

INTRODUCING KATIE DUNNE NSW DPI REGIONAL VITICULTURIST

It has been a busy few months since I started in November 2020 and it has been an interesting season. I have used the time to develop the R&D plans for the region (*in consultation with the Board*).

My qualifications include a Bachelor of Applied Science (Viticulture) (Honours) from Charles Sturt University. Prior to starting my Honours degree, my first vintage role was with Orlando Wines (Pernod Ricard) as their vintage field officer based in Griffith. It was that experience that led to my interest in plant pathology, focusing on trunk disease and bunch rots.

I completed my PhD at the University of Tasmania focusing on managing botrytis, specifically the role that spray timing has in the development of botrytis bunch rot. I visited the USDA's Geneva research station in New York State to learn about molecular techniques to detect *Botrytis cinerea* in grape berry samples and applied the technique to grape berries (pea size onwards) and grape juice. I also used precision viticulture tools to spatially map the spread of botrytis across a whole block during veraison up until harvest. I was able to investigate the role vine vigour and soil moisture has in relation to how botrytis spreads within bunch and across a block.

I finalised my thesis during the 2014 vintage while working as the Regional Technical Officer with Treasury Wine Estates based in the Murray Valley. I worked across the company vineyards and grower services teams based in the Sunraysia and Riverland regions providing technical support to the GLOs, winemakers, growers and company vineyard managers. I was responsible for the regional yield forecasting project, colour and grading trials and providing support for other research projects. I collaborated with other research groups on various projects on assessing vineyard soil

health, colour and tannin trials. During the growing season, when required I was responsible for assessing blocks to ensure they met contract specifications in relation to disease levels. The experience I gained has enabled me to be able to see the issue at end from both the grower and the winery's point of view. One particular vintage will always stick in my mind for all the wrong reasons.

During 2017-18 I joined the AWRI team, focusing on the Greater Victoria Regional Program based in the Yarra Valley. This role encompassed delivering the extension project funded by Agriculture Victoria, Wine Australia, Wine Victoria and the AWRI. Being based in the Yarra Valley, I learnt firsthand about the issues surrounding phylloxera. By collaborating with Forest Fire

Management Victoria and the local associations when planned burns occurred, we were also able to focus on smoke taint. The highlight for me was running the 2018 Sparkling Symposium. Providing advice to the industry as required on various issues enabled me to develop linkages to other groups where I was able to tap into unlimited resources. I was fortunate to have an extensive 'brains trust', including the AWRI, that I could call upon when needed.



Dr Katie Dunne NSW DPI

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BOARD ACTIVITIES REPORT



**Riverina
WINEGRAPE
GROWERS**

Bird Repelling Laser

The AVIX laser installation trial that was conducted by the Board recently has proven that the technology does repel pest bird species in vineyards.

The vineyard that was chosen for the trial was done so due to its location away from main roads and housing. It also was constantly getting attacked by pest birds, mainly European Starlings and reducing the yields.

The yield losses although hard to calculate are estimated around 10-30 tonnes of red winegrapes. It is believed that the laser disrupted the birds significantly to limit their consumption of winegrapes leading to a yield increase to the grower of 10-20 tonnes this season.

A second year trial will be conducted in 2022 vintage now we have a baseline. We have also experienced difficulty with the product with the laser at times pointing itself into the sky (which is not good given it is a Class 3B laser).

Transport of Winegrapes being investigated

Transport for NSW have contacted the Board office following complaints made by members of the general public regarding the high level of winegrape spillage this season. A meeting will be held following vintage to discuss the matter.

National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) working with the industry. The South Australian Wine Industry

Association is working with the NHVR on a project to determine the best and safest method for the transport of winegrapes. This follows spillages in South Australian regions. The project is a national project and representatives of NSW and VIC are participating. The Board will keep growers informed of any outcomes.

This season the Board funded radio advertisement to try and educate road users and the variable message boards were being moved around the region on a week by week basis - they were out for 6 weeks.

