

# **Horticulture Innovation Australia**

## **Final Report**

### **7th International Table Grape Symposium**

Jeff Scott  
Australian Table Grape Association

Project Number: TG13702

## TG13702

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# Project TG13702: 7th International Table Grape Symposium

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## Introduction

The meeting that launched a legacy of table grape research and extension was held in Anaheim, California in 1994. Since then the international table grape symposium has been rotated around the world to key table grape production regions such as Chile, South Africa and in 2014 Australia.

The 7th International Table Grape Symposium (7ITGS) was held at the Mildura Arts Centre from 12-14 November, 2014, with an optional technical tour to follow on 15-16 November.

Held every three or four years, the symposium brings together researchers, growers and industry stakeholders from around the world. 7ITGS was the first time the event had been held in Australia, and offered growers a unique opportunity to showcase their vineyard and meet new people within the industry.

Furthermore, 2014 was especially significant in that it marked the event's 20th anniversary.

Platinum sponsor, Valent Biosciences has been instrumental in supporting the event since its inauguration in 1994, and will continue to do so at the 8ITGS in Italy. Valent BioSciences Corporation is a worldwide leader in agricultural research and development technologies, with significant linkage to the table grape industry through the Plant Growth Regulator product range, especially GA sprays.

The 7ITGS Organising Committee spent two years planning this event, and great care was taken to ensure that local and international delegates were treated to the best technical program, as well as showcasing Australia and especially the Sunraysia district and local culture and produce to the rest of the world.

Over 325 delegates registered to attend the event from 17 different countries, including major growing regions USA, South Africa, Chile and Spain. Large delegations also attended from the Middle East, primarily Egypt and Israel.

## Method

In 2012, Australia nominated to host the 7<sup>th</sup> International Table Grape Symposium in Mildura, Victoria. A relatively small organising committee, comprising of key stakeholders from the Australian table grape industry, was appointed to oversee the planning and logistics of the Symposium.

Planning an international event for a specific commodity can be difficult, especially when the event is only held every three or four years. Initially scheduled to take place in November 2013, there were some early teething issues which resulted in the date being changed to November 2014. This gave the Organising Committee more time to ensure the event was well supported by both the international growing community, as well as the local.

The revised timeframe provided a good opportunity to build relationships with supply chain partners in the form of sponsorship and/or donations. ATGA also worked closely with local businesses including Mildura Rural City Council, Mildura Tourism, Mildura Airport and Sunraysia Bus Lines to ensure the event ran smoothly and addressed all Occupational, Health and Safety requirements; as well as providing avenues for local promotion towards the importance of such an event for the local community.

The contact list of delegates at the 6th International Table Grape Conference was used as a primary source to kick start the promotion of 7ITGS and update potential attendees on the progress of the event. Members of the 7ITGS Organising Committee used their extensive network to reach out to colleagues around the world, and help promote the event.

While the majority of logistics and preparation was undertaken by the 7ITGS Organising Committee, the event would not have been possible without the assistance of additional staff. In total, six additional staff were engaged to assist with the preparation and running of the event, including packing of satchels (350 in total), ushering, program time keeping, processing registrations and handling of general enquiries throughout the duration of the Symposium.

## Media

Many forms of media were utilised in order to ensure a broad network of researchers, growers and table grape industry representatives were kept well informed towards the progress of the Symposium program, including:

- Regular articles in the industry quarterly publication - *The Vine*.
- Frequent group emails from 7ITGS Gmail Account
- Updates posted on 7ITGS Website [www.7itgs2014.org](http://www.7itgs2014.org) and ATGA Website [www.australiangrapes.com.au](http://www.australiangrapes.com.au)
- Twitter posts and notifications via 7ITGS Twitter Account
- Social Media posts via ATGA Facebook account
- Publication of 7ITGS Poster for display at universities, research facilities and local agricultural franchises (Appendix 10)
- Pull up banner and brochures displayed in HIA stand at International Horticulture Congress in Brisbane, August 2014
- Regular media updates via rural publications including The Weekly Times, Sunraysia Daily, Mildura Weekly
- Emails sent to Mildura and Robinvale Grower Associations, prompting reminders of the event to grower members
- January 2015 edition of The Vine included full coverage of the event (Appendix 13).

Full media articles have been scanned (Appendix 3.) for the purposes of this report.

## Objectives

The key objectives for this project were surrounding the planning, co-ordination and execution of a highly successful international event with a strong technical program, designed to showcase new technology and innovation to the Australian table grape industry.

Ensuring that the format and program is relevant and stimulating, creating a “must attend” event across the entire industry supply chain was a constant challenge for those charged with the responsibility of planning such a significant event. Individuals with a unique skill set were engaged in order to thoroughly execute all tasks, whilst ensuring cultural diversity and event tradition was being taken into consideration.

The international table grape industry is experiencing strong demand on the back of continued category growth and the growth of Asian markets. The Australian industry must target international markets, as it currently produces 50% greater supply than consumed. However, given the export demand is uncapped the challenge will be to lift production to meet demand. Asia wants high quality Australian grapes but we cannot sustain supply due to seasonal fluctuations and market factors. Australia stands to benefit most from any growth in Asia and the ATGA must drive these developments on behalf of growers.

The Symposium is the premier event for the international table grape community, and attracts leading researchers and innovators in their respective fields from around the globe. As such, the Symposium is a unique opportunity for local growers and supply chain partners to establish valuable international contacts and networks, as well as benefit from information delivered on the latest R&D in knowledge and technology specific to the table grape commodity.

## 7ITGS R&D Technical Program

The technical program ran over three days from 12-14 November. The program was divided into 9 Sessions, with each topic addressing current issues and challenges for the global table grape growing community. The ten sessions were:

- Session 1: Table grape production and marketing: future challenges and opportunities
- Session 2: Soil management and mineral nutrition
- Session 3 and 4: Rootstocks, breeding and cultivar improvement
- Session 5: Pest and disease management
- Session 6: Plant growth regulators
- Session 7: Table grape growing in tropical/subtropical environments and dormancy
- Session 8: General viticulture and vine physiology
- Session 9: Post harvest technologies

Presentations were delivered by 32 scientists and researchers from countries including Australia, the United States, Israel, Italy, Portugal, South Africa, Chile, Spain and Argentina. The majority of speakers were employed as research officers or leading scientists for Government organisations, universities or private research institutes.

In addition to the researcher presentations, 6 Key Note speakers were invited to give insightful presentations on topics including Food Safety, Impacts of Climate Change, Genetics, Disease Management, and Tropical Climates. The key note speakers were invited to attend from research organisations in Australia, USA, and Brazil.

A particular highlight for the technical program was the “Insights into exporting table grapes into Asian markets” presentation which was delivered by then Victorian Minister for Agriculture and Food Security, Minister for Water Peter Walsh.

While finalising the technical program is always a challenge, as you can't please everyone, the most common interest among delegates was new varieties. All were seeking “the next best thing” in the product differentiation of table grapes with many liaising with local growers about varietal preferences and viticultural techniques. A number of delegates from Egypt and the Middle East requested private tours of grower properties throughout the duration of the Symposium – hopefully only a few vine cuttings made their way through customs!!

A full program with speaker details can be found at the front of the 7th International Table Grape Symposium Proceedings (Appendix 1). Abstracts from each presentation can also be located on the 7ITGS Website [www.7itgs2014.org](http://www.7itgs2014.org) (Appendix 9).

The 7ITGS Organising Committee also made available a 2014 Delegate Directory (Appendix 11) for participants who missed the opportunity to exchange contact details during networking events. Many sponsors request this information in order to build their contact base, as well as researchers who complete post-Symposium reports for their respective organisations.

## 7ITGS Networking Events

- **Welcome Function – 11<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

Sponsored by Sun World International, 7ITGS began on 11 November with the Pre-Symposium Registration and Welcome Function on the lawns of the Mildura Arts Centre. This was the first of four optional social functions and included official welcomes from ATGA Chief Executive Jeff Scott, Mildura Rural City Council Mayor Glen Milne, ATGA Chairman Richard Lomman, and 7ITGS Organising Committee Chair Mark Krstic.

In order to officially greet our international and local guests to Mildura, Aunty Janine, a local Indigenous Elder was invited to perform the 'Welcome to Country' speech, a common ritual conducted to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land. This acknowledgement pays respect to the traditional custodians, ancestors and continuing cultural, spiritual and religious practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Further, it provides an increasing awareness and recognition of Australia's Indigenous peoples and cultures. The formal greeting was followed by a didgeridoo performance by the three local indigenous brothers, known as the Kennedy Brothers.

An official 7ITGS Welcome Function commemorative photo was taken by the Mildura Rural City Council on the steps of the historic Rio Vista Building, as a token of "thanks" to the international guests for travelling to Mildura. A copy of the photo was provided to all participants the following day (Appendix 15).

- **Symposium Networking Dinner – 12<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

The Networking Dinner was held at the Grand Hotel, Mildura and gave many delegates the opportunity to network away from the formal technical program. Sponsored by Perfection Fresh, the 110 guests in attendance were thrilled by Illusionist, Tom Berger with many left speechless at his "mind reading" abilities. The dinner was well supported by the local growers, who enjoy the opportunity to mingle and represent their local table grape growing community. ATGA CEO Jeff Scott thanked a number of key individuals for their work and commitment to planning such an outstanding event.

- **Poster Session - 13<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

The Poster Session is a traditional element to the International Symposium. It provides individuals with an opportunity to showcase their research in written format. The posters are particularly useful for young postgraduates or researchers attending a conference for the first time, or for presenting a progress report on experiments not yet complete.

