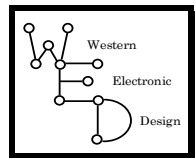




MAGAREY PLANT PATHOLOGY



GrowCare Clare

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Winners and Losers

- The current weather has been good in terms of the lack of disease pressure for the wet weather diseases like downy mildew and bunch rots but it has been so dry that vines on some soils may need a little supplementary watering. As always in agriculture, there are winners and losers from any weather event.
- The dry conditions mean that there is insufficient leaf wetness for the growth of most pathogens, like the fungus that causes downy mildew and the various fungi and micro-organisms that lead to bunch rots.
- Current growth stages for Riesling are ranging from around 80% capfall (EL 25) to fruit set (EL 27). Cabernet is a little behind and is, in some vineyards, at early flowering. This is a high risk time for bunch rots which invade through the sugar conducting tissue exposed when the caps fall. However, if the forecast weather is true to predictions, the conditions are likely to remain unfavourable for Botrytis and the other bunch rot pathogens.
- As a result, there is no need to spray for Botrytis in most vineyards. However, it would be wise to think about applying some form of protective cover if there was a lot of bunch rot in your vineyard last season, for instance in tight-bunched thin-skinned varieties.
- For botrytis, products including captan, chlorothalonil (eg Bravo) or azoxystrobin (eg Amistar) will also give some protection against downy.
- The level of bunch rot at vintage will however, largely depend on the weather when the berries sugar up from veraison onwards.

Controlling Powdery Mildew

- In contrast, powdery mildew, although also a fungal disease, grows best in dry weather. It is the only fungal pathogen that grows without free-water. As a result, the conditions of recent days have been quite favourable to the development of powdery.
- As the canopies increase in size, less ultraviolet light penetrates the inner canopy and the relative humidity increases – both aspects favour the development of powdery mildew.
- As always, effective spraying for powdery, requires an effective spray cover to be maintained in your



Now is a good time to look carefully for powdery mildew on leaves in the most shaded, protected parts of your vine canopies. Look for grey-white blotches on upper and/or lower surfaces of leaves. Look also on the young bunches just after fruit set. Angle the leaves into the light for best detection of the powdery mildew colonies (Photo: Bob Emmett, Vic DPI.)

vineyard. Keep an eye on the growth of shoots and new leaves and on the expansion of existing leaves, as a guide to the amount of foliage without adequate spray coverage since your last application.

- Some Riesling shoots that had grown by about 25cm in the 10-day period previously reported, have now grown a further 40-50cm in the following 19 days, with a number of new leaves!!
- Powdery mildew is likely to be showing up now in your vineyard if your cover has not been adequate. Now is a good time to look closely on older leaves and especially those within the bunch zone. A single careful look now is worth three careful looks later in the season!
- As said in the previous GrowCare message, though the high risk time for powdery will decrease after flowering, it is critical to maintain good control at least until around pea-size. The berries will have gained resistance to powdery before then.
- Where necessary, when the density of the canopy increases, trim or tip the vines to allow optimum spray access and best control of powdery.
- If using sulphur, spray at 600gm/100L with good coverage. You may wish to apply a DMI or similar 'single-site' fungicide around flowering to 'alternate the chemistry' or 'for better coverage in the denser

canopies' but if good control is being achieved it is not necessary to change.

LBAM monitoring



*LBAM Second Instar – look for these in the shoot tips.
Photo: Greg Baker, SARDI*

- Keep a lookout for LBAM (light brown apple moth) in shoot tips of any varieties affected last season. As indicated in the last message, the next generation of LBAM are beginning to show up now – they are 6-12mm long.
- As noted, control at that time is difficult to achieve. At pea-size. If in doubt about the levels of LBAM you find in your vineyard and action thresholds for spraying, contact your winery rep.

Petiole Sampling

- Consider taking petiole samples for assessment of nutrient needs for your vineyard. This is best done as the vines approach flowering. Too much 'tender loving care' can be a disadvantage since excess nitrogen leads to softer berries which are more susceptible to diseases like the bunch rots.
- Also keep a lookout for grubs of the Grape Vine Moth. It is quite a voracious (hungry) feeder on vine foliage in some vineyards.
- Like for LBAM, if in doubt about the levels of Grape Vine Moth in your vineyard and the action thresholds for spraying, contact your winery rep.

Grapevine Moth



Damage from Grape Vine Moth and its caterpillar appears in some vineyards. It is worth looking for this at this time of the season. Photo: Greg baker, SARDI.

*This message was prepared for
The Clare Region Grape Growers Association by
Magarey Plant Pathology and Western Electronic Design.*