Sustainable Winegrowing Australia Program

The Board has been approached by the NSW DPI to support and possibly pilot a program in the region to seek better adoption of the nationally audited program that involves committing to annually recording and reporting all farm inputs and completing a workbook of vineyard practices.

The costs of participating in the program is \$110 annually. Program members whom choose to be certified undergo an external third-party audit to an approved certification standard (details of the costs of the third party audit are not known).

The Board has declined to participate in the program.

Annual Report for 2020

The Board recently completed and approved the Annual Report of its operations and financials. It is currently at the printers and will be posted ahead of the AGM.

The Annual General meeting will be held Wednesday 23rd June 2021 at the Yoogali Club, Yoogali.

HACCP UPDATE

HACCP: It's approaching that time of the year again when I will be calling you for a coffee and to complete your HACCP audit. This will commence late April early May. If you wish to complete your audit earlier, before pruning season starts please give me a ring. Brian Bortolin 0401 567 449, or ring the office on 6962 3944.

IMPORTANT: Growers need to have the following:

- A copy of your fungicide/herbicide spray diary and/or access to your electronic spray diary
- HACCP delivery book, winery delivery dockets and HACCP folder.

CASH BACK REMINDER FOR 3RD PARTY AUDITS AND CHEMICAL USER CERTIFICATION

Growers are reminded that Riverina Winegrape Growers provide the following:

- \$150 GST free per person that successfully completes an annual 3rd Party HACCP Certification for their winegrape business.
- \$100 GST free per person that successfully complete a chemical user's certification course.

Evidence of completion of above required before payment.

NSWDPI DEVELOPMENT OFFICER REPORT

(Continued from page 1)

Riverina Regional Program 2020-21 update

Starting part way through the season left us little time to ensure trials were set up properly. Instead, we used the time to assess industry requirements and plan accordingly.

Vintage 2021 saw the first official harvest of the disease - resistant trial vines at the NSW DPI Griffith Research Station. These varieties required little maintenance with only botrytis sprays being applied. Four of the varieties were selectively harvested and all wines were made at the NWGIC experimental winery. Plans are underway for a Regional workshop later this year where the wines will be made available for those wishing to taste them.

Data is still being analysed but bunch numbers ranged from 30 - 120 per vine and bunch weights ranged from 60g to 230g. Bunch architecture was similar to Riesling and Frontignac. Some botrytis and other rots were observed along with some splitting due to uneven berry set. The rootstock grafted section will be redeveloped with more white and red disease-resistant varieties to be planted. It is hoped that part of the block will include the varieties being grafted on the rootstocks that are soon to be released from CSIRO.

The area wide weed management project is being managed by the IREC. The project had several trial sites across the Riverina with AGnVET, Yenda Producers and Nutrien Ag Solutions. All information can be found on the IREC website and updates will be provided in the 2021 Grapevine Management Guide, published by NSW DPI.

Riverina Regional Program 2021–22 plans

Plans for the final year of the Riverina Regional Program is currently being reviewed by Wine Australia.

Irrigation

The irrigation focus will continue and will include the practical aspects of irrigation scheduling using technology. Different types of soil moisture monitoring equipment will be installed at the NSW DPI Griffith Research Station, starting with EnviroPro probes. For those that wish to see the technology being used, workshops are planned for later in the year before the 2021–22 season. The project will be funded partly by the Riverina Regional Program but also via the Wine

Australia Ag Tech program with negotiations underway to finalise the participating companies.

Vine health

Vine health and vineyard longevity will also continue to be a focus. Trials are being planned at DPI NSW Griffith Research Station. [Expressions of interest from growers wishing to participate are currently being sought.](#)

Botrytis bunch rot

Given the seasonal weather, we are also planning trials on botrytis management, focusing on spray timing and other treatments.

Trunk disease

[A trunk disease management workshop will be held on 13 May 2021.](#) Dr Mark Sosnowski from SARDI and Dr Regina Billones-Baaijens from CSU/NWGIC will be presenting, as well as others who are yet to be confirmed. The seminar will include a field session where some vines will be sacrificed for the greater good. Lunch will be provided.

