



Drop The Crop or Should I Mothball ?

Or do I just need
to significantly
reduce annual
operating costs?

Mothballing Vineyards

Mothballing may involve:

- Total crop removal at flowering by various means (there are a number of possible chemical treatments)
 - Is registration status an issue ?
 - Carry-over effects ?
- Total crop removal later in the growing season at about “pea size” using a machine harvester.
- Severe pruning in the winter or even removing the entire fruiting zone.
 - Will incur significant on-going expenses
- Put the sheep in.

Mothballing Vineyards

What about :

- Pruning
 - Hard machine vs minimal ?
- Vegetative growth control
 - By irrigation management in MBDC
- Diseases & Pests
 - Copper/Sulphur only ?
- Weed Control
 - Perennial & noxious weeds?
- Nutrient management
 - Longer term consequences of zero input ?

Pre-mothballing considerations



IF:

- Wrong variety
- Poor site selection
- Inadequate trellising
- Sub-standard irrigation design
- Nematodes

Vineyard removal should be considered

Pre-mothballing considerations

- Mothball part vs yield reduction ?
- What will it cost to bring vineyard back into production?
- Will mothballing affect fruit quality?
- When brought back into production what will be the \$/T fruit?
 - warm irrigated districts - \$500/T ??
 - cooler regions -\$1000/T ??
- What is your annual cost of production/T ?
- Can I shift fruit quality into a higher grade?
 - Is there demand at for higher grades ?

WHEN ?

- The earlier in the growing season the decision to mothball is made the greater the \$ saving in annual operating costs
- Grape growers will need timely & sound financial advice regarding the decision to “mothball”:
 - This will depend on timely advice from wineries – pruning already underway

Complete abandonment of vineyards ?

Not recommended:

- Source of disease inoculum for surrounding productive vineyards within a property or region.
- Noxious weeds.
- Abandoned vineyards within a region can have a negative impact on grower & community moral.

Mothballed vineyards still incur expenses

- P& D Sprays
- Pruning
- Herbicide
- Fertiliser
- Slashing
- Irrigation
- Trellis repairs
- Soil & plant tissue testing
- Desuckering
- Fuel
- R&M
- Labour
- Harvest costs

What can be eliminated/reduced ?

MOTHBALLING SAVES \$\$

	BUDGETED
P& D Sprays	820
Pruning	1650
Herbicide	160
Fertiliser	190
Slashing	60
Irrigation	120
Trellis repairs	25
Soil & plant tissue testing	25
Desuckering	80
Fuel	200
R&M	200
Labour	1720
TOTAL	5250

MOTHBALLING SAVES \$\$

	BUDGETED	ACTUAL
P& D Sprays	820	90
Pruning	1650	0
Herbicide	160	0
Fertiliser	190	0
Slashing	60	0
Irrigation	120	60
Trellis repairs	25	0
Soil & plant tissue testing	25	0
Desuckering	80	0
Fuel	200	20
R&M	200	20
Labour	1720	120
TOTAL	5250	310

MOTHBALLING SAVES \$\$

	BUDGETED	ACTUAL	SAVINGS
P& D Sprays	820	90	730
Pruning	1650	0	1650
Herbicide	160	0	160
Fertiliser	190	0	190
Slashing	60	0	60
Irrigation	120	60	60
Trellis repairs	25	0	25
Soil & plant tissue testing	25	0	25
Desuckering	80	0	80
Fuel	200	20	180
R&M	200	20	180
Labour	1720	120	1600
TOTAL	5250	310	4940

Final Consideration

Is mothballing just postponing the inevitable decision to remove uneconomic vineyards regardless of supply?

SO YOU THINK ITS BAD !!

