Strategic plan for the winegrape industry in the Clare Valley 2001 - 2006



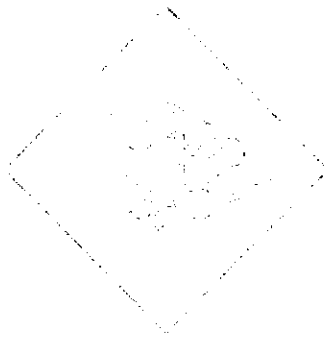
FINAL REPORT to
GRAPE AND WINE RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Project Number: **RT 00/9**

Principal Investigator: **Rural Directions Pty Ltd**

Research Organisation: **Clare Region Winegrape Growers Association**

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Strategic Plan 2001-2006

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Rural Directions PTY LTD
Consultants in Rural Management

1. Introduction

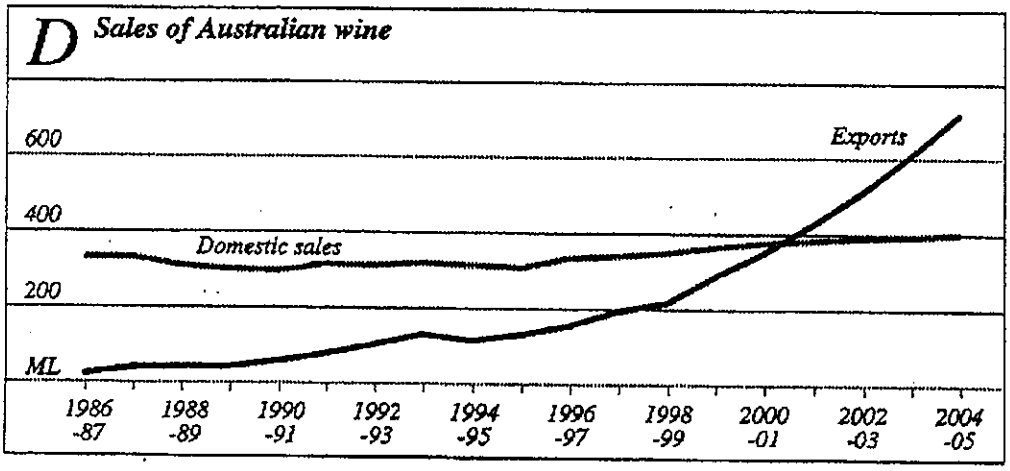
The Clare Valley is a premium wine growing region within South Australia. It has historically produced high quality wines for sale both domestically and internationally.

The Clare Region Winegrape Growers Association incorporates the winegrape growers in the region and aims to address critical grower issues and identify strategies and actions that will enable sustainable, economic growth of the industry into the future.

This Strategic Plan 2001 – 2006 outlines the primary strategies that will be pursued in the next five years by the Association and the actions that will be employed to best sustain the industry over this period.

2. Current Industry Profile

The wine industry within Australia is currently undergoing steady, exponential growth. This increased growth has resulted from increased plantings which have been driven by the development of export markets. On the domestic scene there has been a major shift from the "wine in a box" products of the 1970's and 1980's to bottled wine.



Graph 1. Sales of Australian Wine 1986/87 – 2004-05

(ABARE, 2001)

The industry has been "riding high" on increased prices for bottled wine and as a result, winegrape growers have also been experiencing increased prices for their grapes.

It is the desire of the Clare Region Winegrape Growers Association to address the future needs of the regions growers whilst the industry is still in a period of growth rather than wait for a decline. Strategies focus on sustainable growth.

Key Issues:

- Water is a limiting resource to the Clare Valley wine industry. It is necessary to adopt best practice irrigation and water conservation techniques to alleviate the pressures on water as a resource.

- The industry is continuing to grow at approximately 5% per annum. It is essential to satisfy export and domestic markets whilst meeting changing consumer preferences.

- Any decrease in demand for wine, especially when combined with the increased production across Australia, will place pressure on existing contracts and prices.

- Viticulture is a major industry of the Clare Valley. It is essential that viticulture is promoted within the region to raise the profile and awareness of Clare Valley wines both within the region and nationally. Clare Valley needs to establish clear product differentiation to focus regional marketing.