This year more than 20 posters were displayed in the marquee where delegates could view the information at their leisure. All presented posters were eligible for the Best Poster competition which was judged by 7ITGS Organising Committee Members Peter Clingeffer, CSIRO and Colin Gordon, DAFWA. The social event was sponsored by Sheehan Genetics and saw over 150 delegates attend the informal session.

The "Best Poster Award" titled "Effects of Kelpak *Ecklonia maxima* Seaweed Product on Quality and Yield of Red Globe Table Grapes in Sicily, Italy" was awarded to Kelpak research duo Adriaan F Lourens and Giuseppe Tornello.

Delegates attending the Poster Session were presented with commemorative glasses made for the event, with many collecting one for each year the Symposium has taken place. Voting for the 8<sup>th</sup> International Table Grape Symposium host nation also took place.

- **Paddle Steamer Dinner Cruise – 14<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

While many local and interstate delegates departed Mildura at the conclusion of the formal technical program, approximately 90 local and international guests dined aboard the paddle steamer "Mundoo" for a twilight tour on the River Murray. Sponsored by local grower and exporter, GrapeCo, this informal social event was a highlight for many of the international guests – as well as the remaining Organising Committee members who finally had an opportunity to take a deep breath and relax!

## 7ITGS Post Symposium Technical Tour

After four intensive days of talk and information at the Mildura symposium, the opportunity to break out of the conference venues and look “across the fence” was a welcome shift to a more hands-on focus – and the 60 delegates who elected to take part were not disappointed.

For many, it was an opportunity to get close to the productive, operational and cultural aspects of their own industry within a new region and country. The two-day Tour Program took in a wide area of the Mildura growing region and provided the opportunity to compare and contrast international experiences and practices from a variety of perspectives.

- **Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> November – Mildura to Robinvale & District**

The first stop by the tour bus on day one was on Barry Pedersen’s property on the banks of the Murray River at Paringi. With a kilometre of river frontage and rolling hills, the sight of kangaroos and emus thrilled delegates during a nature walk of the picturesque property. Barry’s 26 hectares of Flame Seedless, Menindee Seedless, Crimson Seedless, Sable Seedless and Midnight Beauty are planted along with new plantings of Adora Seedless. The property is operated under both dripper and low-level spray irrigation, which are used at various times of the year to best meet the needs of the vines. Barry is a firm believer in the use of professional entomology and agronomy services in his efforts to maximise production. He believes the expert input allows him to ensure the correct balance of nutrient availability to the vines, while minimising chemical application and cost.

The visit to the Pedersen property also included a demonstration by innovative local Mildura region product developer Interlink. The director Peter McWilliams manufactured his first sprayer in 1958 and the company is now a global leader in horticultural spray equipment. Interlink’s Power Tube spraying system was demonstrated, and presents a major advance on traditional multi-row sprayers. It is designed to provide more comprehensive coverage and wetting of fruit through a combination of power and droplet control. The unique design of the Power Tube air delivery system creates the perfect balance between air and pressure. Air is catapulted off the sidewall of the “power tube” diffuser, delivering 20-times more air than a ducted sprayer.

Delegates enjoyed lunch at the Euston Club Resort, before visiting the Euston Weir and Robinvale Pumping Station. Ailsa Willis, Lower Murray Water’s Engineer - Irrigation Operations and Graeme Maloney from LMW, guided the tour. The new Robinvale High Pressure System has been in use since October 2010, replacing an old channel and gravity pipeline system with a high pressure fully pipelined network. The pump station was replaced and during peak demand can deliver up to 3,600L/s in a high-pressure system. It means growers no longer need their own pump to irrigate and costs associated with water delivery and power consumption are reduced. For many of the international delegates present, the morning’s travel had provided an insight into the dominant arid environmental conditions in the Mildura region – and many were intrigued with the detail of the management of the Goulburn Murray system. In particular, it provided deeper appreciation of the delicate balancing act that provides a water supply capable of maintaining permanent plantings in the harsh climatic conditions.

The tour moved on to Robinvale – one of Australia’s largest table grape growing regions with approximately 10,000 acres under vine. The visit provided a significant insight into the Australian industry, particularly for delegates from countries such as Egypt, Chile and Peru, where table grapes are a growing sector, but there has been only limited information exchange with Australia in the past. The tour group looked at various table grape trellis structures before visiting Nick Muraca’s property for a vineyard tour. Nick and his son Peter grow 50 acres of Menindee, Crimson and Thompson Seedless and Nick willingly fielded questions from interested delegates on a diversity of topics. Of particular interest were the Murray Valley’s industry structures, with our local, regional and national bodies, and the effectiveness of these structures in supporting industry development and grower interests. Questions also related to practical and technical vineyard matters, illustrating the value of international conferences such as the symposium in providing a conduit for information and technology transfer between growers and industry personnel from all parts of the world.

The symposium tour continued to mix the opportunity for industry insight with an element of tourism, with a visit to the Hattah Lakes. Again, this was a popular stop-off for the international delegates, who were keen to maximise their opportunities to catch a glimpse of local flora and fauna. The 48,000 hectare national park contains more than 200 bird species, including the threatened Malleefowl.

In the evening, delegates were treated to the unique dining experience of Gino and Elina Garreffa’s Red Cliffs property, Tabletop Grapes. An exclusive rustic Italian feast and an undoubted Symposium highlight.



- **Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> November – Mildura & District**

A visit to the Department of Primary Industries site at Irymple was the first port of call on the second day of the tour. Delegates were divided into two groups to maximise the opportunity to inspect sites and question researchers involved in key projects being run by the DEPI.

The visit followed a topical point of discussion at the symposium around the current and future influence of climate change and the opportunities to adapt production methods appropriately. A DEPI project by researchers at Mildura is examining the effect of climate change on grape production. The groups inspected the open-top chambers, which are being used to simulate global warming under various scenarios and examine the impacts of elevated CO<sub>2</sub> on vines.

A separate demonstration by scientist Maxine Schache provided delegates with an insight on the prevalent soil types in the Mildura region, and the challenges it provides in table grape production. The demonstration was around a soil profile pit, and delegates heard a presentation by Maxine about the impacts of limestone and salinity on table grape production and the value of workshops allowing growers to do application efficiency assessments to evaluate and compare their irrigation performance. The importance of correct irrigation management and monitoring, drew much interest from delegates, particularly in relation to the district-wide drainage system in place in Sunrayia to manage salinity issues. As a result of the prevailing soil types, the salinity threat resulted in the drainage system being installed from the 1930s.

A highlight of the second day was a visit to the property of Merbein South growers John and Sandra Argiro and family. The Argiros' 300 acre property is planted to Crimson, Menindee, Sable and Flame and they are successful export operators into China and the wider Asian region. For the past five years, Palms Vineyards has successfully trial grown more than 50 acres of table grapes under a pergola structure system. The visiting group inspected the Argiros' hot-house production system for table grapes, which effectively allows production to be brought forward by 1 to 2 weeks. It effectively creates a new production zone into the Murray region production calendar, and drew much interest from delegates about the potential for seasonal variation.

The tour moved on to the region's leading transport and logistics provider for containerised cargo, Wakefield Transport at Merbein. Wakefields offers one of the largest cold storage facilities in south eastern Australia, and is approved for the packing and unpacking of exports and imports.

To round off the cultural opportunities provided by the tour, delegates were offered the chance to visit the junction of Australia's two longest rivers – the Murray and Darling Rivers – 20 kilometres away at Wentworth.

The post-symposium tour was an important addition to the overall symposium event and was a key element in allowing the region to make the most of this unique opportunity. It was the first time the event has been held in Australia, and drew speakers, leading scientific researchers and industry representatives from more than 40 countries, including the US, Brazil, Italy, Spain and Israel. The symposium was a wonderful opportunity for the Australian industry and the Mildura region, in showcasing the strengths and opportunities of each to an interested and respected audience.

The Technical Tour Report was completed by local publicist, Jacinta Allen-Gange (Appendix 12.) and a formal Technical Tour Itinerary was made available to paid participants only (Appendix 6).

**Photos from each of the events listed above can be located at the 7ITGS Website [www.7itgs2014.org](http://www.7itgs2014.org) (Appendix 14).**

## 7ITGS Evaluation Results

While no formal evaluation process has been undertaken at the conclusion of previous Symposiums, the 7ITGS Organising Committee felt it was vital that an Online Feedback Evaluation be made available to all delegates in order to capture and measure the experiences of those in attendance.

The experienced gained from the planning and co-ordination of such a complex event was valuable for planning future Australian table grape industry events and conferences. It also identified networking gaps that currently exist within industry, including informal opportunities such as grower "field days", or technical trials for growers and researchers.

Supply chain partners and growers are keen to engage with industry and ATGA, however have had limited opportunities in the past. With new networks and contacts forged during the Symposium, many growers will be more comfortable attending industry events both locally and globally in the future.

### Delegate Attendance

This year's event exceeded the expectations of the organising committee with 325 delegates (Figure 1). This included 110 international visitors from 17 different countries and a fantastic response from the Australian industry, particularly the 160 Victorians (Figure 2) who attended.

