



14 September 2022

## Grapevine Red Blotch Virus detection

- Grapevine Red Blotch Virus (GRBV) has been detected for the first time in Australia in grapevine germplasm collections in Victoria and Western Australia. GRBV (with vector) is a High Priority Plant Pest for the viticulture industry.
- One table grape variety and six wine grape variety/clone combinations have tested positive.
- In the past week, GRBV has also been detected in South Australia.
- Trace back activities show that GRBV likely entered Australia in infected propagation material as early as 1985, well before the virus was discovered or a diagnostic test developed. Trace forward activities are in progress to confirm the extent of spread.
- GRBV is not reported to cause vine death, nor does it pose a threat to grape or wine consumers. However, it has caused significant economic impacts to the North American wine industry due to lower yields, delayed maturity, and reduced quality.
- Long distance spread of the virus is primarily through infected propagation material, including grafting. Insect vectors have been implicated in short-distance spread of the virus in North America where economic impacts of the virus are being felt. The three-cornered alfalfa hopper (*Spissistilus festinus*) is the primary vector of GRBV in the US. This hopper species is not known to exist in Australia. The presence of any insect vector for GRBV is unknown in Australia, however the involvement of a vector in the current detections is under investigation.
- Symptoms that may indicate the presence of GRBV include irregular red blotches across the leaves or reddening of veins. Growers should familiarise themselves with these symptoms which generally start to appear in autumn.
- For further information click here for the AWRI's [GRBV fact sheet](#).
- GRBV diagnostic testing is available in Australia (refer to GRBV fact sheet for information), noting that at some laboratories it is not included as part of the full virus testing suite given its current exotic status.
- This alert aims to provide initial notification to industry of this detection, with further updates being provided as the situation develops in coming weeks, including any activity required of industry.



### **Further work:**

The national Consultative Committee for Emergency Plant Pests expects to receive notifications from Government on the incident as new information becomes available. This committee links the Commonwealth, states and territories and industry into early decision making regarding plant pests. Australian Grape and Wine is the winegrape industry's representative on this committee.

Australian Grape & Wine are:

- Working closely with state government biosecurity departments to understand where the virus is in Australia through tracing and testing, and thus determine the potential impact for industry including for the propagation sector.
- Talking to key industry stakeholders, including the propagation sector and other viticulture industries on this matter.
- Together with the AWRI, planning a GRBV webinar. Industry will be advised of further details.

### **Enquiries:**

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