- Historically winegrape growers have had no indicators of profitability or productivity for the industry. It is essential for the region's growers to have some understanding of their production and profit drivers to enable their own business' sustainable growth.

- In the more competitive markets of the future, the demand for a holistic quality assurance approach will be essential. This new quality assurance approach needs to be pursued and encouraged across the Clare Valley region.

  The Quality issue will impact significantly on grape pricing in the future. Quality assurance programs will ensure market access, and will not necessarily be linked to price premiums.

- With the large increases in winegrape planting and the resultant wine production it is essential for the environmental impacts of the wine industry to be identified and the industry be environmentally accountable. It is essential growers adopt best management practice approaches to grape production.

3. The Vision for the Future

The vision of the Clare Region Winegrape Industry is:

To be an environmentally and economically sustainable premium wine grape producing region that is:

- *Nationally and internationally recognised*
- *Market focussed.*

4. Industry Challenges

There are a number of important elements that will contribute to achieving the industry vision. These present major challenges to the strategies detailed in this plan:

- *Quality*: The industry needs to target consistent and appropriate quality with matching rewards (access to markets, prices).
- The benefits associated with the adoption of *quality assurance*, *environmental management systems* and *benchmarking* are perceived to be low:
  - Adoption will be enhanced by identifying tangible benefits and streamlining administrative procedures.
  - Adoption will also be enhanced by focusing on *best management practice* that incorporates quality assurance, environmental management and benchmarking, into an overall quality approach to winegrape and wine production.
- Understanding the *winegrape supply chain*, especially the differences between commodity and value added production, will allow better understanding of the market.
- Achieving a focus to *marketing and selling*:
  - *Marketing* the region (including wine) can be influenced by the grape growers and can be jointly achieved by working with other relevant regional groups, including winemakers;
  - *Selling* the grapes can be directly controlled by the winegrape growers and returns will be optimised by understanding and managing the interaction between yield and quality and by focusing on a range of best management practice parameters.
  - The industry needs to identify *points of differentiation* for marketing Clare Valley grapes and wine. *Points of differentiation* for the region can be based on criteria such as quality, consistency, image or environmental management.

5. Current Reality vs Where We Want To Be

As part of the consultation process, two industry meetings were conducted to determine the current perception about the industry and success factors for the future. The table below summarises the key differences between today's perceived reality and a future competitive, sustainable regional industry.

Now – Perceptions	Where – Key Success Factors
Water	
❑ Sustainability of the resource is questioned – there appears to be a mismatch between usage and recharge. ❑ Currently salinity is not seen as a problem. ❑ Water use efficiency of both small and large growers is increasing across the region. ❑ There is not enough natural water to sustain further plantings within the region. ❑ Soil moisture monitoring as an indicator of water use efficiency is not employed as a widespread tool for managing vineyards in the region. ❑ There are a number of studies being undertaken within the region by other groups not purely associated with the CRWGA. ❑ There are large scale losses in surface water storage through leakage and evaporation.	❑ Education and training of growers in better irrigation practice and soil moisture usage. ❑ Clearer market signals, which provide a premium for quality and compensates for lower yields, are likely to reduce demand for water. ❑ Irrigate to soil water holding capacity and develop grower knowledge of water use efficiencies. ❑ Incorporate local supply and mains water as an irrigation regime. ❑ Have grower usage match recharge. ❑ Employ volumetric licensing to alleviate water use pressures. ❑ Introduction of improved systems for water storage and application.
Sustainable Growth	
❑ The local industry has grown by 20%/year over the last two years. ❑ Growth is currently controlled by the amount of water available in the region and by the contracts being offered to growers by the wineries. ❑ Demand for fruit is currently being met on the whole by locally grown winegrapes, thus the buying in of grapes is limited. ❑ Any plantings associated with an increase in the availability of imported (reticulated) water, need to be well considered. ❑ Uncontrolled growth will lead to an inbalance in supply and demand.	❑ A growth rate of 3 – 5% per annum is required by an industry to maintain a competitive advantage. ❑ If reticulated water is put into the Clare Valley there will be a need for an integrated development management plan to sustain growth and maintain quality produce. ❑ Price declines should be kept to a minimum by managing growth. ❑ Clearer market signals will assist in managing growth. ❑ Ensure growers grow to contract rather than on speculation (market first, infrastructure second).