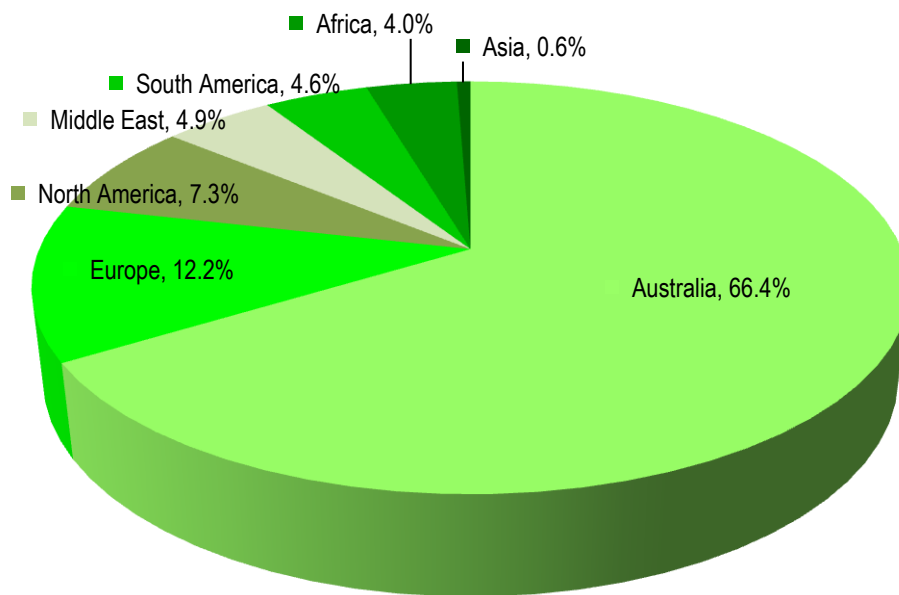


Figure 1. 7ITGS attendance according to geographic region of delegate.

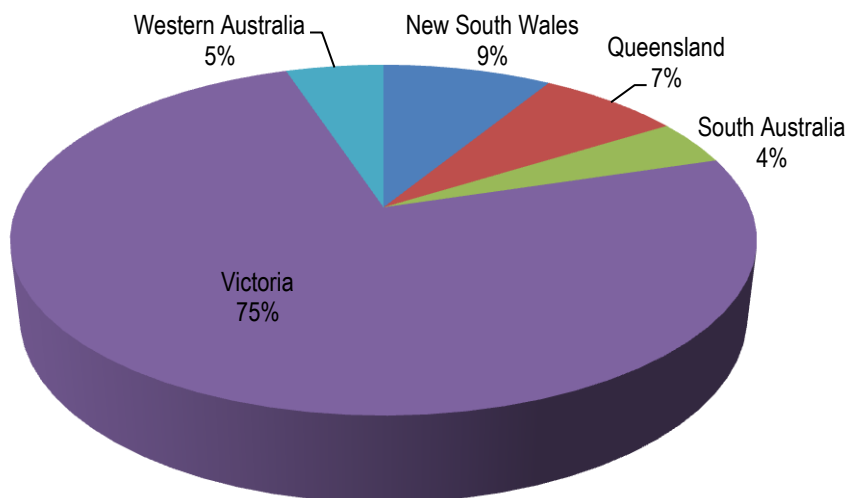


Figure 2. Breakup of the 217 Australian delegate attendees according to state.

## 7ITGS Venue, Catering, Transport & Service

Delegates were asked to rate their overall experiences throughout the duration of the event, in order to provide feedback to service providers and the venue hosts. As you can see in Figure 3, the majority rated the Mildura Art Centre venue and facilities as 'Good' or 'Excellent'; as well as the service received at each of the networking events. Specific comments for this section of the survey have been listed below the graph.

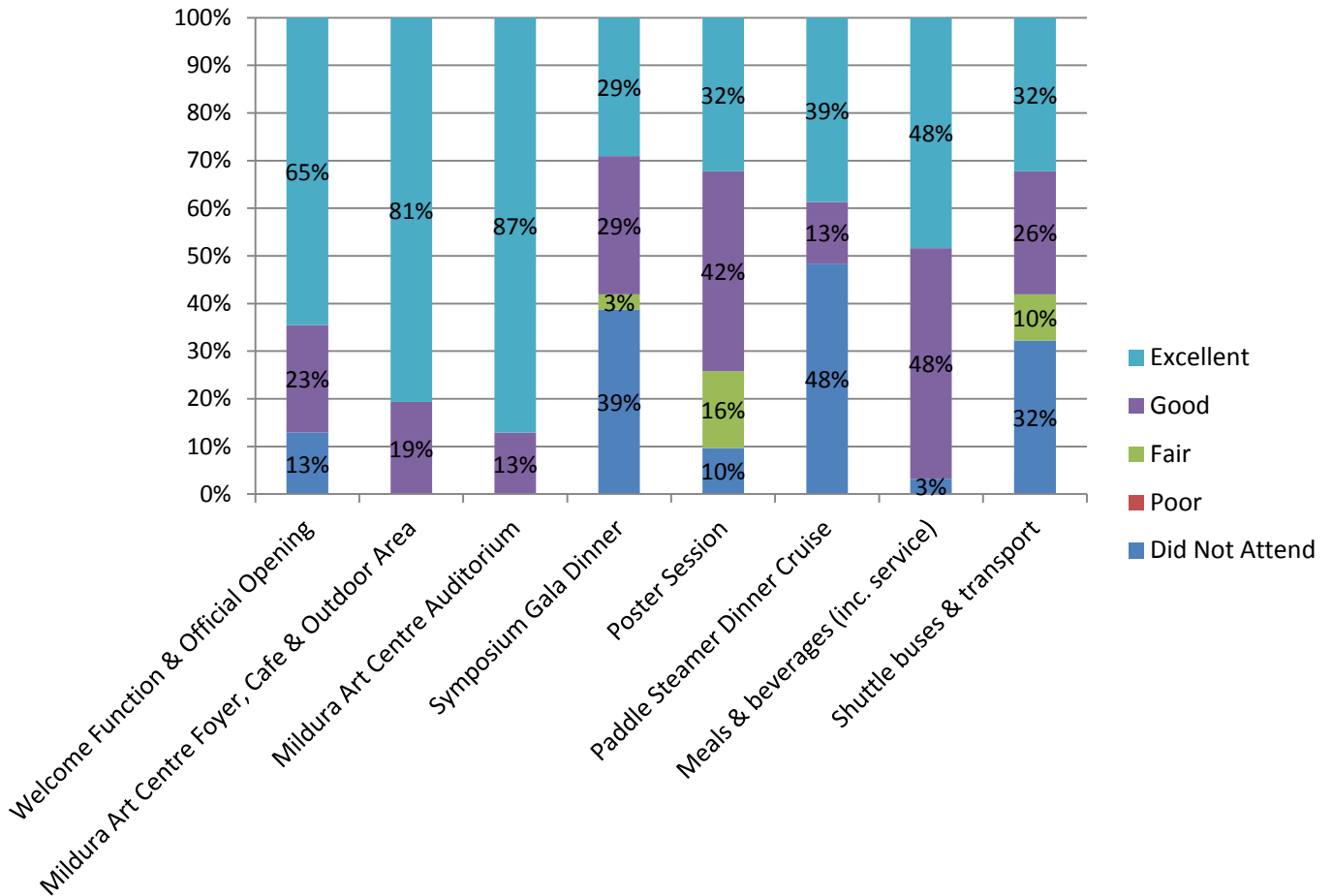


Figure 3. Overall satisfaction of Venue, Catering, Transport & Service

### Additional Comments:

- “We were very happy with all events, couldn't fault anything.” Australian Sponsor
- “Professional, helpful and always smiling :)” Australian Sponsor
- “Global representation was excellent and added significantly to the professional and social enjoyment of the event.” Australian Poster Presenter
- “We were very pleased with the exposure of our Uvasys branding at the symposium. When I think back of how I had to motivate for the funding for the sponsorship for the symposium, I know our MD would automatically sign on the dotted line for another event like this. He too was very happy with what he saw, even though he was only at the symposium for the opening session and day 1.” Australian Sponsor
- “One of the best networking events I have been to for a long time. I am still seeing the benefits of it albeit outside of table grapes” Australian Corporate Representative
- “Great interaction between researchers and producers” Portugal Oral Presenter
- “Too much science not enough commerce and development. suggest reducing the time by a day.(or night)” Australian Exporter
- “If not the best one of the top 2-3”, USA Researcher

- “The organization was excellent, the scientific presence on the Australian side was excellent but not enough leaders of the field from elsewhere.” Israel, Oral Presenter
- “a fantastic conference, well organised and well attended.” Australian Sponsor
- “The best one so far” South African Grower

### Post Symposium Technical Tour Results

There were some challenges in finalising the Post Symposium Tour itinerary, particularly growers willing to host the delegates on tour and comments received throughout this section of the survey are reflective of this issue. Planning a post symposium is difficult, as some expect to spend the majority of their time viewing vineyard production, however there is also a number of delegates who like to see the Australian landscape and wildlife whilst visiting the region. The 7ITGS Organising Committee achieved this balance quite well, with the large majority rating their overall tour experience as ‘Excellent’ or ‘Good’ (as per Figure 4).

Timing of the Post Symposium Tour was not ideal for international visitors hoping to see fruit on vines, however it was the best time for local growers as they were not in the midst of harvest. Including a spray demonstration was interesting for international growers not familiar with the spray technology, and opened up much opportunity for discussion with the local growers.

The post symposium tour was a relatively small group of 60 international guests. This was an ideal number for the tour operators and hosts, as many delegates were able to engage with growers and service providers on a one-on-one basis or in small groups.

