



Issue: WIN vol. 157

ISSN: 1835-8675

Date: Dec 2025

Wine Industry Newsletter

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Grapevine germplasm relocation update

WA's grapevine germplasm collection is currently being prepared for relocation from DPIRD's Manjimup Horticulture Research Institute to the University of Western Australia's Shenton Park facility in Perth.

As noted in the September 2025 edition of the [Wine Industry Newsletter](#), the relocation is due to the detection within the collection of *Diaporthe ampelina* (Phomopsis cane and leaf spot), a declared pest in WA.

DPIRD, Wines of Western Australia, WA Vine Improvement Association and Wine Australia are collaborating to eradicate *Diaporthe ampelina* virus, screen the collection and ensure material is true to type. This aligns with the Wine Australia-funded National Grapevine Collection (NGC) program which is addressing critical challenges around the management of the nation's genetic resources, the quality of grapevine propagation material and biosecurity.

Over the last 3 months representatives from the collaborating organisations have been working toward establishing 'clean' potted vines.

In October, cuttings were submersed in a 50°C hot water bath for 30 minutes. This delicate process required multiple temperature probes to be positioned within the heat bath and cutting bundles. This treatment eradicates *Diaporthe ampelina*, with minimal risk to the viability of the cuttings.



Hot water treatment set-up with multiple sensors logging temperature

Following the completion of the hot water treatment, the cuttings were dipped in a rooting hormone, placed in tubs and covered with vermiculite. The tubs were then stored in a temperature and humidity-controlled room for 3 weeks resulting in callus formation on the base of the cuttings.



Callusing tubs within the climate controlled glasshouse

In November, the cuttings were removed from the vermiculite and potted, carefully ensuring all cuttings and pots were labelled with the name of the variety, clone and accession number.



Callus and root development on cutting prior to potting



The team prefilling pots with potting mix, planting the cuttings, topping with more potting mix and adding slow-release fertiliser

The potted vines are now held within a shade house receiving regular monitoring to check for disease symptoms and presence of any pests.

All activities were conducted under protocols designed to meet strict biosecurity standards and supervised by a DPIRD biosecurity officer to mitigate any chance of *Diaporthe ampelina* breaching quarantine.

This work is supported by Wines of Western Australia, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), Western Australia Vine Improvement Association (WAVIA) and Wine Australia, with levies from Australia's grapegrowers and winemakers and matching funds from the Australian Government.

For more information on this project contact [Richard Fennessy](#) or [Nick Dry](#).



Potted vines in the shade house at MHRI

Wines of WA sustainability program news

WA wine industry secures \$2.13 million for climate-smart sustainability program



Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development

**Wine
Australia**



Wines of Western Australia (WoWA) has successfully secured \$2.13 million in funding from the Australian Government's Climate-Smart Agriculture Program under the Natural Heritage Trust to deliver the **Western Australian Wine Sustainability Advancement Program** (WAWSAP). This landmark 3-year initiative was one of only 10 grants awarded and represents \$9 million in total project value, positioning WA's wine industry to become international leaders in sustainable wine production.

WAWSAP directly addresses industry-identified priorities from the 2024 Sustainability Survey, including water management, soil health, sustainability certification, and circular economy practices. Led by WoWA in partnership with DPIRD, Wine Australia, Margaret River Wine Association, Great Southern Wine Producers Association, Nature Conservation Margaret River Region, South Coast Natural Resource Management, South West Natural Resource Management, and Grower Group Alliance, the program builds on significant momentum from **WoWA's 2024-2025 Driving Sustainability Program** and delivers tangible support through three integrated projects now open for industry participation.

To be **eligible** for all projects you must be a **current financial member of Wines of Western Australia** (paid APC Fee For Services) or a grapegrower supplying to a current financial member of WoWA.

Project 1: Enhancing Water Security and Biodiversity through Dam and Riparian Rehabilitation

Grant Funding: \$1,032,040 | EOI Closing Date: Friday 19 December 2025

This project will establish 5 demonstration sites across WA wine regions showcasing climate-smart water management practices that improve water security whilst enhancing biodiversity and reducing carbon emissions. Riparian zones - vegetated areas surrounding waterways and dams - act as natural buffers that improve water quality, reduce erosion, and provide critical habitat for native species.

