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Vinehealth Australia launches responsible visit campaign

05 February, 2018 by **Andy Young**

Vinehealth Australia has launched a new campaign, which aims to educate tourists on the risks of phylloxera and other pests which could threaten South Australia’s wine industry.

While phylloxera is present in some parts of Australia, South Australia is currently free of the pest and this campaign emphasises that the tiny pest can be picked up and spread on tyres, shoes and clothes.

“Tourists could walk through a phylloxera-infested vineyard in Australia or overseas, and unknowingly, pick up the tiny insect on their shoes or clothing, then be in a phylloxera-free vineyard later that day or weeks later and spread phylloxera there,” said Inca Pearce, CEO of Vinehealth Australia.

“Our campaign asks tourists not to let Phil the phylloxera bug and his nasty pest friends hitchhike with them. We’re asking tourists not to walk or drive close to vines or down vine rows. Stick to the roads and paths.”

Research commissioned by Vinehealth Australia in 2017 showed that 44 per cent of female visitors and 28 per cent of male visitors to wine regions expect to be able to take photos amongst the vines as part of their wine tourism experience.

“It’s wonderful that tourists are visiting our regions and enjoying our wines. In this campaign, we’re encouraging tourists to be part of our Australian wine story. We have some of the oldest vines in the world in South Australia, and we want to keep it that way,” Pearce said.

“There are many ways tourists can enjoy all that our wine regions have to offer without risking the health of our vines. When you arrive at a cellar door, chat to the staff about tours, experiences and activities available.”

Leon Bignell MP, Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries and Minister for Tourism, officially launched the campaign at the end of last week.

“South Australia has a proud tradition of producing premium food and wine from our clean environment, which is why this message about vine health is so important,” Minister Bignell said.

“During the past year, South Australia welcomed 2.8 million international and interstate visitors and we know more than 17 percent visit a winery during their stay.

“This campaign will educate visitors about simple ways they can help us protect our precious vines, while they’re out enjoying our beautiful wine regions and sampling South Australia’s world-renowned wines.”



Read more about: **phylloxera, Vinehealth Australia,**