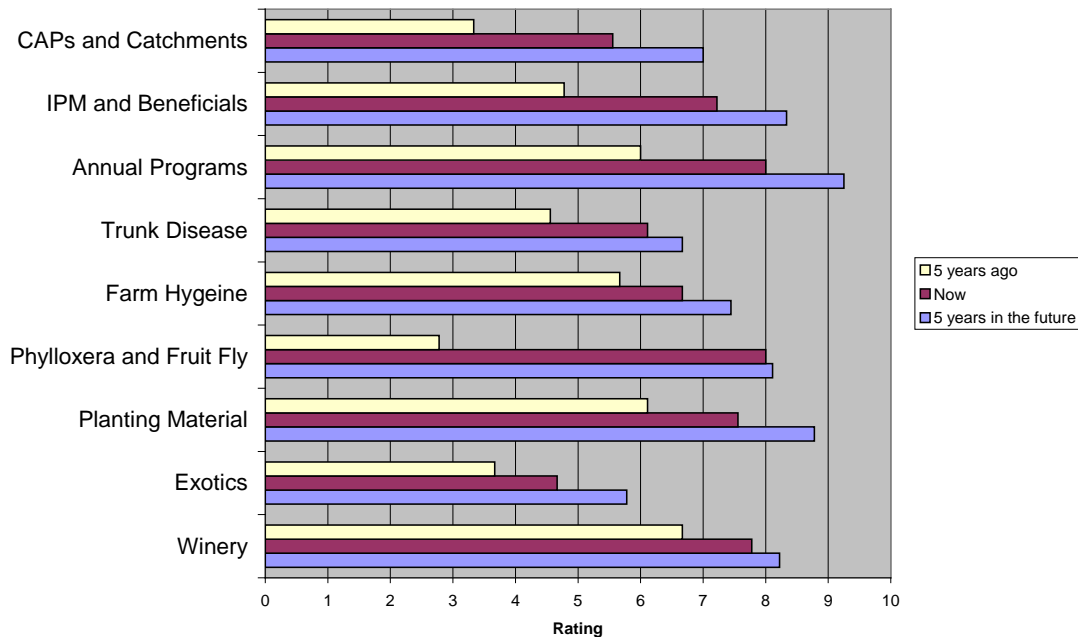


Yarra Valley pre Field Day Review



Duncan's Comments

- 1) Your vineyard managers are on average aspiring for incremental improvements in all aspects surveyed
- 2) The comments and ratings don't indicate the wheels are really falling off anywhere right now
- 3) You may have selected your very best growers which makes this a great benchmark of attitudes and performance. An opportunity may be to deepen the commitment within the region amongst staff and other vineyards?
- 4) Maintaining this capacity and developing efficiencies and cross understanding between these stakeholders is an opportunity moving forward.

Off the cuff I suggest some presentations and connections that may be useful for your group. This is to start a discussion toward a program.

CAPs and Catchments	Short 20 min presentation from PPWCMA about priorities biodiversity and resilience issues in the valley
IPM and Beneficials	Spiders and Spider Ecology Nematodes and other indicators of soil health
Annual Programs	Kathy Evan's from Tasmania Botrytis model and work with powdery mildew
Trunk Disease	Is botryosphaeria in the valley
Farm Hygeine	What are the Valleys major Farm Hygeine issues
Phylloxera and Fruit Fly	Kevin Powell on Phylloxera biology and control
Planting Material	Rootstock recommendations for the Yarra Valley
Exotics	Presentation from AQIS as to what they are surveying
Winery	10 minute sum up of seasonal issues with a three winery panel to maintain this capacity
Other issues	Show us the evidence - Are my chemicals safe presentation from the APVMA Soil biology and the potential for managing mulching logistics in the valley Entwine adoption and feedback from vineyard EMS - WFA

1. Please rate how your vineyard fits into your region's landscape?

We are very aware of how our vineyard fits in our landscape we have many areas set aside as nature corridors and as remnant forest on our properties. And use these areas as a resource for beneficial organisms.

As a dry land vineyard, we are certainly well aware of the challenges in maintaining viability into the future along with less chemical reliance & a self-supporting robust & resilient vineyard. These issues were not really thought of 5 years ago but have become much more important now and will continue to be important

This vineyard is in Victoria, where catchment action plans do not exist. vineyards are based in Victoria so not entirely applicable. but in terms of biodiversity this is a topic touched on frequently.

