

2022/23 Performance at a glance

In the past year, the grape and wine industry has continued to operate amidst challenges around grape and wine oversupply, high pest and disease pressure, rising cost pressures, River Murray flooding events and continuing fruit fly outbreaks in the Riverland. It is within this operating environment that Vinehealth Australia has worked tirelessly to continue our sharp focus on protecting the South Australian grape and wine industry from pest and disease incursions impacting long term sustainability.

Vinehealth Australia's key achievements in 2022-23 included:

- Provision to PIRSA of three pieces of comprehensive and considered advice, post our evaluation of risk to the state of phylloxera introduction due to proposed rezoning of Mornington Peninsula from a Phylloxera Risk Zone to a Phylloxera Exclusion Zone. This advice was founded on protecting South Australia's vineyards and took a scientific, risk-based, practical approach.
- Investment in significant capability and capacity in supporting PIRSA's fruit fly response in South Australia's Riverland. This involved reviewing and contributing to all industry communications, direct contact with vineyard owners and wineries to communicate timely changes to fruit fly boundaries, movement requirements and associated compliance knowledge.
- Leading South Australia's response to the Grapevine Red Blotch virus detection in Australia, including surveillance, tracing, and communication activities. Vinehealth Australia's unique foundational Register of South Australian grapevine plantings was key to determining the surveillance plan by enabling rapid identification of vine plantings of interest. Activities were pivotal in driving and shaping the national wine industry's response to this incursion, and learnings for future responses. Response activities continue into 2023-24.

As required under our governing Act, significant time and resources continue to be devoted to maintaining foundational information (including maps of vineyards and planting, location, and owner information) in our core asset – the Register. The Register was again deployed for biosecurity response activities, specifically relating to fruit fly and Grapevine Red Blotch virus. It also provided key foundational information to support government activities, including River Murray flood response, prescribed burns and water allocation planning.

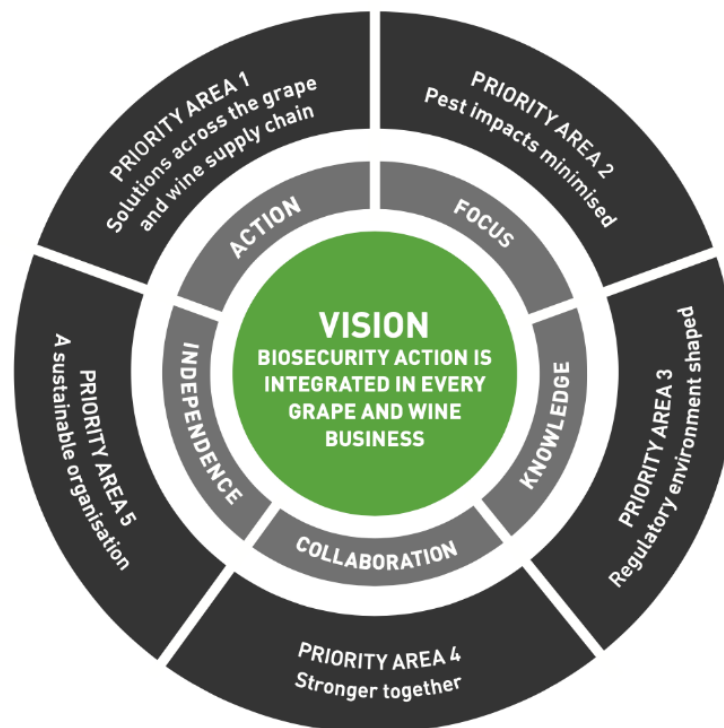
With our levy continuing at the same rate as set in 1996 and business costs continuing to rise, our ability to operate was again considerably constrained, and another deficit financial budget was realised. To that end, the Vinehealth Australia Board decided that a conversation with industry about funding could not wait. With the endorsement of the Hon. Clare Scriven MLC, an extensive 11-week industry consultation was undertaken on proposed new rules and rates. Receiving 10 letters of support and testimonials from wine industry organisations highlighted Vinehealth Australia's strong partnerships with industry, and demonstrated need for Vinehealth's activities. Feedback from industry guided refined recommendations to the Minister around a proposed funding solution, considering the current operating landscape for the wine industry. A funding solution was subsequently endorsed in June 2023, representing a landmark change for the organisation. Vinehealth Australia thanks and commends the Minister and PIRSA for their courage in demonstrating the value of grapevine biosecurity and the South Australian grape and wine industry to the state.

Looking forward to 2023-24, increased funding security for Vinehealth Australia will enable two key pieces of work to begin, improving the capability and capacity of the organisation to prepare for and respond to pest incursions. These include the transformation of our key asset, our Register into a Digital Biosecurity Platform, and completing the new South Australian Phylloxera Response Plan and associated extension activities.

