfatti spent a week in June travelling across the Swan Valley, Margaret River and Great Southern wine regions presenting 'Re-thinking' pruning workshops.

The 67 producers attending the workshops across the regions were presented with a review on how traditional pruning practices can impact vine tissue, vascular flow and productivity. These were then compared to the SIMONIT&SIRCH pruning principles that focus on controlled branching, respecting vascular flow, preferring small cuts and retaining protective wood.

After a morning session of presentations Andrea then conducted vineyard demonstrations of the principles presented. Attendees enjoyed the opportunity to see first-hand how vines of different configurations (old, young, spur pruning, cane pruned and reworked) can be pruned to incorporate the learnings from the morning sessions' content.

Feedback from surveyed participants showed overwhelming agreeance that they would review their pruning strategies and methodologies based on the learnings from the workshop.

These 3 workshops were funded through Wine Australia's Regional Program which is administered by Wines of WA and supported by DPIRD. The organisers of these events thank Nikola Estate, Wayfinder Vineyard and Frankland Estate for generously hosting the respective regional workshops.



Great Southern workshop

Guidelines assist wastewater management decision-making

DPIRD's Agribusiness Development team works closely with industry, primary producers and regulators to create a conducive agribusiness environment. The team has developed information packages around the irrigation of agricultural waste. This information provides support for new or expanding agribusinesses navigating regulatory approvals and licencing processes.

The packages in the form of 3 guideline documents are accessible on DPIRD's [Agribusiness Development](#) webpage.

Agribusiness Development Guidelines:

1. **Site assessment for waste irrigation** – outlines key environmental considerations to determine site suitability of irrigating wastewater.
2. **Suitability of liquid waste for irrigation** – notes important environmental and health considerations for determining whether an agricultural trade waste is suitable to irrigate.
3. **Sizing a waste irrigation area** – provides a guide on how to calculate the required area for waste irrigation, wastewater storage requirements and appropriate irrigation rate.

For wineries wishing to dispose of liquid waste onto land, it is recommended that a Nutrient and Irrigation Management Plan (NIMP) be prepared.

A NIMP shows how environmental impacts are managed in relation to waste disposal, and these guides are designed to support the development of a comprehensive NIMP. Additionally, a winery specific example has been created, and a copy can be requested by emailing agribusiness@dpiird.wa.gov.au.

Partnership to support sustainability certification

Through a co-funding partnership with Wine Australia, Wines of Western Australia (WoWA) has appointed Eloise Jarvis as program manager for the Sustainability adoption, certification and promotion for Western Australian wine growers and producers project.

WoWA Chief Executive Officer, Larry Jorgensen said that a goal of the Western Australian Wine Industry Strategic Plan 2024-34 is for Western Australia to be recognised by consumers as one of the top ten regions internationally for sustainable wine production.

"This project will develop a practical toolkit/pathway to support Western Australian wine producers in achieving sustainability confirmation/recognition to international standards. The primary focus will be on supporting Western Australian wine producers to achieve Sustainable Winegrowing Australia (SWA) certification," he said.

Eloise Jarvis is well known in the WA wine industry with over 25 years' experience as a winemaker, educator, and consultant. She is a graduate of the Wine Australia Future Leaders program and is currently delivering the Wine Australia Next Crop program in Margaret River. Previously, as Sustainability Engagement Officer for Margaret River Wine Association, she implemented the region's Sustainability Action Plan, significantly boosting the adoption and certification of Sustainable Winegrowing Australia by producers. With a strong commitment to advancing sustainability through collaborative projects and education, Eloise's extensive expertise and leadership will further enhance and drive sustainable practices within the industry.

Eloise said it was a privilege to be selected to deliver Wines of Western Australia's Sustainability adoption, certification, and promotion project.

"I'm really excited by the opportunity to collaborate with each wine region's grape growers and wine producers and our stakeholders to increase awareness, engagement and adoption of environment, social and governance practices that will help create a prosperous and resilient wine community," she said.

Wine Australia ESG Manager, Julian Marchant said that certification of sustainable growing and production practices are increasingly important to maintain access in many international markets and that adopting sustainable practises makes good business sense.

"SWA is evolving into a useful tool to measure business efficiency. We are pleased to be working with WoWA on this important project," he said.

The project will begin immediately and continue until 30 June, 2025.

Producers who are interested in accessing the project should contact Eloise directly via email on projectmanager@winewa.asn.au

Annual APC fee-for-service collection

The 2024 collection of the annual compulsory APC fee-for-service is about to commence.

The APC fee-for-service is a comprehensive set of important state and regional services to producers, which are delivered in partnership by Wines of Western Australia and regional wine associations.

Services include:

- advancing a strong brand which enhances the reputation of Western Australian fine wine regions
- expanding local, interstate and international market opportunities for producers
- supporting producers in research, development and education to build a sustainable industry
- representing producers to positively influence regulation and policy matters.

In addition, fee-for-service payers also benefit from the Australia Post state contract administered by WoWA which provides discounted freight for wine producers. Members also benefit from access to CCIWA services and exclusive pricing through our Bunnings Trade Powerpass partnership.

To ensure that these services can continue, it is critical that fee-for-service returns and payments are lodged with the Agricultural Produce Commission on or before the due date of 30 September 2024.