Vineyard sampling

Vineyard sampling across the region is being funded under the 2020–21 regional program. Virus testing is also available, where these samples are sent interstate. Testing will continue into the next financial year. If you are interested in participating, please let us know. *Botryosphaeria canker* and Petri disease/Esca have been identified in the region. Phomopsis has been found in a number of vineyards in the region as well.

NSW DPI's Skills Development Program

Planning for NSW DPI's Skills Development Program underway and ideas are welcome. There are plans for a winemaking focused workshop for the region.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact me. Details of the workshop will be made available shortly where registrations will be required. Further information will be made available via Riverina Winegrape Growers and NSW DPI's vine watch email.

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IRRIGATORS MAY HAVE TO PAY MORE FOR WATER

IPART, which stands for the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal is currently reviewing a submission from NSW Water in relation to bulk water charges.

The last review of bulk water prices was conducted in 2016 with IPART releases its determination that applied to the 2017 irrigation season. This next determination sets the pricing increases that will occur over the determination period.

For background the Bulk water charges are paid to the State by irrigators to keep the dams and river systems running. Murrumbidgee Irrigation is charged these amounts and the expense is passed directly onto irrigators.

NSW Irrigators Council whom the Board is a observer member have held meetings with NSW Water and IPART in relation to these proposed increases in the charges and the management of IPART suggests that not enough irrigators have had input into the pricing discussions.

The proposed pricing changes by NSW Water for the Murrumbidgee Regulated River would see the entitlement charge for water rise from \$1.41 per ML to \$1.71 in 2024/25. The usage charge which is currently

\$0.94 per ML would rise to \$1.14 per ML. Adding more to your existing water bill.

According to the NSW Water proposal (Table 79 page 141 of the document) If you have 500ML of entitlements your accounts if IPART uphold the NSW Waters proposed would increase from \$987 per annum to \$1,200 in 2024-25 which represents a 5% increase.

While the irrigation groups discuss the process it is important that you as actual irrigators speak up and let IPART know if you are comfortable or not with a 5% increase in your base cost for water.

NSW Water says its for increased compliance costs and for metering of water. As MI irrigators the metering of irrigation is charged to you through your fixed charges by MI, therefore why should you be paying again for such measures.

Grower/irrigators that are concerned by the extra costs are urged to make this known to IPART urgently. The email address is ipart@ipart.nsw.gov.au

If you are going to write make sure you put "2021 pricing proposal" in the subject line. Also if you are an active Social Media participant the IPART Twitter hand is @IPARTNSW. Let them know you concerns.

NWGIC RESEARCH UPDATE AVAILABLE TO WATCH

NWGIC research update available to watch

If you missed the recent National Wine and Grape Industry Centre research update you can now watch a recording online.

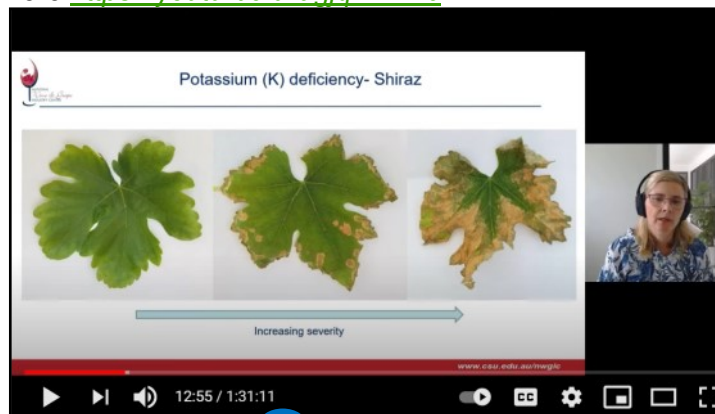
The NWGIC, an alliance between Charles Sturt University, the NSW Department of Primary Industries and the NSW Wine Industry Association, showcased four research projects to support the industry from the vineyard to the glass.

