

## Fact Sheet

# Grapes

Grapes, whether for table use or wine, prefer a sunny, dry climate. There are varieties that are suitable for whichever part of Australia you live. Once planted in the right position, which is a north facing site, vines can be expected to spread 10 metres & live over 100 years.

Grapes need good drainage, they have deep roots. If the soil is too sandy, organic matter will need to be added to improve fertility. If soil is too clayey, gypsum must be added. They do not like the pH to be below 5.8, so if soil is too acid add dolomite lime.

Grapes purchased from nurseries are usually grown from cuttings, these should be planted in early spring. Plant about 2-2.5m apart, water well and tamp down to avoid air pockets. When planting cut back to 2 buds and feed with a handful of Blood & Bone. Older vines rarely need feed unless the soil is too sandy.

In it's first season the vine can sprawl along the ground or be trained onto existing fence or trellis. Serious grape growers will usually erect a fence such as described by Paul Baxter in his excellent book 'Fruit for Australian Gardens'. "Erect a fence with 3-4 wires approximately 30cm apart. The bottom wire is used to attach the 2 permanent arms (either side of the main trunk) of the vine that carry the bunches of fruit, the 2 upper wires will keep the foliage off the bunches and expose leaves to the sun. The 4th wire can be used to support bird netting. Naturally other forms of support e.g. pergolas, verandahs can be utilised."

Pruning is most important so that only fruitful canes are kept, if left unpruned small straggly bunches will develop.

### There are 2 main types of pruning:

- (i) Spur pruning, used for the table grapes where in winter each fruiting cane is cut back to 2 buds from which 2 new fruiting canes will emerge. Home grown vines will find 15-20 fruiting spurs ample.
  
- (ii) Cane pruning, used for sultanas and lambrusca grapes which are large seeded varieties with tough skin good for grape juice but not winemaking. Here main arms are kept short from which 2-3 vigorous canes are kept, the rest removed. The thickest is tied around wire and cut after the 13th bud, from which fruit will emerge. The other 2 are cut back and used the following year.

Grapes flower about a month after growth starts. If used for table thin out, if used for wine just leave as small grapes are preferred. Harvest when fully ripe.

**Main pests are:**

- (i) Vine moth caterpillars - use either Dipel, pyrethrum or carbaryl.
- (ii) Vine mite - causes blister like swellings, spray with lime sulphur prior to bud burst.

**Diseases:** Grapes are unfortunately prone to a number of fungal diseases hence vigilance is necessary. The main ones are:

- (i) Black spot - Brown sunken spots in spring/early summer on leaves, canes and fruit. Spray with Mancozeb at bud burst then fortnightly.
- (ii) Powdery mildew - Grey patches on leaves and fruit. Dust with sulphur after flowering. Repeat regularly.
- (iii) Downy mildew - after warm moist weather brown areas form on leaves and fruit clusters become rotten.

Use bordeaux or Mancozeb

- (a) 6 weeks after bud burst.
- (b) immediately after flowering
- (c) immediately after rain.



**Available varieties we stock include:**

**WHITE WINE**

RIESLING

A German variety often called Rhine riesling in Australia. Small - medium berries green - yellow in colour ripening January - May. An economic wine to produce can be used shortly after bottling. Heavy cropper.

TRAMINER

A vigorous cool climate variety with large 3 lobed leaves that are rough & downy underneath. Small bunches of pink oval berries more coloured in cooler areas. Low yielding but excellent quality each year. Highly regarded for its spicy, aromatic flavour especially the Gerwitz clone.

CHARDONNAY

A vigorous vine producing a reliable crop that ripens early.



## RED WINE

### CABERNET SAUVIGNON

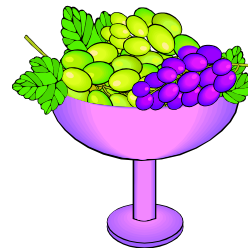
Vigorous vine with upright growth. Leaves deeply 5 lobed. Can be difficult in Tas as fruit set is heavily dependant on weather. Long loose bunches of small, round, black grapes, thick skins. Harvest Mid April - Late May.

### MERLOT

Vigorous variety needing some protection from wind. 3 - 5 lobed leaves. Fruit set affected by adverse weather conditions but quite disease resistant. Produces a nice soft, fruity style of wine.

### PINOT NOIR

Vines are generally slower to develop than most but is one of the few black varieties to ripen early - early to mid April. Suited to the cooler viticultural areas such as Germany & Switzerland. Leaves are usually not lobed & large, bunches cylindrical with small - medium oval berries. Widely planted in Tas. Producing a reliable crop and high quality table wines.



## TABLE GRAPES

### WHITE

(American hybrids - *Vitus lambrusca*)

#### HIMROD SEEDLESS

White seedless variety with a pleasant spicy flavour. Long bunches of medium berries ripening mid season.

#### CANADA MUSCAT

Excellent passionfruit like flavour produced on a vigorous vine with attractive deeply lobed leaves. Makes delicious fruit juice.

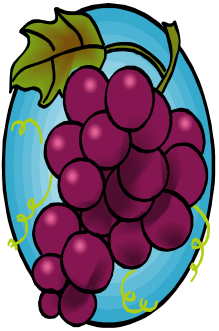
(European - *Vitis vinifera*)

#### MULLER THURGAU

Wine or table grape setting reliably each year in cooler climates. Early ripening of large bunches of medium sized, sweet tasting berries.

#### SCHOENBUGER WINE/TABLE

Heavy cropper, reliable in cool windy areas, spicy flavour. Seeded.

**RED**

(American hybrids)

**GLENORA**

Seedless variety with large compact bunches, delicious flavour & vibrant autumn foliage. Ripening mid season - March.

**SUFFOLK RED**

Attractive vigorous, seedless variety producing loose bunches of bright red medium sized berries. High quality sweet flesh. Early ripening - early to mid Feb.

**CAMPBELLS EARLY**

Another early maturing variety producing large bunches of sweet berries with very small seeds. Attractive velvet like foliage - especially new growth.

SCHYLER. Reliable, seeded, early.

FRAGALA. Reliable. Large grapes & leaves. Early maturing. Seeded.

RUBY SEEDLESS.

FLAME SEEDLESS.

**FACT: Grape sugar differs from other sugars chemically in that it enters the circulation without any action of the saliva. The leaves are astringent and were formerly used to stop bleeding or used dried as a cure for dysentery in cattle.**

**FACT: The name vine is derived from viere (to twist) a reference to it's twining habit. There is evidence of vines existing for up to 600 years.**

