

### CODE OF CONDUCT REVIEW ONGOING

The winegrape industry in response to the ACCC Industry Inquiry which recommended changes to the Australian Wine Industry Code of Conduct is currently reviewing the Code and seeking to adopt these changes.

The Code Management Committee is made up of representatives from within industry:

- Peter Hayes** Independent Chair  
**Fiona Anderson** Treasury Wine Estates  
**Jason Duldig** Accolade Wines  
**Luke Edwards** Casella Family Wines  
**Ben Rose** Grower Representative  
**Byron Hodgkinson** Pernod Ricard Winemakers  
**Jim Caddy** Chair Inland Wine Regions Alliance  
**Chris Byrnes** Riverland Wine  
**Andrew Weeks** Grower Representative

All of the above representatives and the companies they are employed by are members or directors of Australian Grape & Wine.

Australian Grape & Wine formed following an amalgamation of the Winemakers Federation of Australia and Australian Vignerons also appointed the following as observers to ensure coverage across Australia.

- Paul Derrico** Murray Valley Winegrowers' Inc  
**Brian Simpson** Riverina Winegrape Growers

Staff from Australian Grape & Wine provide secretariat support for the committee and any working groups under it.

Growers should be encouraged that Casella Family Brands have a seat at the table, as the only Riverina based winery working on this committee. It is important that Riverina wineries have buy in into the Code of Conduct as we currently have no signatories to the industry voluntary code a fact that was noted by the ACCC during their inquiry.

#### What can we expect from a revised code?

As a grower representative it is important to ensure that the views of members in the Riverina are heard by the

Committee as we seek to implement the recommendations announced as needed by the ACCC.

Main Items from the ACCC:

1. Well documented and objective testing and sampling techniques.
2. Quality assessment standard should be best practice and outlined in supply agreements.
3. Removal of indicator pricing.
4. Better payment terms: the ACCC stated that they would require large winemakers to adopt 30 day payment terms.
5. Ensure the Code Committee has a balance of grower and winemakers representatives.
6. Better structured process for reviewing quality assessment decisions and the process for resolution of contract and other disputes.

The Australian Wine Research Institute is working hard to get the correct procedures needed to assess grape maturity and quality, such as sugar and colour. We will seek to ensure that the sampling and assessment processes are representative of the blocks to be harvested.

Many growers are keen to see the 30 day payments come to the industry, this enthusiasm isn't shared by all wineries in Australia. Some are recommending to remain on the SA terms of 3 payments but this position does not address the ACCC recommendation seeking improvements. If we do not see change in terms of when payments to growers are made or strong support of the Code when it is finalised it will provide a solid ground for a mandatory industry code in the near future.

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## BOARD ACTIVITIES REPORT



### Board meetings continue Online

Members have continued to hold monthly meetings despite COVID19. Using ZOOM we have been able to remain operational (as shown in the image below). Members are able to provide reports in print and verbally.

### Griffith Visitors Guide released

The Board are proud to once again partner with Griffith City Council with their latest visitor centre guide. *(The image to the right is from the new guide.)*

The Board has been supporting these guides for over 20 years for both the Griffith and Leeton local government areas. You can pick up a copy of the guides from our office or most council premises (when these reopen). We can post these to you on request.

The Leeton Shire is currently putting together its next guide with the Board to discuss this shortly.

### AGM Update

The Board has not finalised if the Annual General Meeting due to be held on 24th June 2020 will proceed.



#### RIVERINA WINEGRAPE GROWERS

The Riverina Wine region:

- 22,000ha of winegrapes planted in rows (enough to have wine grapes stretching around Australia's coastline 3 times)
- Greater than 12.5 million cases of bottled wine per annum for export (enough wine to fill 45 Olympic Swimming pools)
- Enough wine bottles are packaged each year that if laid out they could circle the earth.
- The first vine was planted in the region over 100 years ago and the region now grows over 60 different winegrape varieties.
- There are 300 winegrape growers in the region, many of which are third generation viticulturists.

