

# **MURRAY VALLEY WINE GRAPE INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

## **OPERATIONS PLAN**

**2009 – 2013**

### **Background**

The Murray Valley Wine Grape Industry Development Committee (herein the IDC) is a statutory organisation established under the *Agricultural Industry Development Act 1990*, which collects and expends wine grape levies to support the Murray Darling and Swan Hill wine region growers on projects that provide value, education and growth to the industry.

The levy funded projects and services are required to be regionally specific and targeted for the benefit of wine grape growers. The Committee's charter is to develop, in consultation with growers, strategically focussed and prioritised projects to address regional needs, as well as complement the national initiatives of the Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation.

Allowing for seasonal variances, the IDC anticipates an average annual budget for the 2009-2013 period in the order of \$375,000 from levy contributions (300,000 tonnes x \$1.25/tonnes).

On 14<sup>th</sup> May 2009, a one-day workshop of growers, Industry Representatives and several grower members of the IDC was held to obtain feedback on the current issues facing growers in industry extension and research and development. The growers that attended represented the wine grape industry from the Swan Hill, Robinvale and Mildura regions. From this meeting a survey was developed and a survey was provided to all growers. The results from this survey are summarised in Appendix 1 to the Operations Plan.

These discussions led to the development of the 2009-2013 Operations Plan to address the issues, and ensure that levy funds were strategically targeted towards investment in research, development and extension over the four year time frame.

The Operations Plan is a four year rolling plan, which is prepared in accordance with the *Murray Valley Wine Grape Industry Development (Extra-Territorial) Order 2008*. This Order is made under the above Act and effectively establishes the IDC.

At the end of each year, the Operations Plan will be reviewed to monitor progress, evaluate outcomes, modify and refine future projects and establish priorities for the following year.

## **The vision**

By 2013, the Murray Valley Wine Grape Industry Development Committee will have contributed to a more profitable, viable and sustainable wine industry through its investment in the development of accurate regional forecast figures, more uniform quality measurement standards, more informed and involved growers and the continued development of innovative and cutting edge vineyard management practices.

## **Mission**

In order to address the identified issues of concern to growers, through its operation, the IDC will endeavour to help deliver the following on-farm and industry results over the next four years:

- accurate supply and demand figures
- meaningful collection of grower crop information communicated to growers
- costs of production contained
- wider understanding of the economics of the industry and production
- adaptation of new technology
- industry stability
- promotion of grower groups
- involvement of the grower base

## Operational goals

The six **Key Goals** to achieve this vision are:

- Goal 1:** Encourage and support research, development and extension into improved viticultural practices for the Murray Darling and Swan Hill regions.
- Goal 2:** Contribute to regional market stability and good business decision making by encouraging access to and use of more accurate and meaningful market and grape supply and demand information.
- Goal 3:** Enhance grower profitability by contributing to the development of verification, standardisation and transparency of methods of fruit assessment.
- Goal 4:** Encourage industry viability and grower profitability through identifying and supporting grower skills improvement programs (including business and leadership skills).
- Goal 5:** Encourage the participation of growers in industry decision making and direction; including funding grower representation in regional, state and national industry related forums.
- Goal 6:** Support initiatives that enhance the reputation and consumer liking of wines produced from grapes grown in the Murray Darling and Swan Hill regions.

## **Operational Guidelines (scope)**

The IDC will;

1. hold its meetings in Mildura,
2. meet 4 times per year (more or less as required),
3. engage a secretary part time to support the Committee,
4. review the Operational Plan and guidelines annually,
5. continue to manage its budget responsibility in line with prudent commercial practices and statutory requirements.

The Operations Plan has been developed by the industry and growers, and will be ratified and implemented according to the following timetable:

<b><i>Operations Plan discussions and consultation</i></b>	<b><i>July 2009</i></b>
<b><i>Call for projects – annually</i></b>	<b><i>August–October annually</i></b>
<b><i>Operations Plan and project outline to growers for voting</i></b>	<b><i>November annually</i></b>
<b><i>Final Operations Plan for ratification</i></b>	<b><i>August 2009</i></b>
<b><i>Operations Plan to Government for notification and endorsement, prior to Implementation of the Operations Plan</i></b>	<b><i>October 2009</i></b>

## **Issues Identified by IDC Stakeholders on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2009**

Issues of concern for wine grape growers in the Murray Valley region include:

### **Profitability and production issues**

- maintaining and improving efficiency of production
- rootstocks targeting yields
- development of alternative varieties
- water use efficiency
- deficit irrigation
- tannins and anthocyanins in red wine grapes
- knowing where product goes from farm gate
- need information that will help Sunraysia develop a reputation as a region that is developing what the consumer market wants
- carbon credits
- manipulation of vineyard temperature

### **Other topics by relevance to industry**

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| • Market information                    | 80% |
| • Water                                 | 80% |
| • Soil health                           | 63% |
| • Benchmarking the cost of production   | 63% |
| • Alternative varieties                 | 57% |
| • Temperature impacts                   | 47% |
| • Pest & disease                        | 43% |
| • Growing for low alcohol wines         | 39% |
| • Understanding environmental footprint | 35% |
| • Accessing research outcomes           | 35% |
| • Managing rootstocks                   | 25% |
| • Bio-security                          | 15% |