Selected demonstration sites – 3 in Margaret River, one in Great Southern, and one in Geographe/Blackwood Valley/Southern Forests regions – will receive expert assessments, co-funded on-ground restoration works including fencing and revegetation, and technical advice on improving water quality and ecological function. Participants will develop Biodiversity Assessment Plans and benefit from involvement in regional field days, training materials, and case studies that integrate First Nations knowledge into management practices.

Program funding per site ranges from approximately \$140,000 to \$160,000 depending on region with participants contributing towards on-ground restoration activities through cash and in-kind support. This partnership model ensures shared investment in long-term environmental outcomes whilst keeping the program accessible to eligible participants. Capacity building workshops covering water management, carbon reduction, and biodiversity enhancement will be delivered across regions, creating practical knowledge transfer opportunities for the broader industry.

We have already had good interest in this project so get your EOIs in before the closing date (**Friday 19 December**) to ensure you don't miss out on being considered.

See additional information on [project 1](#) and [EOI form](#).

Project 2a: Sustainability Certification Support Vouchers

Grant Funding: \$180,000 (component of Project 2) | EOI Open: Until 31 March 2028 or funds fully subscribed

Breaking down financial barriers to sustainability certification, this voucher program offers 120 WA wine businesses and growers, from across all WA wine regions, \$1,500 towards achieving or maintaining internationally recognised sustainability certification, such as [Sustainable Winegrowing Australia](#). The program supports businesses at 3 critical stages: first-time certification audits, subsequent audits for certification retention, and sustainability action plan implementation projects (available from January 2027).

Priority is given to first-time certification applicants to maximise new adoption across WA regions. Participants gain access to regional certification workshops, peer mentoring networks, regional benchmarking data, and recognition as sustainability leaders whilst securing market access advantages through verified credentials. With sustainability increasingly determining market access both domestically and internationally, this program ensures WA producers can compete on credentials as well as quality.

See additional information on [project 2a](#) and [application form](#).

Project 2b: Wine Forward Climate Resilience Program

Grant Funding: \$273,256 (component of Project 2) | EOI Closing Date: Friday 16 January 2026

Delivered in partnership with [ClimAdapt](#), the Wine Forward program equips wine businesses with comprehensive climate resilience systems integrating climate risk assessment, carbon footprint measurement, and adaptation planning.

Climate-related risks including longer droughts, erratic rainfall, extended fire seasons, and shifting growing conditions are creating operational challenges across WA wine regions, whilst market expectations for climate action continue to intensify.

Phase 1 (2026) provides intensive one-on-one consulting for 4 wine producers (2 in Great Southern, 2 in Margaret River) to establish best-practice methodologies through in-depth climate resilience consulting. Participants receive 40-year climate projections for specific vineyard locations, detailed land mapping using spectrometry, comprehensive carbon footprint assessments (Scopes 1, 2 and 3), tailored adaptation roadmaps, and climate resilience reports aligned with Australia's Climate Reporting Bill. The subsidised program cost is \$2,590 cash plus approximately \$3,000 in-kind contribution for assessment participation.

Phase 2 (2027) scales the program to 15-20 wine enterprises across all WA wine regions using a hybrid model combining ClimAdapt's digital platform with consulting support. Technology efficiencies reduce implementation costs by approximately 40% compared to Phase 1 whilst maintaining quality and rigour. Both phases provide ongoing access to ClimAdapt's technology platform and digital reporting dashboard beyond the project period.

What's in it for you? For \$2,590, receive comprehensive climate risk assessments and carbon footprint measurement worth up to \$10,000. This innovative pilot program could help gain stabilised insurance premiums, green financing access, and verified sustainability credentials that retailers and export markets now demand. Protect production capacity and position ahead of competitors as climate reporting requirements intensify and sustainability determines market access. ClimAdapt will be available throughout January for one-to-one or group discussions with wine producers who submit an Expression of Interest, providing insights into the Wine Forward program and the benefits for your business.

See additional information on [project 2b Wine Forward](#) and [application form](#).

Project 3: Biodiversity Benchmarking and Natural Capital Pathways

Grant Funding: \$244,437 | EOI Opening: February 2026

This project provides co-funded biodiversity assessments for 45 wine producers across all WA wine regions, establishing baseline data for biodiversity monitoring whilst creating pathways for engagement with emerging natural capital frameworks. Participants receive property-specific biodiversity assessments, practical tools for integrating biodiversity enhancement with vineyard operations, and clear pathways for integrating biodiversity data with sustainability certification requirements.