Riverina Winegrape Growers has been operating representing regional growers since 1933. It proudly supports the growers of this wonderful region.

## RIVERINA HARVEST 2020 – figures received to 2nd June 2020

	Reported to WGMB	Reported by RWA	Final 2019	Difference
Chardonnay	51,657	51,645	63,703	-18.91%
Colombard	7,448	7,159	8,095	-7.98%
Muscat Gordo Blanco	6,287	6,553	6,909	-9.00%
Pinot Grigio	21,084	20,804	20,174	4.51%
Riesling	1,841	1,805	2,450	-24.84%
Sauvignon Blanc	16,261	15,542	16,572	-1.88%
Semillon	23,825	23,599	25,201	-5.46%
Traminer	5,981	6,039	7,064	-15.33%
Verdelho	1,877	1,930	3,034	-38.14%
Viognier	1,476	1,476	1,518	-2.77%
White Frontignac	12,319	12,172	12,226	0.76%
Other White	6,450	6,389	6,353	1.53%
<b>Total White</b>	<b>156,507</b>	<b>155,111</b>	<b>173,299</b>	<b>-9.69%</b>
Cabernet Sauvignon	23,286	24,395	26,819	-13.17%
Durif	9,230	9,315	8,216	12.35%
Merlot	20,513	20,868	23,232	-11.70%
Lambrusco Maestri	6,700	2,644	1,066	528.48%
Petit Verdot	2,886	2,937	3,763	-23.30%
Pinot Noir	4,751	4,607	4,829	-1.63%
Red Frontignac	667	652	718	-7.07%
Ruby Cabernet	8,161	6,953	6,963	17.20%
Shiraz	64,692	64,263	66,552	-2.80%
Tempranillo	616	614	531	15.89%
Other Red	4,524	8,296	7,243	-37.54%
<b>Total Red</b>	<b>146,025</b>	<b>145,543</b>	<b>149,932</b>	<b>-2.61%</b>
<b>Total Grapes</b>	<b>302,532</b>	<b>300,654</b>	<b>323,231</b>	<b>-6.40%</b>

The office has almost completed entering in all the tonnage figures for the 2020 vintage. Only a small amount of wineries are yet to provide their intake figures and these do not include purchased winegrapes.

In 2020 (as per in prior years) the Riverina Winemakers Association tracks the intake on a weekly basis and provides industry with updates on the progress of vintage.

At the commencement of the season it looks as though the yield in the region would be down greatly with many suggesting a crop well below 300KT would eventuate. Fortunately we have managed to harvest a crop greater than 300KT and only 6.4% lower than 2019, 323KT.

As the information in the table above indicates the reach of the Riverina Winemakers Association weekly survey is close to 100% of fruit coming into wineries which is excellent to guide wineries decision making.

Chardonnay was the largest variety impacted by yield reductions of greater than 10KT almost 20% down on the prior season.

Lambrusco Maestri was a standout with an increase production of over 4,000 tonnes or 528% increase on 2019 harvest, due to the massive increases in plantings of this variety.

Overall whites suffered close to a 10% reduction and close approx. 3% reduction.

# WINE GRAPES MARKETING BOARD

## YIELD PER HECTARE 2018 TO 2020

White winegrapes	2020 Tonnes	2020 Area	2020 t/ha	2019 t/ha	2018 t/ha
Chardonnay	51,657	4,035	12.8	15.7	17.7
Colombard	7,448	441	16.9	17.6	19.8
Muscat Gordo Blanco	6,287	249	25.2	26.3	21.9
Pinot Grigio	21,084	1,181	17.9	17.3	19.4
Riesling	1,841	170	10.8	14.0	15.3
Sauvignon Blanc	16,261	833	19.5	21.3	17.9
Semillon	23,825	1,507	15.8	15.9	16.4
Traminer	5,981	425	14.1	16.3	19.5
Viognier	1,476	131	11.3	n/a	n/a
White Frontignac	12,319	683	18.0	17.8	19.1
<b>Total All Whites &amp; Area</b>	<b>156,507</b>	<b>10,285</b>	<b>15.2</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>18.1</b>

