



**MEDIA RELEASE:**

**TUESDAY 23 DECEMBER 2008**

**Further detections of Phylloxera  
in the Yarra Valley confirmed**

The Phylloxera and Grape Industry Board of South Australia (PGIBSA) can confirm a further 3 detections of Phylloxera have occurred in the existing Yarra Valley PIZ (Phylloxera Infested Zone) since late October 2008.

The Victorian Department for Primary Industries (DPI) has consulted with the Yarra Valley Wine Grape Association to create an expanded PIZ.



Alan Nankivell, CEO PGIBSA and Brian Smedley, CEO SAWIA discussing the impact of phylloxera on grapevines.

*Phylloxera is a small aphid that lives on the roots of grapevines. Once established death of the vine is inevitable and, despite over 100 years of research, no method of eradication has been found. The only solution is to remove the vines and replanted with vines grafted to phylloxera tolerant rootstocks.*

PGIBSA Chief Executive, Alan Nankivell, does not believe the recent detections pose an immediate threat to South Australia's 3,750 vineyard owners. 'South Australia has the toughest controls in the world designed specifically to prevent phylloxera. In addition, industry in this state invests \$800,000 every year through the PGIBSA, on protocols, surveillance and research to keep the state phylloxera free'. Legislation has for over 100 years prevented planting material and grapes from the Yarra Valley and other phylloxera infested and restricted zones from entering SA. Machinery can only enter after cleaning and inspection in accordance with PIRSA domestic quarantine protocols.

These detections come 2 years after the original detection of phylloxera, which was confirmed in December 2006 at the Yarra Valley Beavis vineyard. An indication that Yarra Valley grapegrowers have become vigilant is the incorporation of the national phylloxera protocols as part of their everyday vineyard management. Evidence suggests that the infestations found recently have been building up for several years. With the application of best practice approaches, detections have been made.

PGIBSA is keen to assist in measures to prevent the spread of phylloxera in Victoria and the rest of Australia. To this end, the Board helps fund specific research into phylloxera; its habits, genotype and detection. The Chairman of the PGIBSA, Dr Richard Hamilton said that "South Australian grapegrowers are seen to be taking a leadership role in reducing the impact of phylloxera across Australia by their long-term support for the existence of the Phylloxera Board (PGIBSA), the only organisation of its type in the world." He went on to say "the wine grape industry is facing challenging times currently and could do without adding to them if the spread of



## Phylloxera and Grape Industry Board of South Australia

Phylloxera. He acknowledged that there would be short term economic pain for some Yarra Valley grapegrowers with the expansion of the PIZ, however he commended them for their determination to ensure that the Yarra Valley remained a premier wine grape growing region”.

Richard continued to say, “we would hope that grapegrowers other regions, particularly those that have close links to the Yarra Valley in Victoria, actively survey for phylloxera. If it is in another vineyard, the earlier it is found the better to contain its spread.”

Each year, the PGIBSA checks South Australia’s vineyards using a combination of aerial imagery and vineyard inspections. In addition to this, the PGIBSA conducts Phylloxera identification workshops and vineyard best practice programs to enable South Australia grapegrowers to be vigilant in protecting their vineyards and those of their industry colleagues against phylloxera infestations.

South Australia has the largest collection of old commercial grapevines in the world. We don’t want to lose them or the tens of thousands of hectares of vines planted in the last decade. For the wine industry, this is a major economic contributor to the States’ economy, employing an estimated 30,000 South Australians.

### **Phylloxera & Grape Industry Board Action**

1. PGIBSA is contacting all SA wineries and vineyard owners and advising them to:
  - Check machinery movement records for any machinery that has operated in a Yarra Valley vineyard;
  - Ensure that any staff travelling to vineyards in the Yarra or other phylloxera-infested areas, change outer clothing and footwear and wash vehicles before returning;
  - Advise vineyard staff to investigate and report vines that are showing symptoms of low vigour for which the cause is not clear; and
  - Utilise the Phylloxera Heat Shed at Naracoorte to sterilise machinery between regions in the Limestone Coast and into or out of the Limestone Coast zone.
2. PGIBSA CEO Alan Nankivell attended the Yarra Valley Wine Growers Association meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> December and offered ongoing support to the Yarra Valley Wine Growers Association and DPI-Vic. It will also consider request for technical support.
3. PGIBSA is reviewing its vineyard phylloxera early detection and surveillance programs, with a view to increasing its efficiency.
4. We have also recently reviewed and updated our Phylloxera Outbreak Response Management Plan.

Because this is an ongoing situation, the Board will update continually its website and provide a regular commentary on [www.phylloxera.com.au](http://www.phylloxera.com.au)

**For comment or information on the discovery of phylloxera in the Yarra Valley and its implications or image files of phylloxera, please contact CEO Alan Nankivell, of the Phylloxera & Grape Industry Board on 0428 260 430.**

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