Now – Perceptions	Where – Key Success Factors

Contracts and Pricing
 	
❑ Currently winegrapes are returning fair prices for growers.
❑ The larger wineries set the prices which become the benchmark prices for contracts within the whole region.
❑ Contracts and prices are negotiated on a yearly basis with the buyers.
❑ The "district weighted average" is the historical indicator and is used against growers by winery negotiators. It does not give an indication of all bonuses received by growers.
❑ The wineries pay fair money for quality grapes, with penalties being applied for grapes not meeting the standards.
	❑ Establish market clarity to ensure growers are growing grapes to meet specific market requirements.
	❑ Price signals should allow growers to optimise returns by managing the interaction between quality and yield.
	❑ Negotiate prices for contracts earlier in the season to establish production regimes and identify profit drivers.
	❑ Ensure growers have an understanding of their supply chain and where their grapes go so they are better able to:
	  ❑ Target specific markets
	  ❑ Build shared strategies and
	  ❑ Utilise Quality Management Systems for better quality production.

Clare Regional Marketing ❑ There is confusion over marketing roles for grapes, the wine and the region. ❑ Clare Valley as a region is seen as a small volume producer. ❑ Clare Valley wines are not recognised as premium by interstate markets, to the degree the region would like. ❑ There is a danger that the region may focus too strongly on the international markets, to the detriment of domestic markets. ❑ There is some recognition of the Clare Valley as a premium wine region. However, marketing and infrastructure need to be developed to improve promotion.	❑ Regional marketing needs to be the focus within the Clare Valley ❑ Grower focus should be on producing a high quality grape which can be sold for a optimum price. ❑ Regional marketing should encompass the branding integrity of Clare Valley wines. ❑ The industry needs to identify points of differentiation for marketing the Clare Valley (eg. quality, experience, consistency). ❑ Ensure the Geographical Indicator of the Clare Valley remains intact for product differentiation.

Now– Perceptions	Where – Key Success Factors
Quality Assurance	
❑ The larger wineries have implemented training programs to educate growers contracted to them on the quality assurance measures they require for fruit grown to meet their contracts. ❑ Much of the quality assurance and record keeping being implemented has been done to meet food safety standards in domestic and world markets. ❑ Winery based programs are quite expensive to growers. ❑ The extent to which smaller wineries and winegrowers have implemented for quality assurance is unknown and undocumented. ❑ Record keeping is limited to requirements of larger clients.	❑ Focus on quality as specified by the market/end user. ❑ A regional understanding and commitment to a Quality Assurance System that is implemented by all the region's growers. ❑ Education on the benefits of quality assurance and the need to set standards to ensure contracts can be filled. ❑ Link quality assurance standards to production and profit analysis (benchmarks) for individual growers.
Environmental Management	
❑ Environmental management systems have begun to be incorporated into the region. ❑ Environmental management in the Clare region has many facets: ❑ Water ❑ Waste ❑ Salinity ❑ Biodiversity ❑ Chemical usage ❑ Noise ❑ Nets ❑ Dust ❑ Weed and pest management ❑ Diseases (eg. Phylloxera)	❑ Incorporate Environmental Management System standards as a matter of course into any development management plans for the region. ❑ Identify industry standards and ensure all industry operators including growers, wineries and contractors within the region meet these standards at a regional level. ❑ Link Environmental Management System standards with production and profit analysis for individual growers.

Now – Perceptions	Where – Key Success Factors
Benchmarking	
❑ There is very little production or financial benchmarking undertaken by the winegrape growers of the Clare Valley region. ❑ The only source of benchmarks or industry comparisons are those made by the *Phylloxera and Grape Industry Board of SA, Utilisation and Pricing Survey* that is produced at the end of each vintage and is based on weighted average yields and prices. ❑ There is a low adoption rate of benchmarking within the winegrape industry, and there is a poor understanding of the concepts.	❑ Benchmarking needs to become an accepted practice within the winegrape industry. ❑ Benchmarking can be used to better understand production and profit drivers. ❑ The industry can achieve a competitive edge by identifying key indicators for best management practice (including quality and environmental issues) and promoting the adoption of best practice. ❑ Current and new investors in the industry can achieve a clearer picture of individual, regional and industry performance. This will assist in driving the pursuit of best practice and industry growth.

