

## Viticultural and Oenology Committee (VOC)

### MINUTES – VOC MEETING

Thursday 19 August 2021

10.35 am

Brands Laira Estate

### ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES

**Present:** Hans Loder (HL), Sally Macleod (SCM), Martin Warper (MW), Ockert Le Roux (OLR)

**Apologies:** Rae Clark (RC),

**Minutes:** Sally Macleod (SM)

### MINUTES OF THE VOC MEETING HELD 03 JUNE 2020

- The Minutes are also available here on the website: <https://coonawarra.org/cgwi/>.

### BUSINESS ARISING:

- Vine Improvement – Coonawarra Heritage Selection**

No further progress with this project due to limited interest from local growers and fund availability.

A suitable terra rossa site for the CAS clonal trial comparison being conducted by Paul Petri from SARDI has been found at Balnaves.

- Welfare Health and Safety**

*21.12.20 - SAWIA Released Bushfire Emergency Booklet, with template for each business to create own Bushfire response plan. Available here: South Australian Wine Industry Association. ([winesa.asn.au](http://winesa.asn.au)) AWRI has also produced good resources with practical tips. They held a webinar in December 2020.*

**ACTIONS: OLR to email links of resources for bushfire plans to members in the first week of October to make it more relevant to the timing of the fire danger season.**

- Coonawarra Root stock Trial**

Meeting between relevant parties held and trial extended for 5 years only. Contract has still not been obtained. Rather than a 5 year budget, the trial will be costed on a year to year needs basis.

Steve Tyerman (ST) (Adelaide University), who is involved with the berry shrivel project, was unable to access the rootstock trial site to obtain samples in the 2020/2021 season, primarily due to University of Adelaide legal department delays in processing the TWE MOU. Going forward he needs access as it is the desired site for sampling.

**ACTION: Hans to contact ST to get updated timing on MOU approval**

- External Education and training/Coonawarra Rail Siding Project**

Rail trail in final weeks of planning. Work due to begin at end of first week of September. Emphasis on not doing any tree planting etc. at the Coonawarra Rail Siding until after the project is completed. Suggestion of underpass for crossing of Riddoch Highway at Penola and Bellweather Wines.

**ACTION: Dru to provide information on the status of the Rail Siding Project by next meeting.**

- Weather Stations**

The weather station network in Coonawarra is being rolled over to Bush Links, a platform which will provide easier and better access to weather data.

Weather data for STEM project available but project on hold for 6 months due to Covid.

**ACTION: OLR continue with MOU preparation between CV and Tim Powell.**

- Smoke taint**

HL talked about the potential for a smoke monitoring network across the Limestone Coast due to stubble burns occurring annually and increasingly raising concern amongst local growers around vintage. Such networks have the potential to ease grower angst, along with being able to pre-empt when cumulative smoke is approaching threshold levels. The network could also be useful for local Councils. Wine Australia are currently funding work in Victoria, which it would be useful to “piggy back” on to. Hans has been in communication with Ulrich at LCWIC, due to the fact it is a matter affecting the broader Limestone Coast and would like to seek

Board support to take to Wine Australia (indicating our interest in this research and outcomes). The idea would be to do collaborative work, with LCWIC input, with the main aim to determine smoke thresholds which result in taint and establish a regional monitoring network across the Limestone Coast.

**ACTION: SCM to seek board approval.**

## **PRIORITY PROJECTS:**

The first three projects below end in 2022. As there is still work to be done to bring these projects to finalisation, with the aim of having practical tools for vineyards/wineries to use, there is a need to lobby Wine Australia to have funding available to continue with them. It is also vital that researchers report to CV in a useable format.

- **Cabernet Characterisation Project**

This project is nearing completion so the next step will be to organise a seminar where the final results can be disseminated. The planned University of Adelaide Training Centre forum provides opportunity for this and all other ARC funded projects to be presented to the VOC and local growers. As per last correspondence between University of Adelaide and OLR (4<sup>th</sup> August) has this proposed for 6<sup>th</sup> September. Cath Kidman has suggested having a day sometime in October.

**ACTIONS: OLR/HL - In consultation with Cath, confirm the date for the seminar in Coonawarra.**

- **Irrigation Optimisation Project (Proximal Sensing Thermography)**

Final work will be final testing of systems associated with thermography towers, in order to be commercially ready for use in vineyards. This project requires an additional two years (beyond current 2022 funding), to get to this point.

- **Berry Shivel Project**

Ongoing emphasis on the importance of this trial proceeding. Next steps are to understand the influence of rootstocks on berry shivel in Cabernet Sauvignon. Outcomes need to detail techniques vineyards can use to reduce berry shivel.

**ACTIONS: Ensure ST continues work in Coonawarra Cabernet and that this project receives support from Coonawarra Vignerons and industry funding.**

- **Coonawarra Biodiversity Enhancement Project:**

Project fully funded with no further input from CV budget wise. Landscape Board funded a further 6 growers for the 21/22 season.