- The development of a smartphone app to identify and manage nutrient deficiency in grapevines - Dr Suzy Rogiers, principal research scientist NSW DPI
- Techniques for determining the levels of grey mould contamination of grapes- Professor Chris Steel, Charles Sturt
- Measurement of different forms of copper in wine- Dr Andrew Clark, Charles Sturt

- Benchmarking regional and sub-regional Shiraz fine wines- Dr John Blackman and Dr Sijing Li, Charles Sturt.

NSW Wine Industry Association President Mark Bourne, was the MC for the free online event on Wednesday 28 October 2020. It was well attended with people from across Australia and overseas tuning in to watch the presentations.

Watch the 2020 NWGIC Research Update on YouTube here <https://youtu.be/u-aqiqhbmXc>



NSWDPI APPOINTS SUSTAINABILITY AND BIOSECURITY OFFICER

Late 2020 NSW DPI appointed Maggie Jarrett to a newly created position within the department for the viticulture industry.

Maggie hails from the Orange region, having grown up on a vineyard she has had experience in both viticulture and wine production and has seen the industry change over the last 20 years. Maggie completed a Bachelor of Environmental Management majoring in ecology at the University of New South Wales. She has a strong interest in sustainable viticulture systems, soil health, renewable energy and triple-bottom-line agriculture.

Maggie has previously worked with the Orange wine industry in adopting the Sustainable Winegrowing Australia program as well as for her parents (See Saw Wines) in creating and adopting a sustainable action plan.



These projects involved extensive research in understanding how natural resource management can increase productivity and profitability for businesses.

Maggie is looking forward to collaborating directly with industry, both with growers and winemakers across NSW, and gaining a greater understanding of how each region functions independently and within NSW. She is looking forward to finding opportunities for collaborating to investigate the links between the social, environmental and economic fields and using this to secure a more sustainable future for the industry.

Maggie will be responsible for Sustainability and Biosecurity projects including the uptake of the Sustainable Winegrowing Australia Program and increased awareness of Phylloxera and exotic biosecurity risks.

POST HARVEST NUTRITION

The following item was sourced from the SA Riverland. This is not a directive from the Board but provides Riverina growers with an example of what other growers are doing post harvest.

With active root growth now occurring, the post harvest fertiliser applications should be applied now to ensure maximum uptake of nutrient. After a long period of constant irrigation during the ripening of the crop the more mobile nutrients will have been largely utilised by the vines or leached from the soil profile. It is from this time that post-harvest applications of fertiliser should be applied to assist in restoration of the vine carbohydrate reserves before dormancy. Nitrogen and phosphorus are the two main nutrients taken up during the autumn root growth flush.

Nitrogen: As a rule, about 30% of the annual nitrogen requirement should be applied in this period, equivalent

to 20-25kg/ha of actual nitrogen. It is better to apply this in smaller, more frequent doses to avoid the production of new shoot growth.

Phosphorus: Is also taken up by the vines post-harvest. 5-10kg/ha of actual phosphorus can be applied during this period. This amount of phosphorus would be applied in 25kg/ha of MAP.

Calcium: Although little calcium is taken up by the vine at this time of year, the calcium can assist in overcoming some of the damage to soil structure caused by constant irrigation through the summer.

Some **Potassium** is taken up by the roots in the post harvest period. If potassium deficiencies have been observed, apply up to 25kg/ha of potassium nitrate post harvest.

Source: Technical Advisory CCW Co-operative Limited 5th March 2021.

CONCERN OVER COUNTERFEIT YELLOW TAIL WINE FOUND

Read This Before Buying Another Bottle Of Yellow Tail Wine *(article headline not the editors advice)*

Online: www.mashed.com 24th February 2021.

