

Lifestyle Wines PGP

Producing premium naturally produced lower alcohol, lower calorie New Zealand Wines

Quarterly Report: 1 October 2014 to 31 December 2014

1: Quarterly Report Summary:



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All projects related to the 'Lifestyle Wines' PGP programme are on track for the third-quarter reporting period.

Project 1. Market Access

Preliminary research indicating that globally the Lifestyle Wines category is dynamic and fast growing continues to be reflected in current overall trends, with the category remaining in number-one position in terms of dollars for growth. The market for lower alcohol wines is now worth approximately \$20 million in retail in New Zealand.

A new stakeholder/influencer questionnaire is being developed for market research that will be conducted in New Zealand, Australia, the UK, the US and Canada in the New Year.

Project 2. Sensory Perception

Statistical analysis continues on the sensory and instrumental data collected in the initial investigation into how lower alcohol content influences the sensory properties of NZ Sauvignon Blanc wine. The analysis is expected to be completed by the end of March 2015 and will guide planning for the ongoing sensory characterisation of wines with varying alcohol content.

Project 3. Vineyard Manipulations

Irrigation trial work is going well at the site selected for detailed research on water regimes for early-harvest grapes. The objective is to determine an optimum deficit irrigation programme to delay sugar accumulation in grapes by several weeks, which will result in lower alcohol, lower calorie wines.

Additional vineyard blocks are now being considered for trial work related to nutrition, and laboratory testing will help with the final selection.

Project 4. Winery Manipulations

Planning continues for the design of the small-scale winemaking trials, which will get under way during vintage 2015. Medium- and large-scale winemaking trials are also in the planning stages, to further explore metabolites showing positive correlations with ethanol (alcohol) content in Sauvignon Blanc wines.

Screening yeasts continues (with the goal of identifying candidates that will naturally produce less ethanol per unit of sugar consumed). The last batches for screening were completed in December, and the samples will be analysed for ethanol in January. Sugar analysis to date has shown wide variation in the finished wines, and, based on this result, it is expected that there will also be variations in ethanol content.

Project 5. Communications and Tech Transfer

The programme held its first workshop/seminar on 14-15 October in Blenheim, providing 28 representatives from participating companies with research reports on marketing, baseline sensory analysis, fermentation and metabolomics. In addition, a series of 'blind' tastings of lower alcohol wines were offered, enabling participants to evaluate (1) foreign competitors' offerings currently available in the US, UK and Australian markets, and (2) lower alcohol wines currently produced by NZ companies involved in the PGP programme. Supplementary information, including tasting notes and presentation materials were made available to participants. A vineyard field day will be held on 17 February 2015, in Marlborough.