Regional workshops and field days covering Natural Capital Approach principles, biodiversity assessment methodologies, and biodiversity outcomes integration provide capacity building opportunities across the industry. With ecosystem services critical to vineyard health and long-term viability, this project positions WA wine producers to understand, measure, and enhance the natural capital assets that underpin sustainable production.

Full details will be available in January 2026.

Wines of WA - Emissions Reduction Program: Professional Carbon Measurement Made Affordable

Wines of WA – Emissions Reduction Program

Emissions Reporting Made Simple For Our Industry


Everything You Need

Small businesses deserve smart solutions, not overwhelming headaches. That's exactly what our Wines of WA - Emissions Reduction Program delivers - professional climate compliance that actually fits your world. No more choosing between doing it right or doing it affordably.

All Inclusive

- ✓ Emissions footprint for most business activities
- ✓ Professional and personalised reports
- ✓ Emissions Reduction action planning – wine specific
- ✓ Dashboards and data sharing features
- ✓ Help and training support


How to Participate



Register


Wines of WA registration page

Register Here →




Pay the small fee

Pay \$100 to WoWA for managing the program, training and more.




Confirmation email

Receive the confirmation email with the Sign Up details to the program and Group Code




"Now I have a simple and transparent plan I can easily implement, track and update over the years"

Bec Duffy, Holm Oak Vineyards



WINES OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA
Extraordinary Regions



In partnership with Carbonhalo, WoWA has launched the **Wines of WA - Emissions Reduction Program**, bringing professional-grade emissions measurement and climate action planning to WA wine businesses and growers at exceptional value. For just \$100 per business, participants receive 2 years' full access to Carbonhalo's BCAP+ platform - comparable services typically cost \$1,000-\$2,000 per business per year.

The program delivers everything needed for professional climate action: comprehensive emissions footprint measurement for all business activities, wine-specific emissions reduction action plans tailored to the industry, professional reports and dashboards with data sharing features, expert help and training support throughout the program, and ongoing platform access. This solution allows WA wine businesses and growers to start measuring and monitoring your sustainability activities, with simple transparent reporting.

For those unsure about sustainability certification, **Wines of WA – Emissions Reduction Program** offers an approachable, affordable option and place to start. The program covers Scope 1, 2 and 3 carbon emissions reporting and supports critical business needs including grant applications, competitive advantage, supply chain compliance, and transparency building.

Registrations are open until **30 September 2027**. Register through WoWA to receive a unique Carbonhalo Group Code for program access details. Start measuring and reducing emissions with expert support immediately!

Cultivate Leadership 2025 - Great Southern Graduates Inaugural Cohort



WA wine industry's inaugural Regional Leadership Accelerator Program **Cultivate Leadership 2025 – Great Southern** successfully concluded on 26 November 2025 with the graduation of 12 emerging leaders from across Great Southern, Margaret River, Geographe, and Blackwood Valley regions. Delivered in partnership with Great Southern Wine Producers Association, DPIRD, and Wine Australia's Rootlings program, the 3-month intensive program built contemporary leadership capability through workshops covering communication, resilience, governance, and strategic planning.

The graduation celebration in Albany featured keynote speaker Richard Hemming MW and showcased 4 collaborative pitch projects addressing real industry challenges:

Blackwood Wine Collaborative Kelly Kay (Bunderra Estate), Tayla Semmens (Bridgetown Winery), and Chris Gillmore (Clairault Streicker) pitched a collaborative cellar door model to address the Blackwood Valley's remoteness and size challenges. Many producers lack individual cellar doors, limiting visitor access to their wines. The proposed Collaborative Cellar Door would provide a single destination for tourists to experience regional wine diversity. Successful cellar door collaboration models are in South Australia.

The project seeks \$10,000 to engage a consultant to develop a comprehensive business plan, with the Blackwood Valley Wine Association indicating potential matched funding support. The initiative aligns with strengthening regional identity, elevating producer capability, growing wine tourism, and driving sustainable growth.