From the grape vines planted in the soil to the silky elixir that is poured into a bottle, there is no denying that wine is something special. According to Toptal, global wine consumption is set to rise to about 281 million cases by 2022, worth about \$32.9 billion. With such high margins for profit in countries like Portugal, Italy, Australia, the United States, and the United Kingdom, it's no surprise that people would want to get in on the wine selling pie.

British officials found 41 bottles of counterfeit Yellow Tail wine on store shelves

A Birmingham Live report cites that officials found a total of 41 fake bottles of the popular Australian brand at a local grocer in the town of Walmley in Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham, England. According to the report, upon finding the counterfeit wine bottles, the customer reached out to local members of the Trading Standards committee to report that three of the six bottles they purchased "had different color liquid inside and did not taste the same as the others."



Walking down your local supermarket's wine aisle now feels like a trip into wine country due to the large variety of wines now on offer. Yellow Tail, an Australian wine brand first started in 2001, is a grocery and liquor store staple known for their cheap and yet still tasty offerings (via Vinepair). But with so many options available to consumers, one must be careful, as one cautious wine shopper in Birmingham, England found out.

According to Food & Wine, back in November, the customer became seriously concerned when they discovered that three of six bottles of Yellow Tail wine they had purchased seemed distinctly different.

Upon receiving the report, the Trading Standards members alerted the local Birmingham City Council after having visited the local grocer and confiscated bottles of Pinot Grigio, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Shiraz all marked Yellow Tail wine. The Trading Standards committee's investigation concluded that the counterfeit wine seemed to be part of a larger scaled operation with ties to crime rings. While the fake wine was deemed safe to drink, another Birmingham Live report states that the local KVK Supermarket where they were found had its liquor license revoked. As Food & Wine noted, because the counterfeit Yellow Tail was sold at multiple grocery stores, shoppers should be on alert for fake bottles.

THE REAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EXPENSIVE AND CHEAP WINE

What's the real difference between expensive and cheap wine? It may surprise you that the answer is as simple as, "It's all in your head." Forbes contributor Katie Kelly Bell notes that wine preference is subjective as she confronted the question of whether or not there is a real difference between a bottle of wine that costs \$15 and one that costs \$150.

First, we have to ask: What makes a bottle of wine expensive? Dr. Vinny of Wine Spectator says there are two things that can make a bottle of wine expensive. The first is how much it costs to make the bottle of wine in the first place. There is a wide variety of costs when it comes to raw materials, for starters, and this cost is then passed on to the imbiber. The second reason expensive wine is expensive is because of its "perceived value" by the consumer, which is, again, subjective.

Still not a believer?

In 2017, The University of Bonn conducted an experiment to test what is called the "marketing placebo effect" which is a phenomenon where identical products are perceived differently solely based on differences in cost. The experiment took 30 people and asked them to rate the wines they tested. The only thing that varied in the experiment was the cost of the wine that each participant was shown prior to sampling it (via EurekAlert).

"As expected, the subjects stated that the wine with the higher price tasted better than an apparently cheaper one," reports Professor Hilke Plassmann from the

INSEAD Business School, with campuses in Fontainebleau (France), Singapore and Abu Dhabi. Moreover, the statement concluded, "Identical wine leads to a better taste experience when a greater quality expectation is associated with the wine due to its price."

That's not the end of the story - there has been more than one study to reach a similar conclusion. Wired also details a study psychologist Richard Wiseman conducted about wine. Wiseman purchased wine ranging in price from \$5 to \$50 and then did his own double-blind taste test - neither he nor the taster knew which wine was the expensive wine - and asked which wine was the most expensive. Over 600 people participated and could only pick the most expensive wine 53 percent of the time, which is basically as good as random guessing.

This brings us back to Bell's question - Is there a real difference between a bottle of wine that costs \$15 and one that costs \$150? Bell agrees with the plethora of experiments that have been conducted to demonstrate how cost can influence our tastes, but she believes the one thing these experiments leave out is the experience you bring to the wine when you drink it.

The bottom line? A hefty price tag doesn't always equal a better bottle of vino, but perhaps the best bottles of wine are the ones we share with family and friends.