What do I need to do?

- In the coming weeks, the Agricultural Produce Commission will be sending out the annual fee notice to wine producers by email. If your contact details or assigned contact person has changed since last year, you can update your details by emailing apcadmin@dpird.wa.gov.au.
- The email will contain links to the vintage 2024 return forms and nil return forms. Consistent with previous years, a return will need to be completed and lodged by the due date (30 September 2024).
- The fee-for-service rates for vintage 2024 are now available to review at <https://apcwa.org.au/producers-committees/wine>, with most regional and state rates remaining the same as 2023.
- If you don't receive your APC email, or are having difficulties accessing the links contained, the 2024 return forms will be available for access at any time at <https://apcwa.org.au/producers-committees/wine> by the end of August.

What happens if I don't lodge/pay?

Where returns are not lodged / paid, services (including access to the Australia Post state contract arrangement) will be restricted. In addition, as the fee is a statutory fee, there will be penalties applicable for failing to lodge or lodging false information.

Agrochemical update from the AWRI

New active constituents for control of *Botrytis* and powdery mildew

Newly registered active constituents

- The following active constituents are now registered for use in wine-grape production by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA):
 - IPFLUFENOQUIN
- APVMA 91333: Migiwa Kinoprol Active Fungicide is an AgNovaTechnologies Pty Ltd product registered for control of *Botrytis* in winegrapes. It is an activity group 52 fungicide.
- Recommended restriction on use (withholding period) for grapes destined for export wine: Use no later than E-L 29, berries peppercorn size (not >4 mm diameter). Apply no more than one application per season.
 - FLORYLPICOXAMID
- PVMA 91871: Verpixo Adavelt active Fungicide is a Corteva Agriscience Australia Pty Ltd product registered for control of powdery mildew and *Botrytis* on grapevines. It is an activity group 21 fungicide.
- Recommended restriction on use (withholding period) for grapes destined for export wine: Use no later than E-L 31, berries pea-size (not >7 mm diameter). Apply no more than 2 applications per season.

Changes to CropLife resistance management strategies

- Activity groups 21 and 52 are new additions to the CropLife *Botrytis* resistance management strategy published in the hard copy AWRI 'Dog book'. Accordingly, an updated resistance management strategy for *Botrytis* has been included in the online version of the 'Dog book'.
- For more information, please contact Suzanne McLoughlin on 0427 945 259 or email helpdesk@awri.com.au.
- The AWRI advises that the online version of the 2024/25 'Dog book' and mobile app have been updated to include two new active constituents.
- This information is provided to inform the Australian grape and wine sector and should not be interpreted as an endorsement of any product.

Acknowledgements

The AWRI's eBulletin from which this information is sourced is supported by Wine Australia, with levies from Australia's grape growers and winemakers and matching funds from the Australian Government. The AWRI is a member of the Wine Innovation Cluster in Adelaide, South Australia.

Future events

ASVO Viticulture Seminar: Managing extreme weather conditions

The seminar scheduled for 3 September will be held face-to-face in Orange in conjunction with NSW Department of Primary Industries Research and Development and will be broadcast online across Australia.

Topics:

- How do you handle extreme wet conditions effectively?
- What are the recommended practices after frost events?
- What's the best approach for extreme heat and dry conditions?
- How can you adapt vineyard management to accommodate fluctuating seasons from wet to dry and maintain flexibility?

Why you should attend:

- Learn resilient viticulture practices from experts and successful practitioners.
- Gain insights on handling extreme wet, dry, frost, and heat conditions.
- Discover flexible vineyard management techniques for unpredictable seasons.
- We are providing the opportunity for field visits to showcase strategies to protect vineyards and minimise damage.
- There will also be a networking opportunity with a dinner allowing attendees to connect with fellow viticulturists and industry professionals.

More information on the event is available on the [ASVO website](#).

Navigating business growth with digital solutions

Join us for an insightful Awareness Webinar where we delve into the transformative potential of digital solutions for your business. Hosted by DPIRD, this webinar will equip you with practical strategies to enhance efficiency, overcome skills shortages, and meet customer standards in logistics and sustainability. Going digital means support to focus on what really matters.

This webinar is ideal for SME owners, managers, and decision-makers interested in leveraging digital solutions to drive business growth and sustainability.

Agenda items:

- introduction to Shoestring Digital Solutions for SMEs
- activities on solution areas and starter solutions to pick from
- case studies
- digital needs activity: Understanding your priority solution areas
- Q&A Session: Get your questions answered by our experts

Date: Wednesday 25 September 2024

Time: 10am AWST

Duration: 75 minutes

Cost: Free

[Register online.](#)

Plan(t)ing your future, Finlaysons Wine Roadshow – Margaret River

The Australian wine sector (or at least the bulk of the industry) has been suffering enormous pain. There are critical issues that must be resolved in the short-term, but we also need to look to the medium and long terms where there are existential threats to Australian winemakers and grape growers.

The current generation of wine drinkers is dying or drinking less. Future generations are not drinking as much wine as their parents did, so it is essential to address the question of 'who will be the next consumer of Australian wine and how do we go about attracting them?'.

Date: 18 November 2024

Where: Margaret River

Time: 2:45pm – 7pm

More information on Finlaysons wine roadshow is available on [Eventbrite](#).

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