Can of Worms: Winery Wastewater Recovery, Recharging Resources for a Sustainable Future

Liam Carmody (Forest Hill Estate | Lonely Shore), Fi Borgomastro (Saint Aidan Wines), Laura Penniment (Alkoomi Wines) proposed a 3-year, multi-site pilot evaluating vermifiltration using BioFiltro's BIDA (Biodynamic Aerobic) system as a sustainable wastewater management solution for WA wineries. The project addresses the industry challenge where only 20% of Australian wineries use tertiary wastewater treatment, meaning 80% receive no water return from wastewater. The BIDA system, already operating commercially in US wineries, delivers up to 98% water recovery suitable for irrigation, 60-70% lower operating costs than aeration ponds, 97-99% methane reduction, and produces valuable vermicast by-product improving soil health. The pilot would span 4 winery scales representing 98% of WA producers: Ferguson Valley (<50 T), Margaret River (<200 T), Denmark (<500 T), and Frankland River (<2000 T). A steering group comprising of all stakeholders (government and industry) would guide the project, with deliverables including WA-specific performance data, cost analysis, environmental impact assessments, and implementation guidelines for broader industry adoption.

Community Events & Collaborations

Team members Ian Fenech (Singlefile Wines), Giacomo Picin (Ferngrove) and Sam Palmer (Castle Rock Estate) addressed the challenges of distance and isolation faced by the Great Southern wine community. The Great Southern covers Australia's largest wine region by land mass yet accounts for approximately 0.2% vineyard area, divided across 5 subregions. The team proposed seeking support from state and regional wine associations to facilitate and fund more collaborative events and opportunities bringing wine industry professionals together. These events could take various forms including field days, technical workshops, seminars, or social sundowners, hosted centrally or rotating across regions. The pitch drew on successful examples including the GSWPA Riesling and Shiraz benchmarking events, the Cultivate Leadership 2025 program itself, and Castle Rock Estate's informal Pinot Noir workshop. The vision focuses on building a more resilient regional wine industry through collaboration and information sharing, ultimately strengthening the regional brand, improving wine quality, increasing staff retention through community support, and attracting skilled professionals to regional positions.

The Big Blend: A Margaret River Industry Collaboration Christine Harper (Passel Estate), Darran Stone (Stones + Thunder) and Benjamin Totino (Credaro Family Estate) proposed a Margaret River collaboration creating contemporary, market-relevant wine styles whilst building next-generation capability across winemaking, viticulture, marketing and design. The Big Blend addresses succession planning challenges for both workforce and consumer markets, creating wines focused on styles driving global growth including chilled reds, textured whites, rosés and lower-alcohol expressions. The project pairs established and emerging producers in unorthodox collaborations, with each collaboration assigned a wine style, nominating junior viticulturists to manage donated rows and junior winemakers to create the wines under mentor guidance.

Labels would be designed by emerging local Margaret River artists, with marketing coordinated by up-and-coming marketers. The model operates through sweat-equity, with the program seeking 4 established producers, four emerging producers, local creative talent, and financial backing to launch the first blends, workshops, and activation events. The Big Blend aims to position Margaret River as innovative and collaborative whilst creating practical pathways for next-generation leaders.

Facilitators including Georgina Beniston (Executive Coach), Myles Pollard (Play State Media), Dom Sheldrick (Performance Development Consultant), Caroline Robinson (150 Square, governance specialist), and Rachel Triggs (strategic leadership) delivered highly effective sessions that built participants' confidence and capability. Several graduates have already stepped into regional leadership roles and working group positions, demonstrating the program's immediate impact on building regional capacity. The program's success positions WA wine industry to achieve the WA Wine Industry Sustainability Strategy target of empowering 80 future leaders by 2029.

Watch out for **Cultivate Leadership 2026 – Margaret River!** Details, dates, information and EOIs to be shared in the New Year!

For more information about WAWSAP and EOI submissions, contact:

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Protecting WA's wine industry: the power of MyPestGuide® community

Western Australia's wine industry faces growing challenges from both established and exotic pests. These threats can impact productivity, profitability, and market access – making sustainable pest management essential for long-term success.

Digital tools for smarter pest management

Since 2015, the MyPestGuide® suite of apps, has helped growers, viticulturalists, and the wider community monitor grape pests and diseases. These tools are designed to make reporting simple and facilitate accurate identification of organisms in Australia's grape-growing regions or local backyards, enhancing early detection of exotic species and providing evidence of absence for trade sensitive pests:



MyPestGuide® Grapes - Quickly identify grape pests and disease with confidence



MyPestGuide® Reporter - Report, identify and learn about organisms in real time alongside our expert diagnostician.

MyPestGuide suite of apps

Together, these apps strengthen WA's biosecurity system, help protect our vineyards from costly pest incursions and makes it easy to monitor levels of known pests.

