Greater Victoria Wine Grapes

Australian Government
Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation

MONASH University

State Government Victoria Department of Primary Industries

VitiSolutions

Viticultural consultancy and technical services

THE PUBLICATION OF A CHECKLIST AND RESOURCE MATERIALS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF BEST PRACTICE BOTRYTIS CONTROL ON VINEYARDS THROUGHOUT THE GREATER VICTORIA REGION

FINAL REPORT to
GRAPE AND WINE RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Project Number: **RT 03/09-2**

Principal Investigator: **Mr Spencer Field**

Research Organisation: **Greater Victoria Wine Grape Industry Development Committee**

Date: **30 September 2004**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aim is to develop and produce a complete extension package for best practice Botrytis management and extend it to all growers across all Greater Victoria regions. The extension package consists of:

- A high quality resource booklet which will provide growers with a sound understanding of botrytis linking to the conduct of best practices recommended in the checklist. A draft version of the contents of the booklet is available upon request. The resource booklet will detail:
  - Some basic details about the disease;
  - Factors influencing infection and damage;
  - Monitoring for Botrytis;
  - Managing Botrytis through cultural management and chemical application;
- Best Practice Botrytis Management Checklist in CD-Rom format;
- Four workshops in Greater Victoria regions.

This work is year 2 of a region wide project aiming to develop best practice management guidelines for wine grape growers. In year 1, (2002/03), three grower groups in the Yarra Valley, Alpine Valleys and Mornington Peninsula regions were engaged in the project to *demonstrate, assess and refine best practice Botrytis control strategies on vineyards* (RT 02/30-4, RT 02/40-4 and RT 02/38-4). Testing and monitoring on the demonstration sites by Monash scientists, along with grower group discussions led by skilled facilitators (DPI and expert consultants), were used to develop a detailed best practice checklist. The development of a resource book to support the checklist was also initiated in year 1 and completed in year 2.

Some of the benefits of this project are:

- The potential contribution of this project to the levy base is very high: 68,000 tonnes across Greater Victoria. Copies of the full package are being forwarded for evaluation to grower associations in other cool climate wine regions of Australia.
- The resource book and checklist include the very latest research findings, and can provide an easily adapted template for using in Botrytis management in other major wine grape regions, including the Murray Valley and in other states.
- Provides for easily accessed and user friendly extension of latest national R&D to all growers across Greater Victoria.
- Promotes interaction by growers leading to a greater understanding and co-operation in applying best practice technology;
- Will improve grower income through avoiding quality and yield losses from Botrytis combining with reducing costs associated with the use of expensive chemical sprays;
- More strategic use of chemicals and reduced impact on the environment.

About $120,000 in total was invested in this project and investors included grower groups, Greater Victoria Wine Grape Industry Development Committee, GWRDC, Monash University and the Department of Primary Industries, Victoria.

Further information:

Mr John Whiting, Senior Viticulturalist, Victoria; tel 03 5430 4455; john.whiting@dpi.vic.gov.au.

Botrytis Control – A Best Practice Approach: Regional Workshops Final report to GVWGIDC; by John Whiting, Senior Viticulturist in the Department of Primary Industries Victoria; 30 Sept 2004.

2003 RITA reports (RT 02/30-4, RT 02/40-4 and RT 02/38-4) available from GWRDC: *'Demonstrating, assessing and refining best practice Botrytis control strategies on vineyards'* by Alpine Valleys, Yarra Valley and the Mornington Peninsula grower groups.

BACKGROUND

Botrytis cinerea is a disease of great economic significance to the wine grape industry, especially in cool climate regions including much of Greater Victoria, resulting in major reductions in yield and losses in grape quality. Justifiably, very significant R&D aimed at developing best practice management and prevention is being done at both national (GWRDC, CRCV) and state levels. The regional adaption and adoption of national R&D work on Botrytis management is a key priority of the Greater Victoria Wine Grape Industry Development Committee (the IDC), arising out of its *Industry Plan 2001-2004.*

In grower voting on 2002/03 projects proposed by the IDC, the *Best Practice Botrytis Control* project was second most popular, with just under 90% of growers voting in support. For year 2 (2003/04) of the project, it was again supported by 90% of voters.

In year 1, (2002/03), three grower groups in the Yarra Valley, Alpine Valleys and Mornington Peninsula regions were engaged in the project to *demonstrate, assess and refine best practice Botrytis control strategies on vineyards* (RT 02/30-4, RT 02/40-4 and RT 02/38-4). Testing and monitoring on the demonstration sites by Monash scientists, along with grower group discussions led by skilled facilitators (DPI and expert consultants), were used to develop a detailed best practice checklist.

OBJECTIVES

To produce a checklist and resource materials for implementation of best practice Botrytis management on vineyards throughout the Greater Victoria region.

This project will fund:

- A checklist (CD-Rom format) which will assist wine grape growers to identify and manage risks associated with Botrytis and in minimising its impact when outbreaks do occur.
- A resource booklet setting out the details for the conduct of best practices recommended in the checklist.

These two items along with regional workshops form an extension package targeting all wine grape growers in Greater Victoria.

RESULTS

The resource book and best practice guidelines have been finalised and printed into the extension package which was posted in August 2004 to all Greater Victorian growers and to leaders of grower associations in other cool climate regions of Australia.

Four workshops held in June/July across Greater Victoria to present the latest information on the biology and management of Botrytis along with a practical activity using a checklist approach to determine management strategies for the disease. The workshops were attended by 91 growers in total. For full details of the four workshops, see the accompanying report by DPI Senior Viticulturist John Whiting entitled *Botrytis Control – A Best Practice Approach: Regional Workshops*.

Four copies of the Botrytis best practice package and the DPI have been forwarded to GWRDC as the key output of this project.

As requested by GWRDC, copies of the Botrytis best practice package were posted to 24 cool climate wine grape associations around Australia.

BUDGET RECONCILIATION

Budget	Funding granted by GWRDC		Actual Expenditure
Printing of resource book – 1500 @ $7.00	$10,500		$6,280
Prod/n of CD_Rom's – 1500 @ $3.00	$4,500		$2,550
Add 10 % GST	$1500		883
Total funds granted by GWRDC	$16,500	**Total actual expenditure**	$9,713
		Remitted to GWRDC	$6,787