I thank the outgoing Chair, Dr Prue McMichael and Board of Vinehealth Australia for their strategic oversight and counsel, and together with the outgoing CEO Inca Lee and the Vinehealth team, for their collective contribution to Vinehealth's achievements in 2022-23, and unwavering focus on working with and for industry.

It is with a deep sense of responsibility and respect that I will continue in 2023-24 to oversee wise investment of your contributions payable into activities that will benefit industry now and into the future.

Suzanne McLoughlin
Acting CEO



WHAT DRIVES US

Our purpose: To foster a profitable, sustainable and reputable grape and wine industry in South Australia.

Our vision: Biosecurity action is integrated in every grape and wine business.

Our values: To pursue new knowledge, deliver high impact activities, collaborate with industry, government and other key partners, maintain a razor-sharp focus on biosecurity and to honour our independent status.

PERFORMANCE AT A GLANCE

PRIORITY AREA 1: SOLUTIONS ACROSS THE GRAPE AND WINE SUPPLY CHAIN

- Conducted pilot training session for 'Biosecurity for Contractors and Vineyard Owners' program to encourage shared responsibility for biosecurity across the wine supply chain. The program is being refined based on the feedback from the pilot session.
- Continued collaborative project with Small Design Co. to produce a fit-for-purpose disposable shoe cover as an alternative to footwear disinfection. Production targeted to begin in 2023-24.

PRIORITY AREA 2: PEST IMPACTS MINIMISED

- Led South Australia's response to the Grapevine Red Blotch virus detection in Australia.
- Provided significant support to PIRSA in response to 46 plant pest biosecurity incidents.
- In response to speculation that River Murray floodwaters may transport phylloxera from flooded vineyards in the North East Phylloxera Infested Zone to South Australian vineyards, Vinehealth Australia, with the assistance of third party expertise, evaluated and [reported](#) the likelihood of this introduction as negligible.

PRIORITY AREA 3: REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT SHAPED

- Three pieces of comprehensive and considered advice provided to PIRSA post evaluation of risk to SA of phylloxera introduction due to proposed rezoning of Mornington Peninsula from a Phylloxera Risk Zone to a Phylloxera Exclusion Zone by PIRSA.
 - Continued to provide significant support to industry and PIRSA on quarantine-related enquiries. These represented approximately 100 enquiries and half of the annual service requests received.
 - Continued to encourage state governments and national industry bodies to develop a National Phylloxera Management Strategy to ensure the grape and wine industry is protected through a robust national system.
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PRIORITY AREA 4: STRONGER TOGETHER

- Continued to lead the conversation about wine biosecurity in Australia through news articles, feature articles, videos and case studies in the media, on industry platforms, in our monthly newsletter and on our website.
 - Used the state's foundational vineyard data in Vinehealth's Register to provide aggregated, deidentified planting data to state government departments, state and regional wine industry associations, and national wine RDC on request. This included predicting impact to vineyards and wineries in the Riverland as a result of the River Murray flooding event.
 - Continued to provide aggregated, deidentified data from Vinehealth's Register for the 2023 SA Winegrape Crush Survey.
 - Supported vineyard owners, regional associations and National Parks and Wildlife Service SA during the autumn prescribed burns season in the Adelaide & Mount Lofty Ranges Region.
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PRIORITY AREA 5: A SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATION

- Continued to maintain the State's unique Register of vineyard plantings used by Vinehealth for all preparedness, prevention and response activities. Data security enhancements completed.
 - Extensive industry consultation on new rules and rates for contributions payable under the *Phylloxera and Grape Industry Act 1995* undertaken with support of the Hon Clare Scriven MLC to ensure adequate funding for Vinehealth to perform its statutory functions. Formal recommendations made to the Minister and PIRSA on a proposed funding solution to raise the quantum required.
 - Worked with PIRSA and the Minister to continue to explore funding sources for the Digital Biosecurity Platform to replace the current Register.
 - Continued to liaise with PIRSA on development of a new Biosecurity Act for SA, to understand implications on the powers and function within the *Phylloxera and Grape Industry Act 1995*.
 - Management of levy collection and recovery system.
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FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

A summary of Vinehealth's financial performance, including full audited financial statements for 2022/23 can be found in [Vinehealth Australia's 2022/23 Annual Report](#).

WHAT TO KNOW MORE?

Contact Suzanne McLoughlin, Acting CEO of Vinehealth, on suzanne@vinehealth.com.au, or visit Vinehealth Australia's website www.vinehealth.com.au.