Biosecurity Blitz

Each year DPIRD runs the **Biosecurity Blitz (16 Oct – 16 Nov)**, an annual event that encourages everyone to get involved in pest surveillance.

This year's theme, activities and resources focused on '**inference reporting**' helping experts confirm whether priority pests are present or absent in WA.

The good news? Reports confirmed the absence of major threats like:

- Brown marmorated stink bug
- Grape phylloxera
- Spotted wing drosophila
- Queensland fruit fly
- Glassy-winged sharpshooter (vector of *Xylella*, which causes Pierce's disease)

Not all reports were bad news, some highlighted beneficial species. For example, the caterpillar of the grapevine hawk moth (*Hippotion celerio*, Lepidoptera: Sphingidae) may feed on grapevine leaves but does not harm the fruit. On the contrary, this moth is a significant nocturnal pollinator in Australia, contributing to the biodiversity of many plant species, including those crucial for crops like papaya, grapes, and various native plants.

Protecting WA's wine and grape industry is improved with community engagement and technology-driven solutions. Western Australians are playing a pivotal role in safeguarding the quality and sustainability of our wine production, ensuring resilience in a changing climate and global market.

Safeguard WA's wine industry



Protecting WA's wine industry is a shared responsibility. Here's how you can help:

- **Train your vineyard team** to use MyPestGuide® **Grapes** and **Reporter**.
- **Engage your local community** and show them how easy it is to report pests.
- **Advocate for reporting** across plant industries. Pests that affect other crops can also threaten grape and wine production.

Together, we can keep WA's vineyards healthy, productive, and globally competitive. Use the reporting apps and be part of the solution.

Celebrating regional excellence: The JS Gladstones Trophy

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) is the proud sponsor of the JS Gladstones Trophy, awarded at the Wine Show of Western Australia. This prestigious accolade honours Dr John Gladstones, whose groundbreaking research identified WA's key wine regions, including the world-renowned Margaret River.

The trophy celebrates a wine that truly embodies the essence of its Western Australian region – its terroir, climate, and distinctive style. To be eligible, the wine must:

- be 100% sourced from the nominated region
- achieve the top gold medal in its class
- impress the judging panel in a final tasting led by the chief judge and selected representatives.

Judging the best of WA

This year, DPIRD Senior Research Scientist Richard Fennessy joined the judging panel in Mount Barker to assess 12 shortlisted wines. Reflecting on the experience, Richard said that selecting a single winner from such a diverse and high-quality line-up was challenging. 'The discussions amongst the judges were incredibly insightful, exploring how each wine represented the unique elements of the region from which it was sourced,' he said.

2025 Winner: Torrent Wines' 2018 La Famiglia Chenin Blanc

The 2025 JS Gladstones Trophy was awarded to Torrent Wines for their 2018 La Famiglia Chenin Blanc, hailed as a standout example of Swan Valley's signature style. Winemaker Rino D'Angelo shared the story behind the wine and his family's enduring passion for viticulture.

Torrent Wines: A Legacy of Family and Tradition

The D'Angelo family's wine journey began in Torino di Sangro, Italy, where Rino's grandfather, Guerino, worked vineyards and dreamed of owning his own. Migrating to Australia in 1956, Guerino settled in the Swan Valley, planting his first vines in 1958 and crafting wine in traditional Italian style.

Three generations later, Rino continues that legacy:

'My Nonno believed in 3 things: La Famiglia, food, and wine. Our goal is to honour that tradition by producing small-batch, handcrafted wines that showcase the Swan Valley's unique character,' he said.

Chenin Blanc: A Swan Valley Star

Originating in France's Loire Valley, Chenin Blanc thrives in the Swan Valley's warm climate and diverse soils. Known for its versatility, Chenin can produce styles ranging from crisp and dry to sweet and sparkling, with hallmark flavours of apple, pear, citrus, and tropical fruit. With age, it develops honeyed and toasty notes.

'Chenin Blanc was the backbone of Jack Mann's famous Classic White Burgundy, which helped put Swan Valley on the map, it's a varietal that loves to age and evolve in the bottle,' Rino said.

Crafting the Award-Winning 2018 Chenin Blanc

- **Vintage conditions:** 2018 was an exceptional year, ideal temperatures and balanced ripening.
- **Vineyard:** East-west rows on a slight incline; sandy loam at the top, heavy clay below.
- **Vines:** The Chenin block is half 2007 vines and the other is 1980s.
- **Irrigation:** 8 L/hr drippers on a 3 hour timer, 3 times a week.
- **Harvest:** Two picks — early at 11° Baumé, later at 13.5° Baumé — to balance acidity and flavour.
- **Winemaking:** Gentle basket pressing (450 L/tonne), separate fermentations, early pick parcel aged 6 months in new French oak, later pick matured in stainless steel before blending.