6. Industry Development Strategies

The Vision of the Clare Region winegrape industry will be achieved through the following five strategies:

Issue 1 - Water Management

Efficient water management is critical to the sustainable development of the wine grape industry. Water management includes the harvest (local surface water and groundwater), storage, distribution and application of water. As well as providing benefits for winegrape production and wine making, improved water management will reduce the environmental impacts of water usage. Elements of this strategy include:

- **Education and training**
  Industry participation in targeted programs that increase awareness and develop skills will help to improve water management.

- **Management strategy for water utilisation**
  Water quality and availability are key drivers of industry growth. Winegrape industry representation is critical in the development of management plans that incorporate existing water resources and the impact of imported (pipeline) water.

Issue 2 - Building a Sustainable Winegrape Industry

The Clare Valley winegrape industry has been moving through a period of steady growth. This strategy will help to ensure that this growth continues on a sustainable basis through the following elements:

- **Geographic Indicators**
  Maintaining the Clare Valley *Geographic Indicator* and providing support for sub-region boundaries within the Clare Valley will help to ensure market integrity and the development of a brand. Support could be provided for neighbouring regions who respond to market forces, and pursue their own *Geographic Indicators.*

- **Improvement in the quality of grapes**
  Achieving quality grape production will help to ensure that the region continues to be a premium winegrape and wine production area.

- **Strategies to improve resource utilisation**
  Economic models that provide comparisons of management, soil, water and climate interactions, will allow existing and new investors in the industry to better match management and production systems to the resource base.

- **Representation**
  The winegrape industry needs to ensure that there is good representation on all regional planning bodies. Management plans need to provide solid consideration of sustainable industry growth.

Issue 3 - Transparent Contract and Pricing Systems

Clear market signals will allow growers to optimise returns by managing the interaction between quality and yield. In turn, there will be an improvement in meeting the specified needs of the market.

- **Clear market signals**
  Improving the definition of quality, broadening the measured quality criteria and determining payment using a quality grid will assist in focussing production to meet market needs and in achieving greater levels of market equity.

- **Development of contract guidelines**
  Robust contracts will ensure the rights of growers and winemakers are protected.

- **Education and training programs**
  Industry participation in targeted programs that increase awareness and develop skills, will help to improve negotiation, contract management and optimising returns.

- **Improved communication systems**
  A forum for communication between growers and regional winemakers would allow joint input into significant issues (including pricing systems, industry direction and sustainable growth).

Issue 4 - Clare Regional Marketing

Marketing is an important issue for the industry. Marketing wine is the domain of the winemakers. Marketing the Clare Region is a shared responsibility of all stakeholders in the winegrape industry and region.

- **Representation**
  The winegrape industry needs to ensure that there is effective interaction with all regional marketing, promotional and planning bodies (for example Clare Valley Tourism Association, Riesling Trail Committee, and local council).

- **Education and training programs**
  Industry participation in targeted programs will increase awareness and develop skills in promoting the region. These programs will also clarify marketing roles and develop support for key messages.

- **Promotions**
  Promotion of the achievements of both growers and winemakers in best management practice will assist in raising the industry profile and in promoting the region.

Issue 5 - Achieving Best Management Practice

Best management practice should be a focus for the winegrape industry. Best management practice will be achieved by combining the focus of quality assurance with environmental management, underpinned with "whole of business" benchmarking information.

Figure 1 provides a representation of a system for achieving best management practice for winegrape businesses. This same model is applicable to winegrape growers and winemakers. This system has the following prerequisites:

- Environmental management is treated as part of an overall quality program.
- Environmental Management Systems are determined by industry to address both legislative and non legislative issues. The determination of the required level of adoption should be made considering the comparative benefits and costs. The *Framework for a Wine and Grape Industry Approach to Environmental Management* (David Baker, CRC for Viticulture, Feb 2001) provides guidelines for this process.
- Growers and winemakers jointly adopt best management practice which is defined by a range of quality measures and supported by a business benchmarking process.
- The industry has an existing *Code of Practice* (this needs to be developed).