Red winegrapes	2020 Tonnes	2020 Area	2020 t/ha	2019 t/ha	2018 t/ha
Cabernet Sauvignon	23,286	1,710	13.6	15.8	15.9
Durif	9,230	632	14.6	14.9	13.0
Lambrusco Mastri	6,700	390	17.2	n/a	n/a
Merlot	20,513	1,364	15.0	17.0	16.8
Petite Verdot	2,886	214	13.5	17.6	14.0
Pinot Noir	4,751	316	15.0	15.2	16.0
Ruby Cabernet	8,161	582	14.0	11.6	11.1
Shiraz	64,692	4,560	14.2	14.5	13.8
<b>Total All Reds &amp; Area</b>	<b>146,025</b>	<b>10,216</b>	<b>14.3</b>	<b>15.2</b>	<b>14.4</b>

### Grand Totals Hectares

**302,532**      **20,501**

Note: The total variety tonnes and area includes varieties not mentioned in the yield information. Prior year yields are based on area data held by the Board for those years

### Major variety yield analysis

Riverina Winegrape Growers has continued to review and update the data held within its GIS Software that records farm ownership and area of variety plantings within the region.

Following this season a review of tonnes delivered by individual growers against the varieties recorded as being planted on their properties will occur. The purpose of this is to ensure that we hold information that is relevant so that growers can access accurate information about their individual properties and it can produce yield and production reports.

It is interesting to note that the region has decreased in area from the peak 22,000 hectares down to 20,501 hectares.

We have recorded slightly greater than 60 hectares in the region as abandoned winegrapes and around 100 hectares of citrus the same.

Block vacancies has increased with a record of 3,670 hectares of blocks in the area (both citrus and winegrapes) as being notified as vacant land. If you have planted please let us know as it will impact the yield information we have.

The University of Adelaide  
Invites Viticulturists to Complete an  
Online Survey



## Vineyard Floor Management in Australia: Practices, Drivers & Challenges

**PLEASE HELP IF YOU ARE ABLE**

### RESEARCH AIMS

To capture different floor management practices used in Australian winegrowing regions including their associated motivations and challenges

### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

To develop optimised floor management advice based on local environmental characteristics and production goals

Complete this survey by 30 June, 2020 for a chance to win a full registration for the XIII<sup>th</sup> International Terroir Congress from 15-20 November, 2020!

Approximate Completion Time: 15-20 minutes

To complete the online survey, follow this link:  
<https://www.research.net/r/au-vineyardfloormanagement>

Questions? Please contact PhD Student, Ms. Merék Kesser  
Phone: (08) 8313 6813, Email: [merék.kesser@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:merék.kesser@adelaide.edu.au)

## MEMBER BITES



As the COVID-19 crisis really starts to bite, I have had many calls from people concerned about their livelihoods, with so much uncertainty about how long normal routes to market will be closed. It is clear that in many States, some sort of lock down relaxations will start to take place. Internationally, this is already occurring, and in Spain, one of the worst affected countries, bars will open for limited trading on 11 May.

However, even with a staggered opening of restaurants and cellar doors, under strict trading conditions, sales will still be very slow to recover as consumers are unlikely to return to travel or normal purchasing behaviours for some months.

We continue to work very hard to try and bring additional targeted cash relief to grape growers and winemakers, and although we have strong support from some key Ministers, we still have not landed on an outcome, with some key decision makers unconvinced of the need.

We must be prepared for a long recovery process, with on-premise and cellar door sales unlikely to return to normal for many months. On-line sales will continue as a key route to market for smaller producers, and consumers have embraced the channel.