The result? A wine that perfectly expresses Swan Valley's terroir, vibrant acidity, layered complexity, and a nod to tradition.

Honouring Excellence

The JS Gladstones Trophy continues to celebrate wines that define Western Australia's regions. Torrent Wines' achievement is a testament to the Swan Valley's enduring quality and the passion of families like the D'Angelos who keep its traditions alive.



Rino D'Angelo receiving the JS Gladstones Trophy from DPIRD Agribusiness Food and Trade program manager Leon Delpech



Award winning wine

Wine businesses benefit from round 7 of the voucher program

Eighty Western Australian Food and Beverage manufacturing businesses have shared 100 vouchers worth a total of \$681,000 in Round 7 of the WA Agrifood and Beverage Voucher Program.

The Western Australian Wine Industry was successful with 9 vouchers to 7 businesses worth a total of \$53,578 with \$128,388 co-contribution. Recipients were spread across the Swan Valley, Geographe, Margaret River and Great Southern wine regions.

The vouchers will be used to support access to business planning, financial/export planning, e-commerce, and market expansion.

Congratulations to the recipients!

Wine industry recipients WA Agrifood and Beverage Voucher Program, Round 7

Applicant	Region	Voucher type	Voucher amount
Ocean Grown Abalone Operations Pty Ltd T/A Subsea Wines	South West	Sales and Marketing	\$9,520
Cane & Date Pty Ltd	Great Southern	Sales and Marketing	\$5,000
Gillian Margaret Anderson T/A Juniper Estate Wines	South West	Sales and Marketing	\$10,000
The Trustee for Galopoulos Family Trust T/A Driftwood Estate	South West	Sales and Marketing	\$5,000
Wills Domain Pty Ltd	South West	Sales and Marketing	\$10,000
Gillian Margaret Anderson T/A Juniper Estate Wines	South West	Sales and Marketing	\$2,058
Corymbia Wine Pty Ltd	South West	Sales and Marketing	\$2,500
The Wild Fig Company Pty Ltd T/A Mazza Wines	South West	Sales and Marketing	\$4,500
The Wild Fig Company Pty Ltd T/A Mazza Wines	South West	Sales and Marketing	\$5,000



Great Southern wine producers Sarah Date and Ben Cane of Dukes Vineyard.

Sarah Date and Ben Cane, Owners and Directors remember taking on Dukes Vineyard during a very challenging period for the WA wine Industry.

Sarah said that their voucher from the 2024 program helped to uplevel their marketing and branding, which was key in launching the next chapter of the Duke's label.

'The voucher allowed us to partner with a savvy marketing firm, Purple Giraffe, to create a versatile media kit ... which has brought awareness of our premium, cool-climate Great Southern wines to an expanding domestic and international customer base,' she said.

For more information visit dpird.wa.gov.au/AFBvoucherprogram, or phone Tilwin Westrup on 0467 787 133.

Funding opportunity: RED grants – driving regional growth in WA

The South West Development Commission (SWDC) has announced Round 8 of the Regional Economic Development (RED) Grants program, offering a significant opportunity for businesses and organisations in the South West region to secure funding for projects that deliver real economic impact.

What are RED Grants?

RED Grants are a State Government initiative investing more than \$60 million over 11 years to stimulate economic growth and development across regional Western Australia. Managed locally by SWDC, the program supports locally-driven projects that create sustainable jobs, diversify industry, develop skills, attract investment, and boost productivity.

Funding details:

- **Grant amount:** Up to \$150,000 per project
- **Application deadline:** 9 January 2026
- **Eligible projects:** Initiatives that align with regional priorities and contribute to:
 - job creation and workforce development
 - industry expansion or diversification
 - skills and capability building
 - investment attraction and productivity improvements.

Why it matters for the wine industry:

For wine producers and related businesses, RED Grants present an opportunity to fund projects such as:

- **infrastructure upgrades** to support cellar door experiences or production capacity
- **tourism initiatives** that enhance regional wine tourism offerings
- **innovation projects** in viticulture or winemaking technology
- **skills development programs** for the local workforce.