- **Quality Assurance**
  Quality Assurance systems will provide market access and other benefits at all levels of the industry.

  - **Promotion**
    Promote the benefits of adoption of quality systems to the winegrape growers and winemakers.

  - **Develop Quality Assurance indicators**
    Quality Assurance incorporates a range of "whole of business" indicators (food safety, environmental, production and business systems) determined by industry. This will ensure that the needs of different stakeholders and markets are met.

- **Environmental Management Systems**
  Environment management should not be seen as a separate, isolated management issue. It should be embraced as part of an overall quality approach to winegrape and wine production

  - **Promotion**
    Promote the benefits of sound Environmental Management Systems to winegrape growers and winemakers.

  - **Develop adoption targets and strategies**
    Develop targets and strategies for the adoption of a focused Environmental Management System by the winegrape industry.

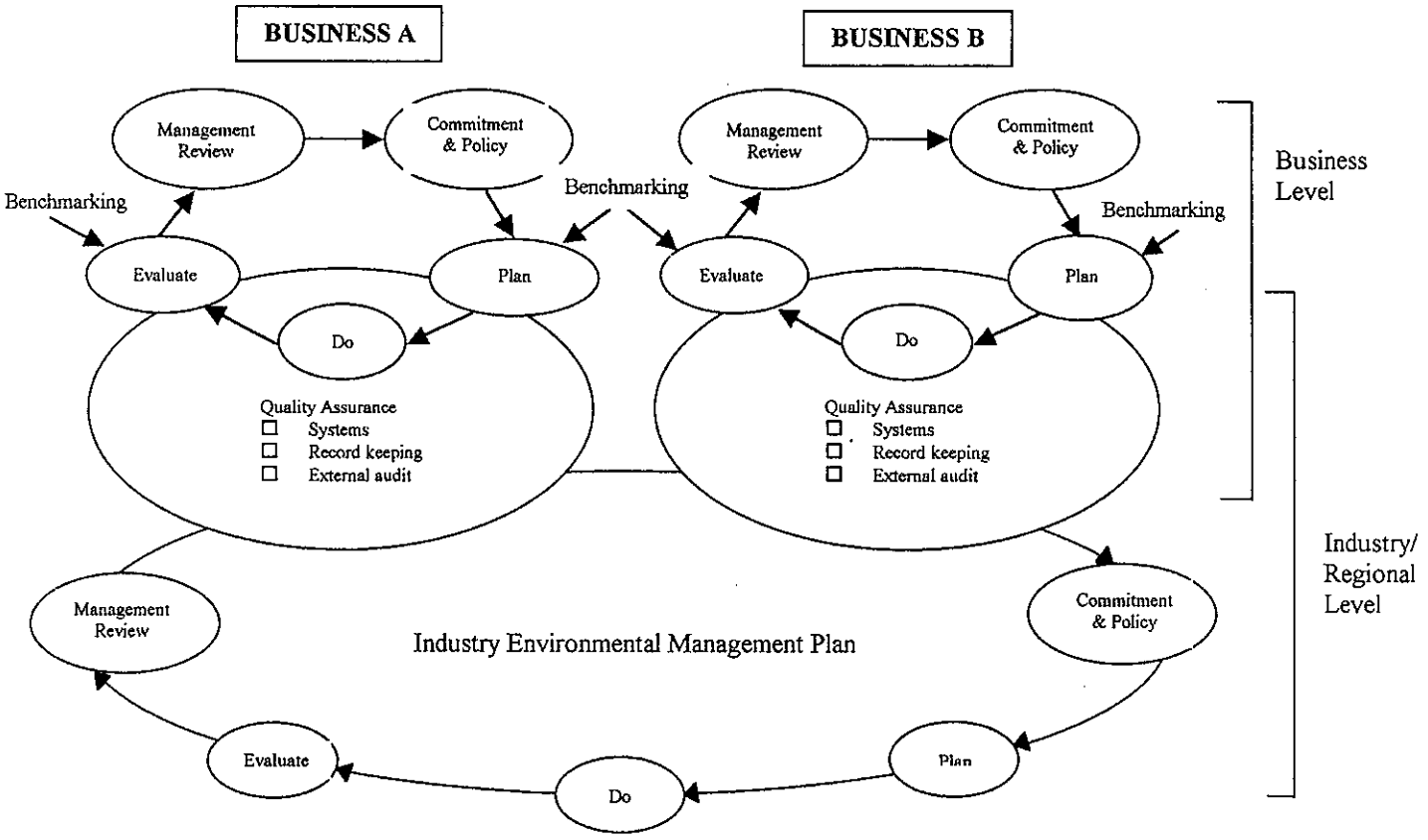
- **Benchmarking**
  A "whole of business" benchmarking system will provide the ongoing performance data required for evaluating and fine-tuning the performance of the business. Rather than being considered as a separate system, benchmarking is a critical component of achieving quality assurance targets for all levels of the business.