Read More: <https://www.mashed.com/193390/the-real-difference-between-expensive-and-cheap-wine/>

MORE THAN 23,000 LITRES OF WINE STOPPED AT CHINA'S BORDER

China-Australia relations: more than 23,000 litres of wine stopped at Chinese ports as trade spat continues: Batches of wine from Penfolds and Badger's Brook Estate are the latest to be held up at Chinese ports, reportedly over labelling issues

More than 3,000 litres of wine from Penfolds and nearly 20,000 litres from a second Australian winery, Badger's Brook Estate, were detained at Chinese ports last month as an import ban continues to hit Australian products, the latest Chinese customs data shows. Some 675 litres of the 2018 Penfolds Bin 128 red wine and 2,700 litres of Penfolds Bin 28 from the same vintage were stopped by Shenzhen customs last month due to poor labelling.

In Chongqing, a municipality in southwest China, a variety of red and white wines across seven batches totalling nearly 20,000 litres were also held back over the same problem.

When asked why more were being sent to China given the ban, owner Treasury Wine Estates said it was "currently investigating the matter".

Badger's Brook, which is based in the state of Victoria's famed Yarra Valley, did not respond to requests for comment.

China's customs agency did not provide details on the nature of the labelling issue.

WINE GRAPES MARKETING BOARD

(Continued from page 7)

China unofficially restricted several Australian imports including wine, barley and coal in November last year amid deteriorating relations between the two countries. On Wednesday, however, a top Chinese trade official expressed interest in restoring the relationship, contingent on Canberra taking steps to increase “mutual trust.”

Late last year, China also imposed preliminary anti-dumping tariffs on wine of up to 212.1 per cent, as well as anti-subsidy countervailing duties of 6.3 to 6.4 per cent as part of an anti-dumping investigation it began in August into cheap Australian wines being sold in China.

The preliminary duties will be in place until the investigation concludes in August, after which new duties could be calculated depending on the outcome. China has made it clear it no longer wants Australian wines amid the ongoing political differences, said a trade consultant based in Beijing who did not want to be named.

“If an exporter is still willing to test the new rules, then they will probably be stuck,” she said.

The restrictions have stopped Australian wine exports to China in their tracks since November. The value of Australian wine exports to China fell to A\$58 million (US\$45.8 million) in November from A\$135 million in the same period a year earlier, said Wine Australia, a government body that regulates the industry, in an outlook earlier this month.

The number of Australian firms exporting wine to China fell from 832 before the anti-dumping duties were imposed to 48 in the final month of 2020. Before the block on trade, China imported nearly 40 per cent of Australia’s wine exports, an amount worth about A\$1 billion a year.

“Exports to mainland China will be constrained while the tariffs remain in place and any exports are likely to be higher-priced products that are less price sensitive and

are better able to absorb the price increases. In addition, some products may be sent in bulk and be bottled in-market,” Wine Australia said in the outlook.

China’s trade restrictions have hit Penfolds owner Treasury Wine Australia’s bottom line hard. This month, the company, one of the biggest winemakers in the world, announced a 43 per cent slump in its first-half net profit. China had previously made up a third of the company’s profits. The company has started redirecting its wine exports to other markets.

In China, the trade block has also resulted in fake versions of the popular Penfolds wine appearing on supermarket shelves, some bearing names such as “Penfunils” and “Benfords”.

An analysis released on Tuesday by research institute Future Directions International said Chinese economic coercion was often driven by domestic factors – the protection of the Chinese winemakers in this case – as much as bilateral relations.

Wine is not the only product suffering in the 10-month long conflict between the two countries, which was triggered when Australia called for an international inquiry into the origins of the coronavirus.

Vessels bearing Australian coal remain stranded off the coast of China waiting to unload their cargo, while log imports from Australian states were held up late last year.

<https://www.scmp.com/economy/china-economy/article/3122965/china-australia-relations-more-23000-litres-wine-stopped>



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