View the [video link](#) to see how Geographe wine producer Vineyard 28 successfully applied the grant to improve production capacity and efficiency.

How to apply:

Applicants are encouraged to:

- review the **Round 8 RED Grant Guidelines**
- understand the **assessment criteria and regional priorities**
- contact the SWDC grants team for advice on eligibility and application preparation.

Applications are assessed competitively, so early planning is essential. Projects must demonstrate long-term sustainability and regional economic benefits beyond individual business growth.

For more information and to start your application, visit the [RED Grants page](#) or contact SWDC at **9792 2000** or grantscoordinator@swdc.wa.gov.au.

AWRI agrochemical updates

Managing downy mildew and fungicide resistance

Downy mildew, caused by *Plasmopara viticola*, remains one of the most significant threats to Australian vineyards under disease favourable conditions. Recent research by SARDI has confirmed resistance in downy mildew to key fungicide groups, including metalaxyl (Group 4) and pyraclostrobin (Group 11), while Groups 40 and 49 remain effective.

Why it matters:

If you are applying fungicides each year and the incidence and severity of downy mildew in your vineyard seems to be getting worse, you may have fungicide resistance or reduced sensitivity.

Fungicide resistance reduces control options, increases spray frequency and costs, and can lead to yield losses and fruit rejection. Overuse of the same fungicide groups is a major contributor.

What you can do:

- Review the CropLife Australia resistance management strategy in the 2025/26 *Dog Book* before planning your spray program.
- Rotate fungicide groups and avoid consecutive applications of the same mode of action.
- Note recent changes: Group 4+M3 co-formulated products (e.g., Axiom MZ) are no longer registered; Group 4 Axiom Flexi must be tank-mixed with a different mode of action.
- Always check winery restrictions and chemical labels before spraying.

Testing available:

A free national testing service for downy mildew, powdery mildew, and botrytis resistance is available until June 2027. Contact ismail.ismail@sa.gov.au before submitting samples to SARDI.

For detailed guidelines, refer to:

- [AWRI fungicide resistance information pack](#)
- The [2025/26 Dog Book](#)

Agrochemical update: Paraquat and diquat decision delayed

The APVMA has announced that its final regulatory decision on paraquat and diquat originally expected by the end of 2025 will now be delivered in mid-2026. The delay follows new findings from the US EPA highlighting increased uncertainty about paraquat volatility, prompting the APVMA to review its own assessments.

Despite this uncertainty, the AWRI expects both products to remain listed in the 2026/27 edition of *Agrochemicals Registered for Use in Australian Viticulture* (the 'Dog Book').

The AWRI will continue to monitor developments and keep the industry informed about any changes to the timeline and the implications for vineyard management.

Further details, contact:

- AWRI Helpdesk: **08 8313 6600** or **helpdesk@awri.com.au**

This information is a summary of the AWRI eBulletin's 27 October and 1 December 2025, these are supported by Wine Australia with levies from Australia's grapegrowers and winemakers and matching funds from the Australian Government.

Applications open: WA Domestic Pathways Program 2026

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) has launched the second edition of the WA Domestic Market Pathways Program, designed to help WA food and beverage businesses master the Australian retail and foodservice landscape.

What's on offer?

- expert-led workshops, 1-on-1 consultations, and buyer introductions
- insights into major retail and foodservice channels (Coles, Woolworths, Metcash/IGA, Aldi, PFD, Bidfood, Sodexo, Compass)
- practical tools for pricing, pitch development, and buyer engagement.

Program Structure:

- **Phase 1:** Masterclass and business capability consultations – **24 Feb 2026**
- **Phase 2:** Pricing and pitch deck workshop – **18 Mar 2026**
- **Phase 3:** Pitching and buyer prep consultations – **April 2026**
- **Phase 4:** Buyer introductions – **May 2026**

Cost: \$108.90 incl. GST per person per phase (+\$55 for an additional person). Phase 4 is free for those completing all prior phases.

Applications close: 30 January 2026 (5 pm AWST)

Places are limited to 30 businesses.

Download the program breakdown [PDF](#) and [apply now](#).

Future events

Biosecurity planning workshops

Workshops are planned for the Swan Valley and Margaret River regions in June 2026. Attendees will learn how to identify farmgate biosecurity risks, particularly those posed by visitors to vineyards, develop practical methods to mitigate these risks and incorporate these learnings into a biosecurity plan.

Further information will be provided in future editions of the Wine Industry Newsletter.

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