Catchment Management Authorities maintain and develop plans for environmental progress at the regional level in Australia. These plans are a regional focal point for Australian sustainable development goals. Our concept of vine health includes how vineyards interact with other natural assets at the catchment scale. The purpose of including these ratings and comments is to build increasingly helpful relationships at the catchment and community level for the wine industry.

2. do you know enough about beneficial organisms?

With the implementation of biological farming, we do everything possible to enhance and promote beneficial organisms to help contain any disease or pest. We are still learning when the thresholds of economic crop loss are as these change over time and in each separate vineyard.

5 years ago little consideration was given to beneficial insects but now we select pest and disease control options that have minimal effects on beneficial organisms. IPM is practiced as a matter of course and no broad spectrum insecticides are used and Sulphur is probably the most destructive fungicide used. More emphasis is also being given to soil health and organic matter levels to promote soil organisms

Concepts of IPM are used in the business where possible.

Hearing a little more about them, there seems to be more entering the market knowledge of IPM is essential in managing vineyard operations and critical timings. people should understand that IPM isn't always releasing bugs or pheromones but can be implemented in many operations like timing of slashing or midrow management.

Our concept of vine health includes optimising the vineyard biological system to grow quality fruit. The purpose of including these ratings and comments is to build relationships with the research community to help growers understand the dynamics of beneficial organisms in the vineyard.

3. How do you manage powdery mildew, downy mildew, botrytis and other annual disease control programs?

We are still struggling with the management of these diseases and the harm to other organisms, but feel we are on the right path to further understanding the best outcome for both the crop and the ecosystem.

These diseases are effectively managed through a carefully considered IPM and pest and disease control program. The control program includes canopy management, mid-row and weed control to improve air flow and drying and careful monitoring of weather conditions and pest and disease incidence.

Powdery mildew has been a major problem for the business, but is now under control. We hope the future will see it's management improve further.

We rely on timely fungicide spraying along with visual checks. We have had very good control of our seasonal pests and diseases

This is essential for quality fruit production. Suppliers and researchers still need to work on communicating application rates and smarter ways to operate.

Grape growers spend a lot of time and money controlling powdery mildew, downy mildew, botrytis and other pests and diseases. The purpose of including these ratings and comments is to give feedback to suppliers and researchers to build better and more effective Integrated Pest Management solutions for growers.

4. Is Trunk Disease an issue on your vineyard and how do you manage it?

We are managing eutypa to help prolong the life of older vineyards, it will be an ongoing process and we certainly do not feel in control but try to limit the spread as best as possible. Some Eutypa is showing up in some of the older vines that have been re-worked. The infected vines are cut back and re-trained as soon as the symptoms are noticed. All large cuts are now painted with a control agent during winter pruning.

Some evidence of Eutypa, but as Phylloxera is present in the (ungrafted) vineyard, management will be achieved via replanting.

Our vineyard is rather young (26 years), vines don't have any trunk disease that we know of, we have done some testing though, I did think that "corky bark" may have been a problem in one of my pinot patches

Trunk disease is always present and is an issue preventative measures are taken but there are more economically destructive diseases to consider. This is a long term planning issue to consider as most trunk diseases (in our area) are slow moving and can be identified and damage mitigated against.

Trunk diseases are the major limitation to the productive lives of vineyards the world over. The purpose of including these ratings and comments is to give feedback to suppliers and researchers to build better and more effective solutions for growers in preventing damage from trunk disease.

5. How are weevils, crown gall, weeds and other farm hygiene issues managed?

We undertake 95% of operations on our vineyards ourselves, we utilise heat treatment to prevent the spread of insect pests. We grow our own hay for use in compost, most of farm inputs go through a composting process or are derived directly from the sea.

These issues are controlled as required. Most of the machinery used on the property is all owned. Phylloxera hygiene protocols are practiced and machinery is cleaned regularly.

Weeds managed via herbicide use - perhaps mechanical control will be used in the future.

Spraying for weevils and weeds, baiting for snails

The appearance of phylloxera in the Yarra Valley has increased vineyard hygiene significantly in the last four years, but still needs to be improved

always room for improvement. general farm hygiene is important and can be easily monitored with controls easily implemented. incursion of dominant weeds outcompeting desirable species is a big issue especially with the very dry summers. this is one thing that needs to be carefully addressed.