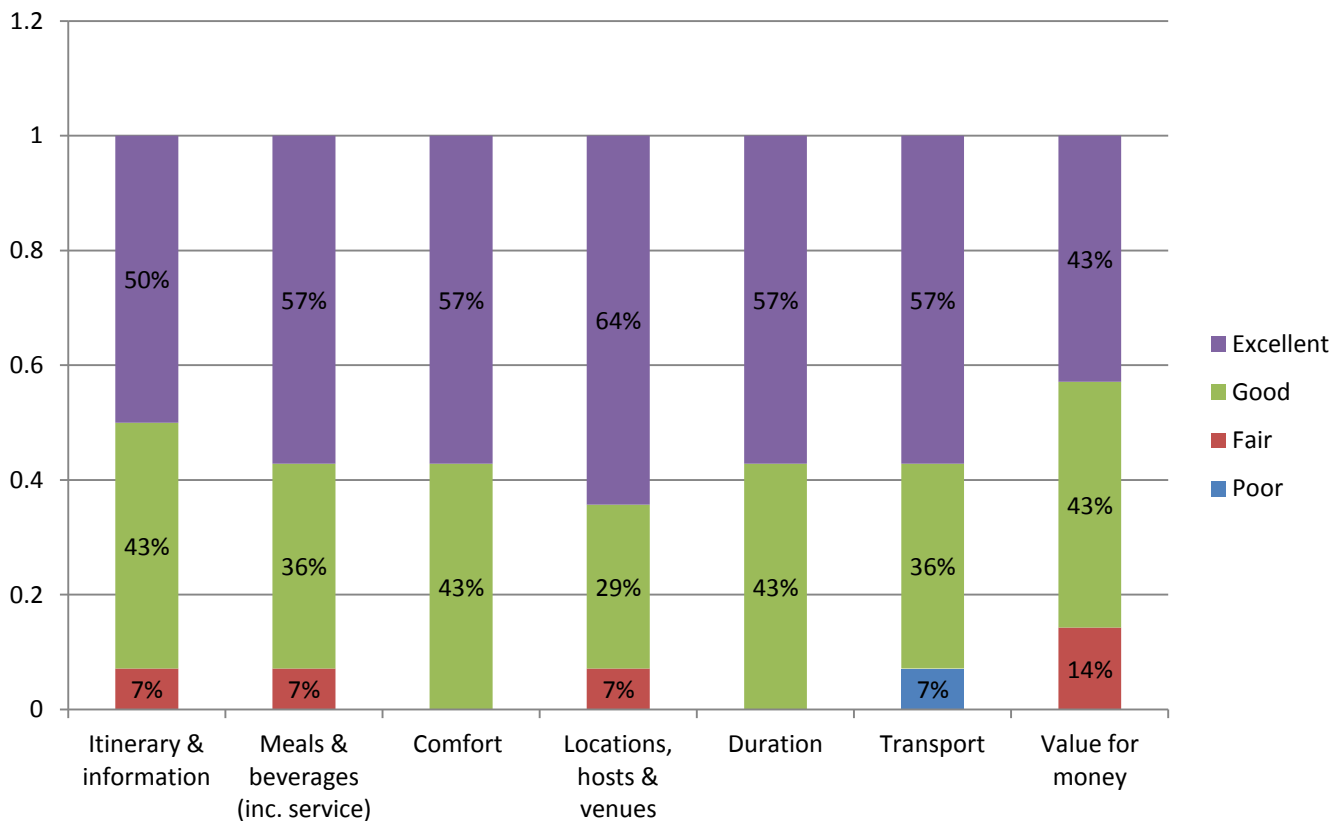


Figure 4. Overall rating of the Post-Symposium Technical Tour

- “I expected a lot more from the post symposium tour. I would have liked to focus more on local growing practices, especially irrigation scheduling, fertilization, plastic covers, etc. Management of labour and productivity of workers in the field is also something we can learn a lot from you.” South African Grower
- “I did not attend the entire day on the Saturday, but did think it may have been a very long day for some delegates who were on the bus at 9am, I think that’s when it started, and we only got back to our hotels late on the Sat night after a wonderful evening at Tabletop Vineyard. It was a great evening, food and company exceptional, but would have been a long day for those who had been on tour all day.” Australian Sponsor

## 7ITGS Technical Program Survey Results

The delivery of the technical program was first class for this event. Delegates sang praises to the Organising Committee as to how well the technical program was managed, in respect to quality of presentations, content and adherence to timing of each Session. The 7ITGS Organising Committee was extremely mindful of how the program would be run inside the auditorium, and had a number of rehearsals with Mildura Art Centre technical staff prior to the event. The results below (Figure 5) really do speak for themselves, with the highest majority of delegates rating the Sessions 1-9 as "Good" or "Excellent".

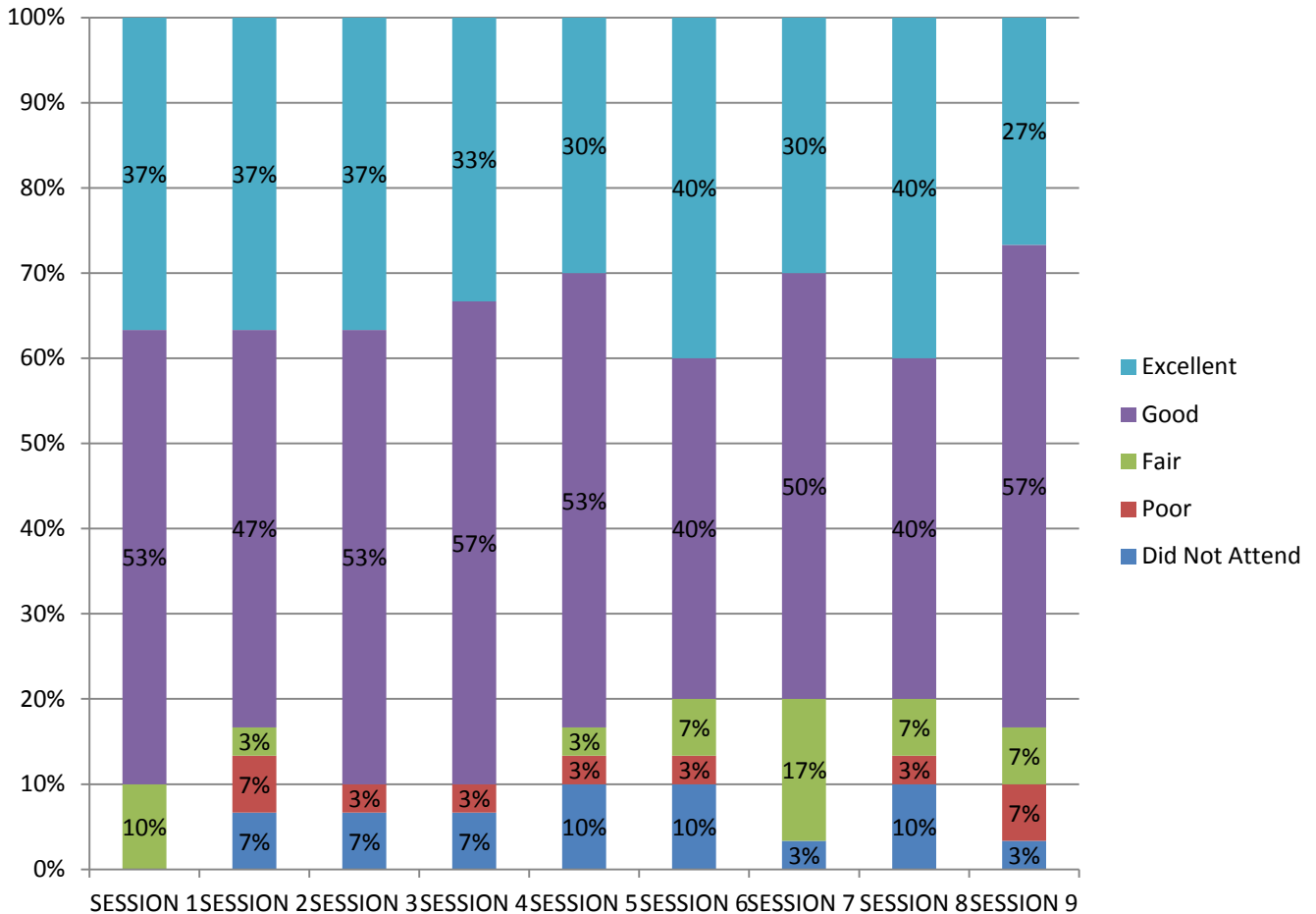


Figure 5. Quality of each 7ITGS Technical Session

Approximately 95% of those surveyed rated the quality of the Oral Presentations as "Good" or "Excellent"

- "references to actual grower experiences needs to be included at all times to show relevance." Australian Exporter
- "Wide range of quality" Israel, Oral Presenter
- "Mixed bunch - some were really good and others missed the mark - but that is normal; not really impressed by some of the sales pitches.....and not sure how you could avoid that." Australian Researcher
- "Few of them might have been too commercial." Chile Oral Presenter

## 7ITGS Key Note Speaker Presentations

When summarising the results of the Key Note Speaker presentations, we have aimed to simply compare the overall performances of each. Some of the presentations were scrutinised (in the additional comments received), however this criticism did not translate when looking at the individual ratings of each speaker. As you can see in Figure 6, the speakers performed quite equally in respect to the subject matter delivered and the quality of their presentations.