- **Other Projects where VOC not involved at this stage:**

1. CSIRO – evaluating canopy size monitoring gadgets – sites at Rymill and Katnook. Project complete and results on CSIRO website.
2. ARC (Australian Research Council) funded berry project at Balnaves. Project at completion in 2022. Ensure results are provided to the Coonawarra Vignerons.

## **ONGOING COMMITMENTS:**

- **Water Allocation Plan:**

No action – always budgeted as a contingency plan.

- **VOC sponsorship – Endeavour drinks.**

Loose sponsorship arrangement of \$15,000 for viticultural research over a 3 year period due to end this year. EDG have not said no to further sponsorship but there needs to be a case built to encourage them to continue. Suggestions are to summarise the benefits of the current research and the need for it to continue with the aim of pursuing the future production of premium Coonawarra wines.

**ACTION: OLR continue communication with EDG.**

- **Coonawarra Cabernet Symposium**

Programmed for July 2022. Committee meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> August and decision made to postpone until July 2023 due to the unpredictability's surrounding Covid. Ulrich Gray-Smith (LCWIC) has received a grant of \$27,500 to help fund the symposium. Questions as to how this money is now best used and/or if all or some of the funds need to be returned to Wine Australia.

**ACTION: OLR to contact Ulrich for clarification on alternative use of the money.**

- **Climate change and the effect on weather.**

As current projects near completion, opportunities for work in this field going forward. LCWIC seminar in Robe on 17<sup>th</sup> September – Managing Extreme Weather Events in Vineyards.

## **BOARD UPDATE:**

- Wine storage: Wines at CV office. Need to increase security in the National Trust building before wines can be housed. MOU signed off.
- Museum wines – (149 bottles) the plan to sell through Langtons being re-visited.
- Register of grants now established and summarised in weekly communication.
- Cellar dwellers – varying success due to Covid.
- Masterclass in Adelaide on 29<sup>th</sup> August. Roadshow cancelled.
- Tourism famile very successful. Victorian councils absent due to Covid restrictions.
- 2021/2022 Budget finalised – see below.
- Board approval for the first planted vine in Coonawarra to have genome mapped in France. Being sent with samples from the Barossa. Approximate cost \$200.
- AGM – 28<sup>th</sup> September 2021. Invitations have been sent to Allan Jenkins and Chris Brodie.

## **FINANCE:**

- Budget as per below stands as correct.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

- AWRI project mapping clones in TWE and Yalumba vineyards. Ben Harris has reported that as this and the Coonawarra Heritage selection trial have entirely different aims, the projects cannot be conducted together. Obtain a copy of the results once project completed.
- OLR has obtained a full compendium of the CV funded research over the past 20 years from Chris Brodie.
- cc OLR when new reports come in so members can have access.
- Importance of lobbying Wine Australia to fund Coonawarra projects.
- SCM to contact Neil Power (Dept of Environment and Water) re salinity testing of Coonawarra bore samples. Is this an ongoing service? How best to stream line the process – labelling, data collection and reporting? Clarification on how data is used and where information is kept.
- SCM was asked to revise and update the Coonawarra Phylloxera Outbreak Plan, prepared in 2013. In contacting Suzanne McLoughlin she replied: We believe that the state and business-level biosecurity plans are key as opposed to regional plans and therefore it might be that the focus of updating your 2013 plan may not be what will best enhance preparedness for a phylloxera outbreak for your region, but rather a collective effort on the ground from individual businesses. This will be our focus for extension of this work and we definitely look forward to working with you to ensure this can happen in the best possible way for your region.
- Governance: OLR raised the importance of how CV provide FY22 budgeted funds to the Berry Shrivel (BS) and Irrigation Optimisation (IO) Projects. There is the risk of reputational damage to the CV if financial contributions to research projects are not provided with full transparency to funding bodies. There is a need to better understand the funding process with both Wine Australia and the University of Adelaide prior to FY22 budgeted funds being released to the BS and IO projects.
- It has come to the attention of the VOC that Adelaide University may require up to 1/3 of any funding provided by the CV for administration to projects which have already commenced. This should be kept front of mind when lobbying for regional research beyond 2022; contractually “locking in” funding as a tangible regional commitment from the onset of projects.

**ACTION: OLR to follow up with Vinay regards funding for the Proximal Sensing Thermography and Steve Tyerman the Berry Shrivel project. Further to this discussion, with Wine Australia and Adelaide University.**

**Next Meeting:** 8.30 am Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at Brands Laira

Meeting closed at 12.05 pm

Date	THESE MINUTES WERE ACCEPTED AS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING DESCRIBED AND THE CHAIRPERSON OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVE WAS DULY AUTHORISED TO SIGN THEM AS SUCH	
	Name	
	Signature	