  - **Promotion**
    Promote the benefits of "whole of business" benchmarks to the winegrape industry.

  - **Education and Training**
    Industry participation in targeted programs will increase awareness and develop skills in benchmarking. These programs need to reinforce that benchmarking provides data for evaluating and planning progress within an overall quality assurance system for the winegrape industry.

  - **Implementation**
    Implement a trial benchmarking program for industry to build experience and to develop an advocate base for promoting the benefits.

Figure 1 - Achieving Best Management Practice



7. Action Statements

The Clare Region Winegrape Growers Association will contribute to the key strategies in the following ways:

Issue 1 - Water Management

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Deadline
❑ Education and training	❑ Extend research findings (*Research to Practice*);	1	Ongoing
	❑ Contribute to the development of Best Management Practice models;	1	2003
	❑ Promote Best Management Practice;	1	Ongoing
	❑ Field days and seminars;	1	Ongoing
	❑ Act as a resource inventory – Collect and disburse information relevant to the industry.	1	Ongoing
❑ Representation	❑ Provide a voice for growers and the industry on significant issues;	1	Ongoing
	❑ Provide a point of input for communication from stakeholders.	1	Ongoing
❑ Management Plan	❑ Provide a voice for growers and the industry;	1	Ongoing
	❑ Provide responses as required	1	Ongoing

Issue 2 - Building a Sustainable Winegrape Industry

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Deadline
❑ Maintain the Clare Valley *Geographic Indicator*	❑ Monitor and lobby to maintain the current boundary; ❑ Respond as required to stakeholder needs.	3 3	Ongoing As required
❑ Support for neighbouring areas for establishing *Geographic Indicator* status	❑ Encourage areas; ❑ Support by providing advice.	3 3	As required
❑ Quality improvement	❑ Best Practice modelling; ❑ Education and training; ❑ Link to contracts and prices; ❑ More objective basis to current "quality" definitions.	1 1 1 1	2002 Ongoing 2002 2002
❑ Management strategy	❑ Support activities of existing agencies; ❑ Provide focussed recognition for the region.	1 1	Ongoing Ongoing
❑ Resource strategies	❑ Lobby and support initiatives that improve labour, skilling and management training; ❑ Input into the development of an *Environmental Management System(EMS)* model; ❑ Input into an *EMS* action plan; ❑ Encourage adoption of *EMS* by members; ❑ Support other agencies in the development of resource models which compare the economic performance from management, soil, water and climate interactions.	2 1 1 1 3	Ongoing 2002 2002 Ongoing As required