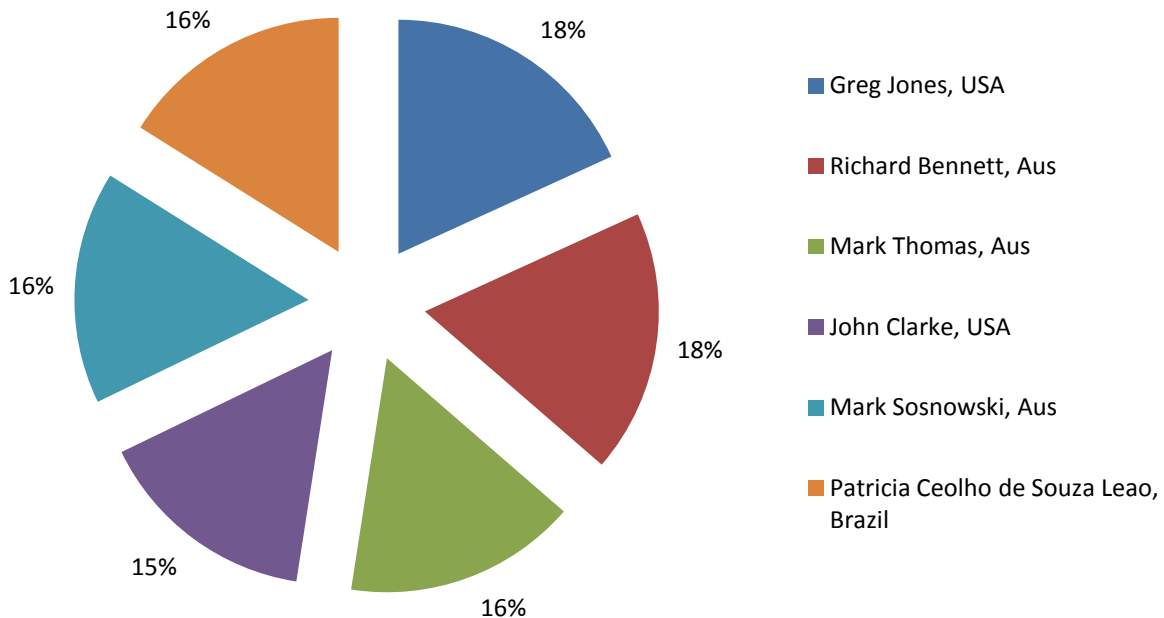


Figure 6. Overall satisfaction for each Key Note Speaker presentation

### Generic Stats from Feedback Evaluation:

- 60% of delegates rated their overall Symposium as "Excellent"
- 30% of those who attended the Symposium, have attended previously
- 60% agreed the Symposium was good value for money
- 100% were satisfied with the level of communication received from 7ITGS Organising Committee
- 65% Completed their registrations online and found the system to be "Easy & Straightforward"
- The remaining 35% who purchased registrations via credit card still rated their experience with ATGA as very high
- 100% of those surveyed rated the Registration Desk staff throughout the event as "Good" or "Excellent"

### General Comments / Feedback for 7ITGS Organising Committee:

- "Adherence to time was excellent. Excellent question time for panels" Researcher
- "Slick and personable - informality made it a great event." Australian Poster Presenter
- "Rowena was brilliant with her communication skills prior and during the event. I did have several questions before the symposium, and she was always very prompt with her responses. Was wonderful assisting me registering colleagues as the online registration was a nightmare. During the event she organised transport for myself and a colleague, which she really didn't have to but was always so obliging and willing to help. Was always checking we were happy with the positioning of our banner during the symposium to make

sure we got the exposure we had hoped to get. So thanks Rowena for your kindness, consideration and professional attitude prior, during and after the event.” Australian Sponsor

- “Excellent in all programs especially field tour.” Taiwan Corporate Representative
- “Very grateful for all the hard work, effort and friendly environment” Chile Corporate Representative
- “The questionnaire is a wee bit late? The conference was about 3.5 months ago...” Australian Researcher
- “a great event, a great location, a good balance between science and practical applications, well attended by a mix of growers, consultants, industry and research. Well done.” Australian Sponsor
- “Well done for a fantastic symposium” South Africa Grower
- “Excellent preparation and coordination of the symposium. Very cordial and cooperative staff” Chile Corporate Representative

### **Suggestions for the Italian Organising Committee (8ITGS):**

- “Good luck for trying to beat the Australians” South Africa Grower
- “Keep it high quality but simple, even if that limits the number of delegates. By quality I don't mean expensive, but quality symposium venue, nearby accommodation, good transport if necessary. Conferences like this are best kept to less than 2-300 delegates, pref only 150.” Australia Oral Presenter
- “Standard of technical contributions to be lifted” Chile, Corporate Representative
- “This conference will be a hard act to follow!” Australia Researcher
- “Scientific committee should have a wider global representation. Industry should have a role but scientific innovation should be more pronounce” Israel Oral Presenter
- “Soilless cultivation technology is amazing.” Taiwan Corporate Representative
- “Have sample stock available when referencing varieties/. have more commercial involvement from breeders, growers, buyers, etc.” Australian Exporter
- “Copy most of Mildura's, but give it an Italian style.” Australian Poster Presenter

## Learning & Reflection

While the event was hailed a great success by the majority of speakers, sponsors and participants, the 7ITGS Organising Committee experienced a few challenges which can only be improved upon for future events.

Due to the industry being geographically spread across Australia, completing a technical and tour program to meet everyone's requirements was always going to pose a few problems, The timing of hosting the event was critical, and a number of factors were considered when establishing the final dates. Being held during Harvest would see minimal participation from local growers, whilst events outside of Harvest meant there was very little for international visitors to see on the vines during the post symposium tour. Initially there was some discussion towards having the Symposium in Mildura, and the post Symposium in Queensland (as they were harvesting), however this was deemed to be too expensive for the delegates who would be required to pay additional interstate airfares and accommodation.

Administrative tasks such as "thank you" letters for oral presenters, key note speakers, sponsors and delegates should have been completed prior to the commencement of the event, in order to have available as soon as the event concluded. The same should be said for the Evaluation Feedback Survey, which was slow to reach delegates and many had moved on to other avenues of their businesses.

However, in saying this we should bear in mind that the ATGA was the first to undertake a formal evaluation process of the Symposium, and the responses received were valuable for the 7ITGS Organising Committee members. Much feedback will also be provided to the Italian organisers of the 8<sup>th</sup> International Table Grape Symposium as they commence planning of the event.

Informal feedback received from a number of supply chain partners suggest there are many organisations and growers who would like to be more closely aligned with the ATGA in the future, either by supporting events or by simply attending to keep abreast of information being extended to the table grape growing community.



## Appendices

*Appendix 1: 7th International Table Grape Symposium Proceedings*

<http://www.7itgs2014.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/ATGA-Symposium-FINAL-WEB-Version.pdf>

*Appendix 2: Sponsorship Prospectus*

Pages 17-32

*Appendix 3: Media generated*

<http://www.7itgs2014.org/information/news-media/>

*Appendix 4: Symposium Evaluation Form*

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1OKP\\_BEDOHXpnlh6QPIP1rKZb6hNB0i8UK7WGy11aY/viewform?edit\\_requeste d=true#](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1OKP_BEDOHXpnlh6QPIP1rKZb6hNB0i8UK7WGy11aY/viewform?edit_requeste d=true#)

*Appendix 5: Thank-you Letter*

Page 25

*Appendix 6: Technical Tour Itinerary*

Pages 26-32

*Appendix 7: Shuttle Bus Timetable*

Pages 33-34

*Appendix 8: Presenter Abstracts (approved only)*

<http://www.7itgs2014.org/presentations/>

*Appendix 9: Promotional Poster*

[http://www.7itgs2014.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/poster\\_final\\_a4.pdf](http://www.7itgs2014.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/poster_final_a4.pdf)

*Appendix 10: 2014 Delegate Directory*

<http://www.7itgs2014.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/2014-7ITGS-Delegate-Directory.pdf>

*Appendix 11. Post Symposium Technical Tour Report*

Pages 35-37

*Appendix 12. The Vine magazine (7ITGS edition)*

[http://www.australiangrapes.com.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/18989/2005\\_JAN-MAR.pdf](http://www.australiangrapes.com.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/18989/2005_JAN-MAR.pdf)

*Appendix 13. Event Photos*

<http://www.7itgs2014.org/symposium-photos/>



7ITGS2014

## SPONSORSHIP PROSPECTUS

**11 - 14 November, 2014**

*(Followed by Technical Tour of Sunraysia)*

The 7th International Table Grape Symposium 2014 (7ITGS2014) is a unique event that provides an excellent opportunity for companies to promote their business to international producers of grapes for the fresh market, scientist and allied industries. This year is especially significant in that it marks the event's 20th anniversary! The meeting that launched a legacy of table grape research and extension was held in Anaheim, California USA in 1994 — were you there?

We invite you to consider sponsoring the Symposium, an event that offers broad exposure through media, visibility and brand identification for your business leading up to and following the formal proceedings taking place this November.

We are targeting approximately 300 attendees over the three-day Symposium and anticipate two coaches for the technical tours. Attendance has traditionally been supported by delegates from the following countries: Australia, United States of America, Peru, Chile, Mexico, Brazil, Middle East, Europe, South Africa, Canada, Argentina and South America, India and Asia.

### Event Details

Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> November	5:30pm - 7:30pm	Sun-World Welcome Function,
Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup> November	8:30am - 5:10pm	Valent Scientific Program commences,
	6:30pm - 11:30pm	Perfection Fresh Gala Dinner,
Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup> November	8:30am - 4:00pm	Valent Scientific Program,
	4.10pm – 6.10pm	Sheehan Australia Poster Session,
Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> November	8:30am - 3:00pm	Valent Scientific Program,
	6:30pm - 10:30pm	GrapeCo Paddle Steamer Dinner Cruise,
Saturday 15 <sup>th</sup> November	8.00am - 6.00pm	Uvasys Victorian Technical Tour,
	6.30pm - 10.30pm	Rustic Italian Dinner,
Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup> November	8.00am - 3.00pm	Uvasys Victorian Technical Tour,
	12.15pm-1.15pm	Netafim Palms Vineyard Luncheon,

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*Event details & times subject to change.*

## Media and Event Promotion

The event is significant for the Mildura region and is promoted via the ATGA website [www.australiangrapes.com.au](http://www.australiangrapes.com.au) and other event websites.

7ITGS2014 will be promoted to Australian table grape grower associations, sponsor logos will appear on 7ITGS2014 website [www.7itgs2014.org](http://www.7itgs2014.org) and will be mentioned in social media - facebook and twitter pages.

Promotion will include but not be limited to: email to a database of approximately 1500 international industry contacts, local print and digital media will cover the event; key stories will appear in *The Vine* magazine and other industry publications as appropriate.