Some pests, weeds and diseases are avoidable if they are not introduced. The purpose of including these ratings and comments is to build an ability to prevent arrival and spread of pests, weeds and diseases that could reduce vineyard productivity. Effective farm hygiene systems achieve this purpose.

6. How does the region deal with Queensland fruit fly and Phylloxera?

We implement phylloxera protocols and movement restrictions.

As an ungrafted own-rooted vineyard, we place the highest importance on self-protection now that phylloxera is present in the Yarra Valley.

Vineyard is now in a PIZ (Maroondah) and has Phylloxera, which was detected 2 years ago. Phylloxera regulations and protocols are followed and a replanting program has commenced.

Nearly 50% of the vineyard is now planted on rootstocks. All fruit is processed on site and all machinery is company owned. The region deals with Phylloxera by following the regulations and protocols that are well documented.

Phylloxera present - quarantine measures now in place and strictly enforced to limit its spread.

Most of the Yarra is now a "PIZ", mainly due to poor hygiene and poor management and poor attitudes of some growers/contractors

Some vineyards are much more diligent in guarding against the spread of phylloxera than others, this attitude needs to be shared by more growers within the region to adequately control/regulate the spread of phylloxera.

Phylloxera cannot be stopped spreading within a GI. protocols and legislation are one thing but movement of workers, vehicles and animals cannot be totally controlled. even the best controls can be infiltrated by one organism so I would say that on paper the regulations might be acceptable but in reality it is a different story.

Queensland Fruit fly and Phylloxera are regulated pests that vignerons need to consider. The purpose of including these ratings and comments is to build an ability to more effectively deal with these regulatory requirements.

7. Do you use certified planting material?

We currently use certified planting material, however to preserve some unknown clonal material we may start to propagate some of our own material in the near future.

We are still deliberating as to continuing with replanting with own-rooted proven selections from our own vineyard, bench-grafting our own scions onto certified out-sourced rootstocks or buying in certified grafted planting material.

Will always only use quality assured accredited planting material.

Original vineyard (20+ years) not certified but all new and future plantings will be.

If we were to do any replanting of vineyard patches we would be using certified materials, it has served us well in the past.

Planting material is a potential source of disease and quality assured accredited planting material is Australia's best practice approach in this area. The purpose of including these ratings and comments is to build on the culture of continuous improvement in delivery of disease free nursery material.

8. Is the region adequately protected from exotic diseases and pests?

Our understanding and knowledge of exotic pests is poor.

The unregulated inter use of equipment & personnel by larger wine producers with various vineyard resources within & without the Yarra Valley has landed the appellation with the legacy of an ever-present phylloxera risk. Although there are procedures in place & you are your own best source of protection, time & cost issues may not see procedures followed to the letter. There is a level of trust involved that your fellow producers will "do the right thing".

Some knowledge of exotics but limited quarantine is practiced apart from Phylloxera protocols.

Little knowledge of exotic diseases and pests.

All potential threat organisms in the world are not understood but the vineyards are surveyed weekly and unusual physiological symptoms are always recorded and passed on to the regional technical officer as potential issues.

AQIS do their best but it is inevitable that some things will get through when the world is this small. The Glassy winged sharpshooter is on its way, I would like to think it will never get here but in reality it is possible 10-20 years down the track. I do have confidence that the technology is getting better and making the borders more secure though.

Exotic pests threaten to damage the health of Australia's vineyards if not controlled at the borders. The purpose of including these ratings and comments is to build support for and understanding of Australia's plant quarantine system including the role of growers in surveillance for new pest incursions.

9. Do problems with pest and disease impact on your relationship with the winery?

We have an excellent relationship with the winery regarding the impact of pests and diseases. We grow all of our own fruit from a single vineyard so the relationship with the winery is first rate.

Most pests and diseases are managed well and cause very few problems on fruit quality for the winery. Some non-manageable environmental impacts have a more significant impact, including smoke from bushfires, frost and heat.

Strong understanding and consequences result from diseased fruit entering the winery.

It hasn't yet, we are committed to keeping our canopies and our fruit clean and disease free yes it has and always will, especially when working in a premium region and for high end labels in a very competitive environment. there is no reason to grow poor quality fruit or deliver it to the winery when the wine is made in the vineyard.

The biological status of fruit entering the winery is important for wine quality. The purpose of including these ratings and comments is to build an ability to recognise and deal with biological issues that are important in making quality wine.