We are also about to enter into winter pruning, so ensuring labour availability has been a key priority. We are working with The Australian Wine Research Institute to develop best-practice pruning guidelines to ensure pruning can be undertaken in a manner that ensures health and safety for workers.

Concern has been raised with us from grape growers about potential non-payment for grapes this vintage. With most growers in South Australia expecting their first 1/3 grape payment for the vintage shortly, we will know if this is a real problem or not. I would urge all those grape purchasers who may have problems with cash flow to negotiate with growers. Unilateral changes to payment terms will result in serious issues with the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC).

This has raised a further matter of concern, in that the WET Rebate changes that mean grape ownership passes to the winery on delivery, resulting in grape growers having no security over their grapes in the case of non-payment or insolvency of the purchaser. Historically, the Personal Property Security Register (PPSR) system offered a degree of security over the grapes, if the grower registered an interest against the receiving wine company.

With the recent changes to the WET laws, winemakers are required to have clear title over the grapes at the start of the winemaking process, therefore if a PPSR interest was registered, the winemaker was deemed to not have clear title so was unable to claim back any WET paid on wine sales from those grapes. The result was that any reference to PPSR was removed from grape supply contracts. The grape grower currently has no way to gain greater security over grapes delivered to wineries other than being a secured creditor. This is clearly an unintended consequence of the changes and we will raise this with the Australian Tax Office to look for solutions.

The recent deterioration in relationships between the Chinese and Australian Governments, as they exchange tit-for-tat blows in the media, is also a concern. China is starting to emerge from the COVID-19 crisis and Chinese demand will provide a springboard for the Australian wine sector's recovery, providing welcome cash flow and export dollars. There has never been a better time to ensure your international commercial relationships are strong.

During the COVID-19 pandemic we have endeavoured to keep a strong communication focus with the sector to ensure you are as well placed as possible to make sound business decisions. I know everyone is doing it tough and all ideas of potential relief measures that we can take to Government are welcome.

Stay safe, Tony

**Tony Battaglione Chief Executive**  
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### RIVERINA WINEMAKERS PROUD NEW ROAD SIGNS

The Riverina Winemakers Association have recently marketing material has been planned for some time updated the main road signage into the region. now and they are a delight that these pictures of them Bringing these signs up to date to match current doesn't fully show.