### *The Vine* Magazine

The symposium will feature in the January 2015 edition of *The Vine*; sponsors will be acknowledged in this publication. *The Vine* is a guaranteed target audience, delivered to approximately 1,000 Australian commercial table grape, dried grape, prune and dried tree fruit growers. Advertising for this magazine is sold separately.

Contact the editor Paula Smith for information. [Email: drpsmith@bigpond.com](mailto:drpsmith@bigpond.com)

### Further Information

**Rowena Norris:**

*Communications Manager, Australian Table Grape Association*

33 Madden Ave Mildura 3500

Mobile: +61 439 829 184

[Email: rowena.norris@ncable.com.au](mailto:rowena.norris@ncable.com.au)

7ITGS2014

## INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

AUSTRALIAN DOLLARS (*Amounts are GST EXCLUSIVE*)

7ITGS2014

## PLATINUM SPONSOR



*Proudly filled by Valent BioSciences Corporation, May 2013*

7ITGS2014

## WELCOME FUNCTION



*Proudly filled by Sun World International, June 2013*

7ITGS2014

## SYMPOSIUM GALA DINNER



*Proudly filled by Perfection Fresh, May 2013*

7ITGS2014

## POSTER SESSION



*Proudly filled by Sheehan Australia, September 2014*

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**GrapeCo.**

Proudly filled by **GrapeCo**, Aug 2014

**UVASYS**

Proudly sponsored by **UVASYS**, July 2013 “Victorian Technical Tour Sponsor”

**NETAFIM™**

Proudly sponsored by **Netafim**, August 2014 “Netafim Palms Vineyard Luncheon Sponsor”



Proudly sponsored by **OCP**, September 2014 “Organic Crop Protectants Morning Tea Sponsor”

## \$15,000 GOLD SPONSORS

- Two complimentary full registrations (including Welcome Function, 3 day Formal Scientific Program/catering, Paddle Steamer Cruise and Gala Dinner)
- Acknowledgement at Symposium Welcome Function
- Logo on sponsor acknowledgement slides during the Scientific Program
- Logo on on-site signage
- Sponsor to provide banner for display either in catering area or theatre foyer
- Logo on Symposium website sponsor page (non-linked)
- Literature available to delegates on a table (provided)



Proudly sponsored by **Costa Group**, Aug 2014

3 opportunities in this sponsor category in total – **2 remaining opportunities AVAILABLE**

**\$10,000**

## **SILVER SPONSORS**

### *4 opportunities in this sponsor category*

- One complimentary full registration (including Welcome Function, 3 day Formal Scientific Program/catering, Paddle Steamer Cruise and Gala Dinner)
- Acknowledgement at Symposium Welcome Function
- Logo on sponsor acknowledgement slides during the Scientific Program (small)
- Logo on on-site signage (small)
- Logo on Symposium website sponsor page (non linked)
- Literature available to delegates on a table (provided)
- Sponsor to provide banner for display either in catering area or foyer
- Attendee names and email (PDF format)

**\$5,000**

## **BRONZE SPONSORS**

- Two complimentary registrations for the three day Formal Scientific Program including catering
- Acknowledgement at Symposium Welcome Function
- Logo on sponsor acknowledgement slides during the Scientific Program (small)
- Logo on on-site signage (small)
- Sponsor to provide banner for display either in catering area or theatre foyer
- Logo on Symposium website sponsor page (non-linked)
- Attendee names and email (PDF format)



*Proudly sponsored by **UVASYS**, July 2013*

*6 opportunities in this sponsor category in total – 5 remaining opportunities AVAILABLE*

**\$3,500**

## **SYMPOSIUM GALA DINNER ENTERTAINMENT**

Sponsorship to assist expenses incurred for the evening entertainment Mr Tom Berger-illusionist would be welcome.

- One complimentary dinner ticket for the sponsor's representative or sponsor's client/prospect
- Acknowledgement in the Symposium Proceedings
- Logo on sponsor acknowledgement slides during the Scientific Program
- Sponsor to provide banner for display in prominent position

## **Sponsorship Applications and Conditions**

- Sponsorship applications must be received on the Official Application Contract Form. A tax invoice will be issued upon receipt of this application form
- Full payment, inclusive of GST must be made within seven days from date of invoice
- Sponsorship will not be assigned without a signed application and full payment upon receipt of invoice
- Symposium organisers reserve the right at their total discretion to decline any application
- All payments, inclusive of GST added to the sponsorship level must be made in Australian Dollars. See payment details on application form
- Payment can be made via cheque, bank transfer or credit card

If the full payment is not received, the Australian Table Grape Association (ATGA) on behalf of the 7ITGS2014 Organising Committee has the right to review the sponsorship commitment and withdraw the application

### ***Cheques***

- Please make all cheques payable to: **ATGA**
- Mail to the ATGA Office: 33 Madden Ave Mildura Victoria 3500

### ***EFT payments***

Direct payment to: Australian Table Grape Association BSB: 063-739

**ITGS2014**

**PROUD SUPPORTERS & PARTNERS**

The 7<sup>th</sup> International Table Grape Symposium (7ITGS2014) is proudly presented by the Australian Table Grape Association (ATGA).



**Supported by Platinum Sponsor**



The 7ITGS2014 Planning Committee acknowledges financial contribution by Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) via the national table grape research and development (R&D) levy and industry contributions with the Australian Government providing matched funding for all HAL's R&D activities.

Further Information: Australian Table Grape Association Inc.

Phone: +61 3 5021 5718

Fax: +61 3 4009 0036

Email: [atga@ncable.com.au](mailto:atga@ncable.com.au)

Website: [www.australiangrapes.com.au](http://www.australiangrapes.com.au)

**Symposium website: [www.7ITGS2014.org](http://www.7ITGS2014.org)**

7ITGS2014 Planning Committee reserves the right to update information as necessary

Information accurate at the time of printing, May 2014



**Valent Biosciences Corporation**

Attention: Johaan Pienaar  
870 Technology Way  
Libertyville, Illinois 60048  
United States of America

28<sup>th</sup> January 2015

Dear Johaan and the Valent Biosciences Team,

The 7ITGS Organising Committee wish you a Happy New Year and fantastic 2015!

For over 20 years, Valent Biosciences have proudly aligned themselves with the International Table Grape Symposium as partner and platinum sponsor, and I write to formally thank you for your continued support of this event and making it truly spectacular for our delegates.

While the 7ITGS event held in Mildura, Australia has now passed, it is important for us to update you on a few matters. We have spent much time over the last few weeks adding the finishing touches to the 7ITGS2014 Website. The following information is now available for you to download at the web addresses below:

- Authorised oral presentations <http://www.7itgs2014.org/presentations/>
- Electronic 7ITGS proceedings <http://www.7itgs2014.org/7itgs-e-proceedings/> (Printed copies of the Proceedings are available for purchase. Please email your order request to [7itgs2014@gmail.com](mailto:7itgs2014@gmail.com) by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2015.)
- Symposium and Social Event Photos <http://www.7itgs2014.org/mac-symposium-photos/>
- 2014 Delegate Directory <http://www.7itgs2014.org/2014-delegate-directory/>

The 7ITGS Organising Committee encourage all participants to complete a short, 5-10 minute online survey to help provide some valuable feedback about the 7ITGS event(s) you attended. Simply visit (<http://www.7itgs2014.org/7itgs-evaluation-form/>) to download the survey from our Website. **Please Note: survey will close Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> February.**

The Symposium saw 327 official delegates from 18 different countries register to attend the event, and we trust that there were been some great business and networking opportunities that have emerged from attending this Symposium.

We look forward to the next meeting, which is tentatively planned for Italy in 2018.

Yours Sincerely,

7ITGS Organising Committee



# **7<sup>th</sup> International Table Grape Symposium**

Mildura Victoria, Australia

## **Welcome to the Uvasys Victorian Post Symposium Technical Tour**

**15th & 16th November, 2014**

### **Departure Times and Location:**

**Saturday 15th Nov - 8:15am - the Quality Grand Hotel**

(please be waiting out the front of Hotel on 7th Street at 8.00am)

The Bus will return delegates to the Hotel at approximately 11.00pm,  
following dinner

**Sunday 16th Nov - 8.30am - the Quality Grand Hotel**

**UVASYS**

## Day 1 – Paringi, Euston, Hattah National Parks/Vineyard Dinner

- 8.15am** Delegates will need to be outside the Quality Hotel Grand Mildura at 8.00am for an 8.15am departure. Please stand on the footpath as buses will not wait for delegates.
- 9.00am** Arrive at Windtan Farms (Barry Pedersen) on Paringi Road NSW.  
Morning Tea, Vineyard Tour and a fungicide spray unit demonstration by Interlink Power Tube Sprayer.  
*Morning tea sponsored by OCP (Organic Crop Protectants) OCP have been established since 1991. They are leading manufacturers and distributors of crop protectants and nutritional product.*
- 11.15am** Travel 45mins to Euston.
- 12.00pm** Lunch at Euston Club Resort.
- 2.00pm** Travel to Euston Lock, Weir 15 & Cooling Towers off Pethard Road.
- 3.00pm** Depart 1 1/4hr drive to Hattah-Kullkyne National Park. Afternoon Tea will be served as a “lunch box” option on bus.
- 4.15pm** Hattah-Kulkyne National Parks (Wildlife, Sunset).
- 5.45pm** Depart Hattah-Kulkyne National Parks travelling towards to Mildura.
- 7.00pm** Arrive Table Top Grapes for a relaxed evening of a rustic Italian dinner under the vines.
- 10.30pm** Return to the Quality Grand Hotel.

**Windtan Farms** – Barry Pedersen is a producer of premium fresh fruit from his 100 acre (40 Hectares) vineyard growing premium varieties of Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Crimson along with Sunworld™ varieties of table grapes for many years and is a very passionate grower.

