



THE PROGRAM

Sustainable Australia Winegrowing (SAW) is the leading sustainability program for grapegrowing in Australia.

The Program was developed by local McLaren Vale growers in 2010 with funding support from the South Australian State Government and aims to assist grape growers to continually improve their operations by becoming more sustainable and reducing environmental impacts.

The Program is based on triple bottom-line methods of sustainability: environment, social and economic. It encourages grapegrowing practices that are sensitive to the environment and our community, and that are economically feasible to implement and maintain.

LINKS WITH GOVERNMENT & INDUSTRY ORGANISATIONS

Content and resource links provided by:

Federal:

- Wine Australia
- Australian Wine Research Institute (AWRI)
- Australian Fair Work Commission

State:

- South Australian State Government support through funding (Primary Industries & Regions SA) – initial Program development (2010), as well as further funding for Program review and enhancements (2016)
- Safe Work South Australia
- Natural Resource Management (NRM) funding – training workshops and resources
- Vinehealth Australia
- South Australian Wine Industry Association (SAWIA)

Local:

- Local Government Authority – the City of Onkaparinga Council – funding for demonstrations and trials in McLaren Vale

PROGRAM BENEFITS

Financial:

- Benefits of the SAW Program are not limited to one year; it provides on-going, continuous improvement and has potential to return the wine grape industry in Australia to profitability as well as improve on-farm practices that exceed current international standards of viticulture and grapegrowing
- The data capture and benchmarking reports highlight gaps in regional knowledge and opportunities for improvement. This allows for highly targeted allocation of funding for training, workshops and seminars, and also provides the framework for assessing the effects of the training. This provides benefit to the individual, the region, the state and the wine industry as a whole.

Research, Development and Extension:

- High level data capture (120 data capture points) have the ability to provide full circle of information to research and development bodies (anonymously supplied with consent from all Program users) – identifies what improvements are required in each region, research projects can be developed and tailored for each region, outcomes can be developed into regional programs, programs can be trialed and/or fully adopted, the effectiveness of the program can be measured.

Communication and Promotion:

- Data provides each region with the ability to promote its on-farm practices and sustainability credentials with hard, on-going evidence
- Enhances conversation regarding each region.

Biosecurity:

- Data provides insight in to uptake of biosecurity practices at an 'on the ground' level
- Enables direct communication with region (and industry) regarding biosecurity best-practice and how to implement
- Highlights gaps in individual and regional practices that may lead to a higher risk in biosecurity threats.

Education:

- Year on year data capture and benchmarking reports highlight gaps in the region's knowledge and therefore opportunities for improvement
- This allows for highly targeted allocation of levy funding for training, workshops or seminars and also provides a framework for assessing the effects of the training.

Community:

- SAW requires local engagement and leadership to further enhance the program for the region, the growers and our wine grape growing community; "SAW has provided a broader framework for growers to come together to discuss ideas and alternatives; it has changed the dynamic of the 'over-the-fence' conversation."

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Sustainable Australia Winegrowing program are to:

- Increase overall sustainability of each region
- Increase the overall sustainability of the Australian wine industry
- Promote regional social development and well-being
- Increase grape quality
- Increase growers' profitability
- Vineyard improvement
- Land preservation and improvement
- Optimise inputs
- Minimise potential negative impacts on the environment
- Sustainable development
- Production optimisation for desired grape quality
- Resource management
- Meet requirements of wineries (fruit specifications).

ONLINE PROGRAM

The online Program is a very powerful tool both for growers and the region, producing detailed reports that allow growers to benchmark their performance against the region's average.

The online Program enables growers to record vineyard management practices for each of their individual blocks utilising GPS coordinates. An online spray diary has also been included in the Program which provides benchmarks on chemical usage per target, per hectare and per sub-district.



ASSESSMENT

The Program is delivered through an online recording platform via a combination of self-assessment and data recording, which is validated by independent third-party audits.

The self-assessment component of the Program has been designed to encourage members to continuously improve the sustainability of their vineyard operations.

Essentially, growers complete an online workbook each year. The workbook consists of 120 questions grouped into seven chapters:

- Soil
- Pest and Disease
- Biodiversity
- Water
- Waste
- Social
- Economic

Growers are presented with five practice-based scenarios per question and are asked to choose the scenario which best represents their own on-farm practices. Each scenario is scored from four to zero, with four being the 'most sustainable' practice, and zero being the 'least sustainable'.

Results are provided as individual vineyard reports by topic, section and chapter against regional benchmarks and identified global best practice.

Growers are encouraged to use their Program results to develop an action plan towards improving their on-farm practices and sustainability goals. As the Program is scenario-based, growers are able to read how simple steps can make a major difference.



CONTACT

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