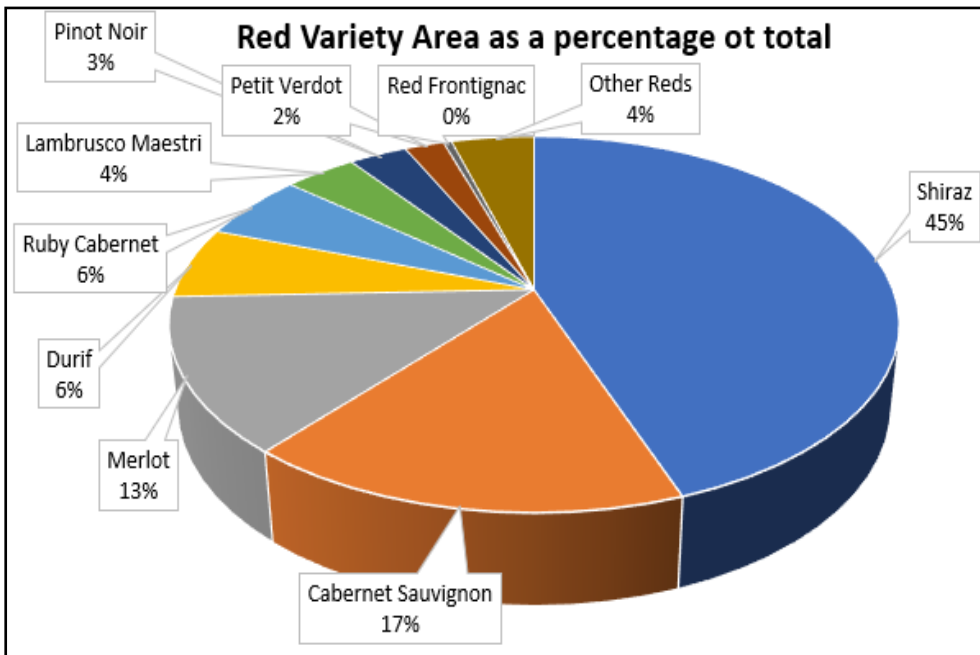


# WINE GRAPES MARKETING BOARD

## REGIONAL MAPPING OF VINEYARDS

Riverina Winegrape Growers recently funded an upgrade to the GIS mapping system that will allow for better simpler production of farm maps.

The pie charts on this page show the percentages in areas of the various varieties grown in the region. Varieties with small areas have been grouped, varieties showing 0% means that the area is less than 1% of the total.



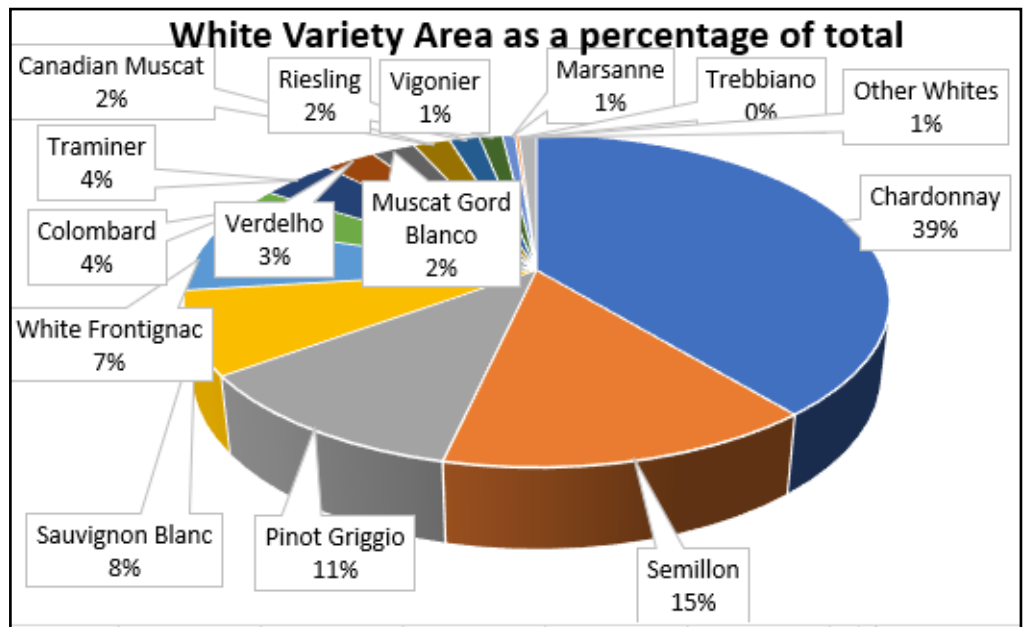
The average block size for the major varieties are:

Chardonnay	6.6 hectares
Shiraz	5.8 hectares
Pinot Griggio	11.8 hectares
Sauvignon Blanc	6.4 hectares
Cabernet Sauv	6.9 hectares
Merlot	6.3 hectares
Durif	5.7 hectares
Semillon	3.6 hectares

The new maps block out neighbouring vineyards for privacy of those landholders. In the coming weeks the office will be sending out copies of the latest maps to our members. If you have changes or would like to obtain further copies of these just call the office.

The largest blocks in the region are a block of Chardonnay at 240 hectares, Pinot Grigio at 204 hectares and Merlot at 190 hectares. **We do BIG things in the Riverina.**

The office is planning to upgrade the aerial imagery from 2017 to the latest images in the 2021. This will be a budget item which will allow the office to work out the changes that may have occurred across the region as the region has dropped production area from 22,000 hectares down to the current 20,500 hectares.



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