Riverland Wine Industry Development Council Inc.

Australian Government
Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation

Some Like it Hot 2008 – Technical Seminar and Advanced Winemaker Tasting

FINAL REPORT to

GRAPE AND WINE RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Project Number: RT 07/05-3

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Research Organisation: **Riverland Wine Show Committee**

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RITA Final Report – Some Like it Hot 2008
- Project Number RT 07/03-1 -

Executive Summary:

The 2008 Some Like it Hot technical seminar and advanced winemaker tasting continued in a fashion that further strengthened burgeoning esteem in which the seminar is now held.

Difficult conditions in the warm irrigated regions of the Australian wine industry persisted. Australia's largest wine region by volume was restricted to 18% of its water allocation. Having panicked and overreacted to a low national crush in 2007, the industry was left grabbling with oversupply and the falling value of its produce. Good information becomes powerful, and does so at the best of times, but when the chips are down those who can best interpret that information position themselves to grasp the opportunities circle within the volatility.

At a regional level, seminars such as Some Like it Hot play an integral role in developing industry. Despite the best intentions of many, innovative solutions to the Australian wine industry are unlikely to be resolved at a national level. Individual enterprises need to be empowered to find commercial solutions to industries predicament. The alternative is to maintain an entrenched system and continue in response to its behaviour.

With this in mind the Some Like it Hot seminar and advanced tasting operated with the intent of offering access to the best information, allowing individuals to partake in strategic debate and supporting the enterprises that are going to lead the industry forward.

Understanding the natural resources, the human resource and the intricacies of the business environment are pertinent to developing the strategies required for success. Some Like it Hot 2008 took a strong focus on water security, the Murray River system and adequacies, or otherwise, of the current system of governance. Corporate views of the global industry were balance by management objectives at a vineyard level and talk of varieties better suited to warm climates had the context of the supply and demand position to lend support.

All in all, the 140 attendees left the seminar knowing they had to unite on many fronts but were also better positioned to make decision at an enterprise level. The leaders, looking for that point of intervention that will allow them to change the system and have it work better to support their businesses!

1. **Background:**

In 2003 the Riverland Wine Show Society Inc. in conjunction with the Riverland Wine Industry Development Council held a technical seminar called 'Some Like it Hot', the seminar was attended by 60 grape growers, winemakers and winery technical staff. The seminar has continued to build a reputation as an event that is bold enough to tackle issues relevant to the warm, irrigated wine regions. A move to a larger venue in 2005 highlights the success the event has had.

In conjunction with an Advanced Winemaker Tasting, Some Like it Hot has been able to attract a range of high calibre wine commentators including; Peter Forrestal, Nick Bulleid MW, Tim White, and Nick Stock. The ilk of such has provided the Riverland winemaking fraternity with an insight to the potential of its offering and allowed comparisons to be made with other regions of the world.

2. **Objectives:**

The seminar's primary focus was to engage regional industry participants in topics pertinent to the sustainable future of the sector and to provide an affordable platform from which to do so.

'Some Like it Hot' offered participants an opportunity to tap into the experience and knowledge of industry leaders, scientists, strategic thinkers and policy makers. Acting as a conduit for information flow, the seminar provided a forum for the regional industry to discuss a holistic approach to management including; technology transfer, risk management and market orientation

3. **Method:**

The 'Some Like it Hot' technical seminar was held on Thursday the 6th of November 2008.

Max Allen, a prominent wine writer, was engaged to conduct a tutored wine tasting titled '***Back to the future – a view of organic and biodynamic wines from warm climates of the world***' on the 10th of November 2008.

An event management group (Planned-2-Perfection) and promotional group (TJM Media Services) were engaged to assist with the delivery of the seminar.

4. Results/Discussion:

The Some Like it Hot events proved popular again in 2008 with 140 people attending the seminar and 32 people attending the advanced winemaker tasting.

The presentations from the seminar are available for download (pdf).

- Lawrie Stanford : 'Industry and market dynamics'
- Peter Dawson : 'Corporate perspective of wine industry'
- Kym Chalmers : 'Sustainable alternatives'
- Mike Young on Water : 'Water'
- Mike Young on Climate Change : 'Change - Yes we can'
- Amy Russell and Jodie Pain : 'The Carbon Hullabaloo'
- Sheridan Alm : 'Eye to the Future'
- Simon Knowles : 'Efficient drip irrigation systems'

5. Budget reconciliation:

An end of project financial statement can be found attached to this report.