Interlink are global leaders in horticultural sprayers. Peter McWilliams made his first sprayer 1950s and has been producing cutting edge units. Since 1998 and the introduction of the Power Tube spray unit, the end-products are seen on many properties throughout the world.

Power Tube spray unit is a unique designed sprayer delivering fungicides more effectively into the canopy.

**The Euston Club Resort** – The Euston Club Resort is a popular destination for locals and tourists.

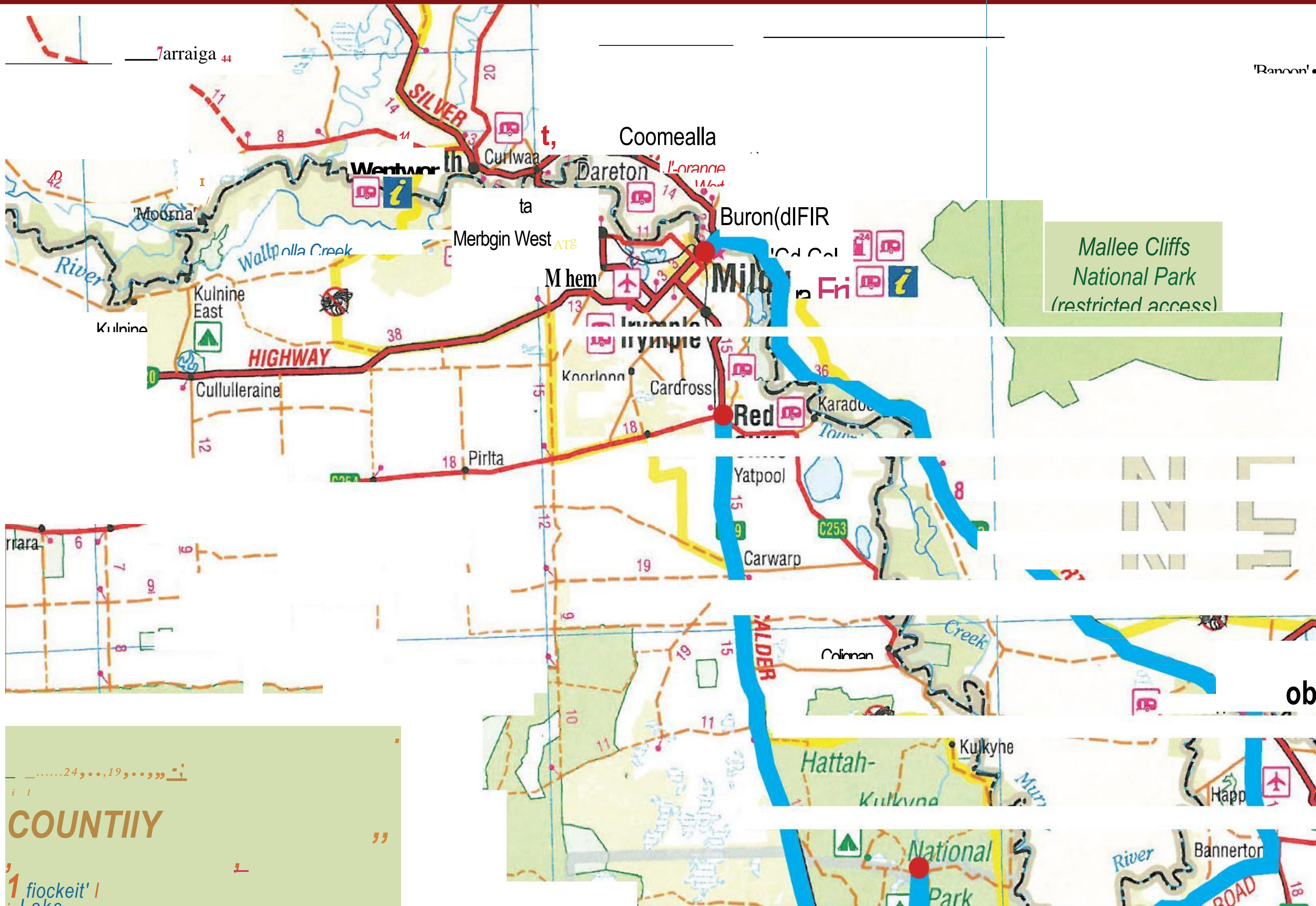
**Weir 15** – The weir was constructed in 1935 and has a daily water flow of 32,000 Megalitres per day.

navigation of river cargo but today its main industry is tourism.

**Hattah-Kulkyne National Parks** – Hattah-Kulkyne National Parks including the habitat of the threatened Malleefowl and open native pine woodland. Superbly scenic and searing summers. Camping, walking, biking and fishing. Seasonally filled by creeks connected to the Murrumbidgee River.

**Table Top Grapes** – In 1972 Gino & Elin moved from professional positions to pursue full time work in the wine industry to produce naturally flavor dried fruit that is a premium table grapes and were one of the first to be produced. They are multiple award-winning producers with a reputation for quality without flooding.





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## Day 2 – Irymple DEPI, Palms Vineyard, Wakefield Transport Depot, Airport

Delegates whom wish to be dropped to the Mildura Airport at 3pm will need to check-out of their hotel room and bring all their luggage with them on the bus on Sunday morning.

**8.30am** Delegates will need to be outside the Quality Hotel Grand Mildura (on 7th Street) for an 8.30am departure.

Travel to Irymple DEPI Research Centre. Speeches from Maxine Schache (DEPI) , Dale Unwin (DEPI) and Owen Russell (LMW).

**8.45am** Regional Table Grape production overview, Soil Pits. The tour party will be divided into three groups

**10.15am** Morning tea

**10.30am** Temperature/CO2 Chamber trials

**11.15am** Travel to Palms Vineyard (John Argiro), 5th Street Merbein. Visit under-cover vineyard set-up, trellising and packing shed

**12.30pm** Palms Vineyard Luncheon

*Sponsored by Netafim - Netafim is global leader in smart drip and micro-irrigation solutions since 1965 where the company started in the Israel's Hegev desert.*

**1.45pm** Travel to Wakefield Transport Depot, Merbein to review Fumigation and Cool rooms

**3pm** Mildura Airport Drop-off

**3.30pm** Return to Quality Grand Hotel, Mildura

**DEPI (Department of Environment and** nationally and internationally. The centre sustainability through its works with pest a whole farm planning. DEPI researchers are been established as a “Centre of Expertise”

**Palms Vineyard** – John and Sandra Argiro 300 acre property is planted to Crimson, Me exported to China and are accredited grower 50+ acres table grapes under a pergola stru

**Wakefield Transport Depot** – Wakefield’s T provider for containerized cargo in the Sunra South-Eastern Australia. The site is ISO 9002 imported goods. During January-April trained i

**Ge**

Saturday weather forecast - 26 degrees Cel  
Some Hotels may provide an umbrella if you

Sunday weather forecast – 26 degrees Cels

A sunhat, sunscreen, sunglasses are recom  
for evening event.

Growth stage in the vineyard – Fruit-Set

Delegates will need to wear boots or sport  
jacket for the cool of the evening on the Satu

Toilet facilities at most stops are available, h

Bottled water will be available on the bus

*Thank you to our sponsors*

Victorian Post Symposium Tour sponsor



Vineyard Morning Tea sponsor



Vineyard Morning Tea sponsor





Product sponsors



In kind support



**TUESDAY 11TH NOVEMBER 2014**

Mercure	Quality Grand	Mildura Art Centre
3.15pm	3.20pm	3.30pm
3.45pm	3.50pm	4.00pm
4.15pm	4.20pm	4.30pm
4.25pm	4.30pm	4.40pm
4.35pm	4.40pm	4.50pm
4.45pm	4.50pm	5.00pm
4.55pm	5.00pm	5.10pm

Meeting point Chaffey Avenue Bus Stop ONLY CBD Hotels

6.30pm	6.40-6.50pm
7.00pm	7.10-7.20pm
7.30pm	7.40-7.50pm
7.45pm	7.55-8.05pm

**THURSDAY 13TH NOVEMBER 2014**

Mercure	Quality Grand	Mildura Art Centre
7.15am	7.20am	7.30am
7.25am	7.30am	7.40am
7.35am	7.40am	7.50am
7.45am	7.50am	8.00am
7.55am	8.00am	8.10am

4.30pm	4.40-4.50pm
5.00pm	5.10-5.20pm
5.30pm	5.40-5.50pm
6.00pm	6.10-6.20pm
6.15pm	6.25-6.35pm
6.30pm	6.40-6.50pm

**WEDNESDAY 12TH NOVEMBER 2014**

Mercure	Quality Grand	Mildura Art Centre
7.15am	7.20am	7.30am
7.25am	7.30am	7.40am
7.35am	7.40am	7.50am
7.45am	7.50am	8.00am
7.55am	8.00am	8.10am

5.45pm	5.55-6.05pm
6.00pm	6.10-6.20pm
6.15pm	6.25-6.35pm

**FRIDAY 14TH NOVEMBER 2014**

Mercure	Quality Grand	Mildura Art Centre
7.25am	7.30am	7.40am
7.35am	7.40am	7.50am
7.45am	7.50am	8.00am
7.55am	8.00am	8.10am

1.45pm	1.55-2.05pm
2.00pm	2.10-2.20pm
2.15pm	2.25-2.35pm

\*Note: For delegates using the shuttle service, the 7ITGS Bus will be marked CHARTER. All other buses are Public Service Buses.