Issue 3 - Transparent Contract and Pricing Systems

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Deadline
❑ Promotion	❑ Promote the need for better definition of quality parameters	1	Ongoing
❑ Develop a quality grid	❑ Work cooperatively with winemakers to define the components of the grid; ❑ Promote the benefits of a quality grid to growers and winemakers; ❑ Access grant monies to support development of a quality grid.	1 1 1	2001/02 2001/02 2001/02
❑ Introduce contract guidelines	❑ Develop a template for minimum terms and conditions as a guideline for the industry; ❑ Promote the use of minimum terms and conditions across the industry.	1 2	2001/02 2001/02
❑ Conduct education and training programs	❑ Access funding for negotiation skills workshops; ❑ Jointly develop targeted business seminars; ❑ Raise the profile of benchmarking by linking financial performance to key benchmarks and promoting to the industry.	2 2 1	2002/03 Ongoing Ongoing
❑ Improved communication systems	❑ Initiate, lobby and promote support for communications with key stakeholders (especially winemakers); ❑ Lobby for input into price projections for current and future seasons.	2 1	Ongoing Ongoing

Issue 4 - Clare Regional Marketing

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Deadline
❑ Representation	❑ Provide a voice for growers and the industry on significant issues; ❑ Provide a point of input for communication from stakeholders.	1 2	Ongoing Ongoing
❑ Education and training	❑ Investigate the market for appropriate programs; ❑ Support and promote industry targeted programs that increase awareness and develop skills in promoting the region.	2 3	2002 Ongoing
❑ Promotion	❑ Support the activities of regional promotion groups; ❑ Promote achievements of growers and winemakers in best management practice as a means of raising industry and regional profiles.	2 1	Ongoing Ongonig

Issue 5 - Achieving Best Management Practice:

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Deadline
❑ Promotion	❑ Promote the benefits of best management practice to the winegrape industry; ❑ Promote the joining of Quality Assurance, Environmental Management Systems and Benchmarking into a single industry package.	1 1	Ongoing 2006
❑ Education and training	❑ Extend research findings (*Research to Practice*); ❑ Contribute to the development of Best Management Practice models; ❑ Promote Best Management Practice.	1 1 1	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing

Quality Assurance

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Deadline
❑ Promotion	❑ Promote the benefits of adoption of quality systems.	1	Ongoing
❑ Develop Quality Assurance indicators	❑ Contribute to the development of "whole of business" Quality Assurance indicators that will achieve best management practice; ❑ Contribute to the continuous improvement of the Quality Assurance indicators.	1 1	2005 Ongoing

Environmental Management Systems

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Deadline
❑ Promotion	❑ Lobby for the development of and contribute to an *Industry Code of Practice;* ❑ Invite David Baker (CRC for Viticulture) to conduct an industry workshop ❑ Promote the benefits of adoption to winegrape growers and winemakers.	1 1 1	2003 2002 Ongoing
❑ Develop adoption targets and strategies	❑ Contribute to the development of an *Industry Code of Practice*; ❑ Encourage the movement by the winegrape industry, towards the adoption of a *level 3* and *level 4/5* focused Environmental Management Systems; ❑ Develop strategies to have 100% of *Clare Region Winegrape Grower Association* members adopt *level 3* status by 2006; ❑ Develop strategies to have 50% of *Clare Region Winegrape Grower Association* members adopting *level 4/5* by 2006.	1 1 1 1	2003 Ongoing 2003 2003

Benchmarking

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Deadline
❑ Promotion	❑ Promote the benefits of benchmarking to the winegrape industry;	1	Ongoing
	❑ Establish and promote the clear links between key benchmarks of best management practice and good financial returns;	1	2003-04
	❑ Promote benchmarking as a contributor to an overall quality approach to business;	1	Ongoing
	❑ Promote the outcomes of the benchmarking trial.	1	2004/05
❑ Education and training	❑ Extend research findings (*Research to Practice*);	1	Ongoing
	❑ Field days and seminars;	1	Ongoing
	❑ Act as a resource inventory – Collect and disburse information relevant to the industry.	1	Ongoing
❑ Implement a benchmarking program	❑ Investigate benchmarking programs for the winegrape industry;	1	2001
	❑ Seek sponsorship for trial program;	1	2002
	❑ Implement a benchmarking trial.	1	2003

8. Regional Industry Associations

Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council
CEO Malcolm Anderson, (08) 8842 2700

Clare Regional Winegrape Growers Association
President Shane Smith, Tel (08) 8842 3802

Clare Regional Winemakers Association
President Andrew Hardy, Tel (08) 8842 2600

Clare Region Wine and Grape Council
Chairperson Anthony Koerner, Tel (08) 8843 0146

