



Increasing competitiveness for Australia's wine and grape industry



CSIRO's novel grape varieties and technical innovations achieving increased yield and quality.

The challenge

Australia has no native grape varieties suitable for winemaking or table and dried grape production. As a result, grape varieties have historically been imported from overseas, but the imported varieties did not always suit Australian conditions such as heat waves and periods of limited water supply. New grape varieties were needed that would survive in these challenging conditions.

Another more contemporary challenge is for the Australian grape and wine industry to more profitably compete in a fiercely contested global marketplace. Australia must continue to improve the competitiveness of its wine, dried grape and table grape businesses through productivity gains, innovation, differentiation and meeting market demand.

The response

CSIRO has a long history of involvement with the grape and wine industry. Since the 1960s, CSIRO has investigated 50,000 or more breeding lines to develop wine, table and dried grape varieties best suited to Australian conditions.

CSIRO has also introduced several other innovations to the industry, including the first mechanical harvesters for wine grapes in Australia, low-input, highly productive mechanised systems for dried grape production and rootstocks that are nematode tolerant and, for the wine industry, with low to medium vigour.

The impact

CSIRO's grapevine breeding program has led to novel grape varieties providing a range of delivered and potential impacts, including increased yield and grape quality, resilience in hot inland environments, and novel product options for growers. Along with technical innovations introduced by CSIRO, the varieties have led to improved capacity by adopters to increase sales of wine, table and dried grapes in a competitive global marketplace.

A recent economic assessment has estimated net present value of CSIRO's grapevine breeding work for wine grapes to be approximately \$334.2 million¹.

Major grape varieties developed by CSIRO are suited to a range of Australian environments and market types, and have been adopted by grape growers and winemaking companies since 1975.

¹ CSIRO, 2016. *Research Impact Evaluation – Grapevine Breeding Case Study*. CSIRO, Canberra.

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