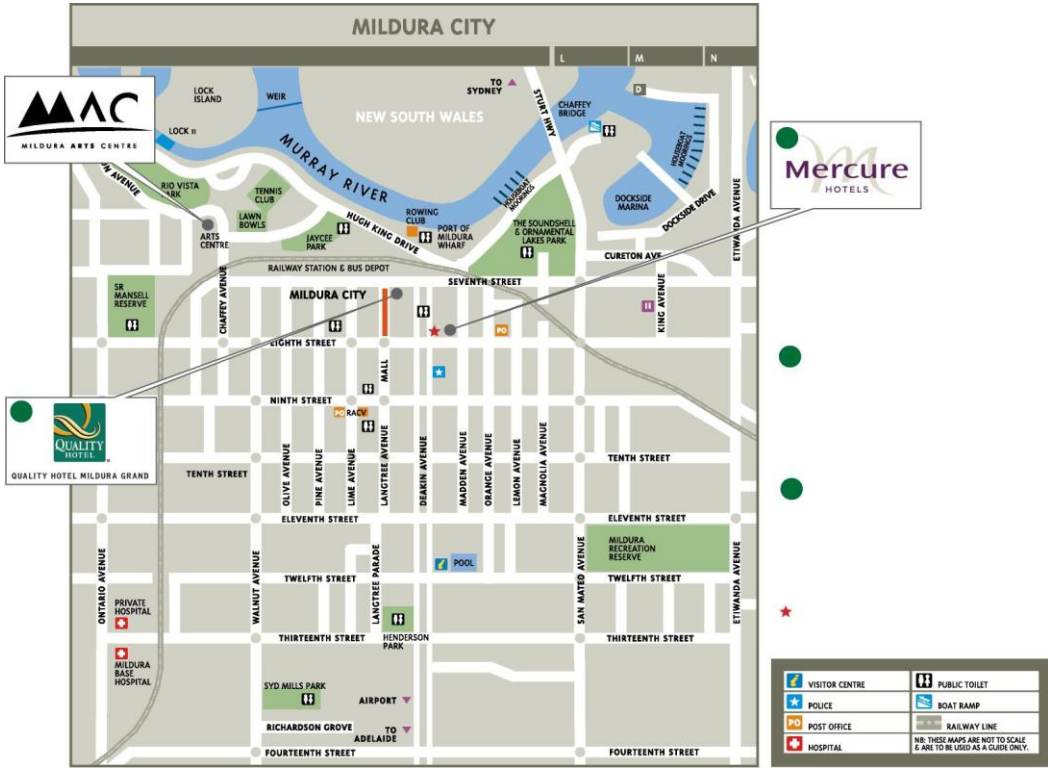


**7<sup>th</sup> International Table Grape Symposium**

Mildura Victoria, Australia

**12-14 November. 2014**

**Bus Schedule**



## **7ITGS Technical Tour Report – by Jacinta Allen-Gange**

While technical, research and market information is always the headline focus of the table grape industry's premier international event, for many delegates and visitors the most memorable highlight is the chance to get out in the field and explore their industry within a completely new context.

The International Table Grape Symposium is held only every three to four years, and is notable for the presentations of the world's leading researchers and innovators.

However, it's the post-symposium tour that is an equally-anticipated opportunity for growers, researchers, exporters or service industry operators – a chance to pull on the boots and head into the vineyard for a fascinating new perspective on the industry.

Such was the experience of delegates opting to undertake the Technical Tour weekend following Australia's hosting of the seventh International Table Grape Symposium in November.

After four intensive days of talk and information at the Mildura symposium, the opportunity to break out of the conference venues and look "across the fence" was a welcome shift to a more hands-on focus – and the 60 delegates who elected to take part were not disappointed.

For many, it was an opportunity to get close to the productive, operational and cultural aspects of their own industry within a new region and country. The two-day Tour Program took in a wide area of the Mildura growing region and provided the opportunity to compare and contrast international experiences and practices from a variety of perspectives.

The first stop by the tour bus on day one was on Barry Pedersen's property on the banks of the Murray River at Paringi. With a kilometre of river frontage and rolling hills, the sight of kangaroos and emus thrilled delegates during a nature walk of the picturesque property. Barry's 26 hectares of Flame Seedless, Menindee Seedless, Crimson Seedless, Sadle Seedless and Midnight Beauty are planted along with new plantings of Adora Seedless. The property is operated under both dripper and low-level spray irrigation, which are used at various times of the year to best meet the needs of the vines. Barry is a firm believer in the use of professional entomology and agronomy services in his efforts to maximise production. He believes the expert input allows him to ensure the correct balance of nutrient availability to the vines, while minimising chemical application and cost.

The visit to the Pedersen property also included a demonstration by innovative local Mildura region product developer Interlink. The director Peter McWilliams manufactured his first sprayer in 1958 and the company is now a global leader in horticultural spray equipment. Interlink's Power Tube spraying system was demonstrated, and presents a major advance on traditional multi-row sprayers. It is designed to provide more comprehensive coverage and wetting of fruit through a combination of power and droplet control. The unique design of the Power Tube air delivery system creates the perfect balance between air and pressure. Air is catapulted off the sidewall of the "power tube" diffuser, delivering 20-times more air than a ducted sprayer.

Delegates enjoyed lunch at the Euston Club Resort, before visiting the Euston Weir and Robinvale Pumping Station. Ailsa Willis, Lower Murray Water's Engineer - Irrigation Operations and Graeme Maloney from LMW, guided the tour. The new Robinvale High Pressure System has been in use since October 2010, replacing an old channel and gravity pipeline system with a high pressure fully pipelined network. The pump station was replaced and during peak demand can deliver up to 3,600L/s in a high-pressure system. It means growers no longer need their own pump to irrigate and costs associated with water delivery and power consumption are reduced. For many of the

international delegates present, the morning's travel had provided an insight into the dominant arid environmental conditions in the Mildura region – and many were intrigued with the detail of the management of the Goulburn Murray system. In particular, it provided deeper appreciation of the delicate balancing act that provides a water supply capable of maintaining permanent plantings in the harsh climatic conditions.

The tour moved on to Robinvale – one of Australia's largest table grape growing regions with approximately 10,000 acres under vine. The visit provided a significant insight into the Australian industry, particularly for delegates from countries such as Egypt, Chile and Peru, where table grapes are a growing sector, but there has been only limited information exchange with Australia in the past. The tour group looked at various table grape trellis structures before visiting Nick Muraca's property for a vineyard tour. Nick and his son Peter grow 50 acres of Menindee, Crimson and Thompson Seedless and Nick willingly fielded questions from interested delegates on a diversity of topics. Of particular interest were the Murray Valley's industry structures, with our local, regional and national bodies, and the effectiveness of these structures in supporting industry development and grower interests. Questions also related to practical and technical vineyard matters, illustrating the value of international conferences such as the symposium in providing a conduit for information and technology transfer between growers and industry personnel from all parts of the world.

The symposium tour continued to mix the opportunity for industry insight with an element of tourism, with a visit to the Hattah Lakes. Again, this was a popular stop-off for the international delegates, who were keen to maximise their opportunities to catch a glimpse of local flora and fauna. The 48,000 hectare national park contains more than 200 bird species, including the threatened Malleefowl.

In the evening, delegates were treated to the unique dining experience of Gino and Elina Garreffa's Red Cliffs property, Tabletop Grapes. An exclusive rustic Italian feast and an undoubted Symposium highlight.

A visit to the Department of Primary Industries site at Irymple was the first port of call on the second day of the tour. Delegates were divided into two groups to maximise the opportunity to inspect sites and question researchers involved in key projects being run by the DEPI.

The visit followed a topical point of discussion at the symposium around the current and future influence of climate change and the opportunities to adapt production methods appropriately. A DEPI project by researchers at Mildura is examining the effect of climate change on grape production. The groups inspected the open-top chambers, which are being used to simulate global warming under various scenarios and examine the impacts of elevated CO<sub>2</sub> on vines.

A separate demonstration by scientist Maxine Schache provided delegates with an insight on the prevalent soil types in the Mildura region, and the challenges it provides in table grape production. The demonstration was around a soil profile pit, and delegates heard a presentation by Maxine about the impacts of limestone and salinity on table grape production and the value of workshops allowing growers to do application efficiency assessments to evaluate and compare their irrigation performance. The importance of correct irrigation management and monitoring, drew much interest from delegates, particularly in relation to the district-wide drainage system in place in Sunrayia to manage salinity issues. As a result of the prevailing soil types, the salinity threat resulted in the drainage system being installed from the 1930s.

A highlight of the second day was a visit to the property of Merbein South growers John and Sandra Argiro and family. The Argiros' 300 acre property is planted to Crimson, Menindee, Sable and Flame and they are successful export operators into China and the wider Asian region. For the past five years, Palms Vineyards has successfully trial grown more than 50 acres of table grapes

under a pergola structure system. The visiting group inspected the Argiros' hot-house production system for table grapes, which effectively allows production to be brought forward by 1 to 2 weeks. It effectively creates a new production zone into the Murray region production calendar, and drew much interest from delegates about the potential for seasonal variation.

The tour moved on to the region's leading transport and logistics provider for containerised cargo, Wakefield Transport at Merbein. Wakefields offers one of the largest cold storage facilities in south eastern Australia, and is approved for the packing and unpacking of exports and imports.

To round off the cultural opportunities provided by the tour, delegates were offered the chance to visit the junction of Australia's two longest rivers – the Murray and Darling rivers – 20 kilometres away at Wentworth.

The post-symposium tour was an important addition to the overall symposium event and was a key element in allowing the region to make the most of this unique opportunity. It was the first time the event has been held in Australia, and drew speakers, leading scientific researchers and industry representatives from more than 40 countries, including the US, Brazil, Italy, Spain and Israel. The symposium was a wonderful opportunity for the Australian industry and the Mildura region, in showcasing the strengths and opportunities of each to an interested and respected audience.

We look forward to the next meeting, which is planned for Italy in 2018.