

## MEDIA RELEASE



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# InnoGrape celebrates putting research and development front and centre

The Australian Table Grape Association (ATGA) will be running the final *InnoGrape - Innovation in Table Grape Production* sessions on Thursday 24 and Friday 25 May. At the completion of the workshop in Robinvale and Mildura, there will be a celebratory dinner for what has proven to be a successful series, that has engaged growers and other key industry stakeholders.

In 2015 the ATGA launched the InnoGrape program, thanks to the Foundation for Regional and Rural Renewal's (FRRR) *Fast-track Ag Innovation* program, which was made possible through the support of the William Buckland Foundation.

"The InnoGrape program presents information of world's best technical table grape production knowledge and also covers critical industry research and development information," Dr Mark Krstic from the Australian Wine Research Institute said.

Dr Krstic and Jennifer Maguire from AUSCAL Viticulture worked closely with the ATGA to develop this technical training program for table grape growers in the Murray Valley. The ATGA had identified an opportunity to secure funding from FRRR to fill a training gap for the next generation of table grape growers growing and exporting grapes in the regional centres of Mildura and Robinvale.

At each workshop growers are exposed to presentations from leading industry experts and scientists and provided with a set of technical reference notes for each module presented.

"The reference notes are a really handy tool that participants can go back and refer to at a later date. Further to that, they also can view YouTube clips on the different subject matter covered in each of the modules," Dr Krstic said.

Feedback from growers notes the high standard of presenters and the broad range of topics from agronomic production through to market insights into Asia. They have also reported how the information at the workshops has proved very informative, practical and useful.

Red Cliffs based second-generation table grape grower Domenic Sergi has attended InnoGrape sessions over the 3-year life of the program.

"We've had a range of topics which have provided valuable information. Examples of this would be looking at MRLs (Maximum Residue Limits), vine management after hail damage and insights into international table grape breeding programs," Mr Sergi said.

"The delivery format and range of topics covered has been great, in that it allows opportunities for growers to ask questions of the presenter and share their experiences.

“We have had some sessions in which many around the table have bought out their phones and shared images, which prompted worthwhile conversations. That just doesn’t happen during the course of a normal working day.” Mr Sergi said.

By programs end, 27 modules will have been presented to growers.

“The range of topics have varied each time we’ve run workshops. For these next sessions we’ll be looking at part 2 of our integrated weed management, soil and plant nutritional analysis and interpretation and trends in trellis design and canopy covers. All the details are on the ATGA website,” Dr Krstic said.

“As these presentations represent the conclusion of the workshop sessions of the project, we’ll also be acknowledging the success of the program with a ‘pot n parmi’ dinner and I’d encourage attendees to stay and join the us,

“Again, it will be a further opportunity for those in attendance to debrief on the topics presented and share their experiences.” Dr Krstic said.

#### **Additional Information:**

Session details:

- **Robinvale** – Thursday 24 May, Bistro, Robinvale Golf Club 3:00pm – 6:00pm
- **Mildura CBD** – Friday 25 May, Upstairs Balcony Room, Mildura Golf Club, 4:00pm – 7:00pm

For further information or to register, please contact Program Manager, Rowena Norris at the ATGA on 0421 553 800 or via [innogrape@gmail.com](mailto:innogrape@gmail.com)

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#### **Media enquiries**

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