Clare Valley Viticultural Landcare Group
Chairperson Shane Smith, Tel (08) 8842 3802

Clare Valley Tourism Association
Chairperson Robyn Masterman, Tel (08) 8842 1060

Clare Valley Vine Improvement Society
Contact Bronwyn Fancis, Tel: (08) 8843 4388

Clare Valley Water Resources Committee
Presiding Member Kerry Ward, Tel (08) 8842 3561

Hummocks Soil Conservation Board
Chairperson Mark Williams, Tel (08) 8893 2269

Lower North Animal and Plant Control Board
Contact Tel (08) 8847 2305

Mid North Regional Development Board
CEO Craig Wilson, Tel (08) 8842 3115

Phylloxera and Grape Industry Board
Local Contact David Lloyd, Tel (08) 8843 4262

State Contact 46 Nelson Street, Stephney, SA, 5069
Tel: (08) 8362 0488
Fax: (08) 8362 0499

9. Funding

There are a number of potential funding sources which may be accessed to assist in achieving the objectives of this plan.

Industry Funding

Wine Industry National Education and Training Advisory Council (WINETAC)

WINETAC is the wine industry's education and training policy development and quality assurance body. WINETAC is not a training provider, but strives to ensure that industry skill requirements are met by playing a key role in the national coordination, integration and standards maintenance for vocal education and training. The Viticare program provides education and training programs for a number of issues identified in the Strategic plan.

Contact: (08) 8373 7090 or www.crcv.com.au

Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation (GWRDC)

The GWRDC is responsible for investing in grape and wine industry research and development. The investment approach aims to address priorities whilst ensuring that adoption occurs at a more regional level. Areas of *innovation and technology adoption* and *winegrape production* (system sustainability and production efficiency) may offer opportunities for funding. Contact (08) 8222 9266 or www.gwrdc.com.au

Regional Innovation and Technology Adoption Project (RITA)

The RITA project was introduced by the GWRDC to provide support for regional grapegrowers and winemakers to uptake new technologies at a regional level. Individual projects are funded up to a maximum of $15,000. However, the CRWGA could propose more than one project and may receive funding for adoption of best management practice which included aspects of benchmarking and quality assurance.

Contact Anita Podder, (08) 8222 9266

Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC)

RIRDC funds will allow individuals, companies or organisations to undertake research into new enterprises or to improve the performance and profitability of existing enterprises. RIRDC calls for preliminary research proposals (a two-page outline of the proposed project) in August.

Contact (02) 6272 4539 or www.rirdc.gov.au

Farm Business Improvement Scheme (FarmBis)

FarmBis SA provides support for primary producers to participate in learning activities focussed on improving their business and natural resource management skills.

Contact: Trudie Stanley, FarmBis Officer (08) 8842 3900

Regional Funding
General information on regional funding can be obtained from www.grants.com.au

Regional Employment Strategy Funding
Funding is available through the Mid North Regional Development Board to create employment operations by assisting with business start-up (including business planning) and business expansion or diversification.
Contact: Jo Lawrie (08) 8842 3115

Mature Age Employer Incentive Scheme (MAEIS)
MAEIS provides financial assistance up to $2,000 to encourage employers to hire mature age job seekers.
Contact: MAEIS hotline 1800 154 117

Mature Age Skills Training Grants
Grants of up to $500 are available for mature age unemployed people to access training in order to gain new skills.
Contact: MAEIS hotline 1800 154 117

Small Business Enterprise Culture Program (SBECP)
SBECP funds can be used for projects that provide employment opportunities and skills development or mentoring for small business operators. Two funding rounds occur each year.
Contact: Dept of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business (02) 6121 7711

Regional Assistance Program (RAP)
RAP funding can be used to assist communities to fund programs which create jobs, improve the skills base of the region, encourage regional growth and support infrastructure. A *Best Management Practice* program may be supported with this funding. Applications can be submitted through the Barossa, Riverland and Mid North Area Consultative Committees.
Contact: Jackie Parkinson, Project Officer (08) 8563 1355

CÓPIA NÃO CONTROLADA

Clare Region Wine Grape Growers Association