

In-Field Ag Pty Ltd  
ABN 74 127 523 620  
10/24 Bridge Street  
Balhannah SA 5242 Australia

Tel: +61 8 8388 4948  
Fax: +61 8 8388 4984  
www.infield.com.au  
info@infield.com.au



## All things infield

30 April 2009

### VINTAGE '09

Vintage is a very personal journey. An ability to work under pressure is a prerequisite. Sitting at my desk they all rush by; staff, winery reps and vineyard owners, all with a renewed sense of purpose.

Tom has this to share:

*Over the past several years, Infield's operations manager, Sarah Paschke, has been cultivating some great relationships with key staff at several wineries. These relationships provide a direct line of communication with those responsible for scheduling during vintage. This year these relationships seemed to chime-in with all involved, including our growers, who, I think, benefitted from a more organised and efficient harvesting process.*

*We also increased our machine harvesting capacity with the addition of the latest model Braud harvester, giving Infield the opportunity to look outside the Adelaide Hills Wine Region for harvesting work. However, this was always underpinned by our commitment to continue to give first priority to Adelaide Hills growers.*

*Growers in the South East responded with an extra few weeks of work, and this strategy seemed to fit in well with the timing of vintage in the Adelaide Hills. It has been an enlightening experience for us all to be involved in vintage operations from this perspective.*

*Infield will continue to make long term investment decisions but acknowledges that we can only do this with the continued support of our local client base. I know that you are making similar, and often difficult decisions about your own enterprises too. Infield will always strive to provide a cost-effective solution. Talk to us about any of your agribusiness requirements.*

### TIME FOR A CHANGE

The wine grape industry remains oversupplied, especially when considered on a variety basis, and winery market

intelligence about emerging trends requires significant lead time.

Where growers are experiencing low prices for their fruit, the value of their vineyard assets are forecast to decline. This will be exacerbated if their main variety is not currently in demand and there is no grape supply contract.

With these factors in mind, growers need to give serious consideration to reviewing their businesses and redeveloping their vineyards by planting new varieties, clones and rootstock.

In the event of a recession, wine companies may experience lower sales and will continue to review their grape intake. They may view any opportunity to stop taking your excess grapes favourably, particularly where varieties are no longer fashionable, and support growers who have a suitable site and the willingness to invest in new variety.

Generally speaking, the world of finance has a willingness to consider a well thought out business proposal, and this is where Infield can put its best foot forward, by supplying consulting services to develop a costed business plan to underpin your decision to redevelop. Infield also has the long-standing track record in redeveloping vineyards which have proven to be highly successful and most importantly, cost-effective for its clients.

### COMING TO A VINEYARD NEAR YOU

What is new, spicy and waiting in the wings? The answer is quite a mouthful in more ways than one, Grüner Veltliner, the hip white wine that is tickling the palates of wine lovers across Europe and North America.

Native to Austria, this white varietal produces wines of great charm and elegance with vibrant crisp flavours coupled with an extraordinary spiciness on the back palate. It has been adopted with affection by international wine lovers and writers alike, who neatly sidestep its somewhat wordy name by calling it "Gruener" (pronounced Grooner), or who simply refer to it as the "groovy white".

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Grüner Veltliner's main claim rests with its reputation for making the world's most food-friendly wine, as it is known for marrying superbly with all vegetable dishes. It is for this reason that sommeliers at smart restaurants in Melbourne and Sydney are importing this wine in ever-increasing volumes directly from Austria.

According to industry talk, Grüner Veltliner is tipped to become Australia's next trendy white by capturing the switch in consumer preference once the public starts to get bored with Sauvignon Blanc. Canny growers in Marlborough, NZ are already planting it.

Larry Jacobs and Marc Dobson of Hahndorf Hill Winery imported three clones of this exciting varietal in early 2006. Now the plant material has passed through the Australian quarantine system, it will be planted on a 2 1/2 hectare site currently being developed for the boutique winery, by Infield.

"Grüner Veltliner should do exceptionally well in the Adelaide Hills," said an enthusiastic Jacobs. "With our remarkable diurnal variation of temperature during ripening, the Hills should prove to be the perfect home for this new immigrant."

Infield broke the first turf on the new development in mid-December 2008, and as the soil was ripped open for the first time, it was promptly given some biodynamic attention in the form of a 500 application.

"I've been most impressed with the practical support and service from Infield and, fingers crossed, we should have all the plant material in the ground this coming winter," added Jacobs.

Hahndorf Hill Winery has also grafted the Grüner Veltliner on to existing Chardonnay vines, with the first production of wine expected in 2010.



MID-ROW TREATMENT  
INFIELD PHOTO GALLERY

#### POST VINTAGE MAKEOVER

Following another dry year and feeling the consequences of prolonged heatwaves, it is critical to ensure that vine nutrition and water resources are optimised to meet the demands of your vines. This is the ideal time to be looking to maintaining your vineyard, not only for good returns next season, but to protect your longterm investment.

Pruning - With grapegrowers' attention now turning to pruning, Infield can offer the following assistance:

- > Technical specifications
- > Bud dissection and recommendations
- > Cost effective pre-pruning
- > Experienced hand pruning teams
- > Work supervision

For more information contact:

Michael Macpherson mob. 0417 395 165

Vine nutrition - To provide quality fruit in quantities that meet winery expectations, Infield can assist in all areas of fertiliser application, including:

- > Soil testing and analysis
- > Tissue testing and interpretation
- > Advice on the application of fertiliser, lime, gypsum and organic mulch.

Water resources - Infield is the national distributor for the **METOS®** range of weather, soil moisture monitoring and irrigation automation equipment and can offer a range of equipment to suit your requirements.

Infield also has a team dedicated to irrigation installation and repairs and can assist you with year round monitoring and maintenance.

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ARTICLE & PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF LARRY JACOBS  
HAHANDORF HILL WINERY ADELAIDE HILLS SA

Mid-row treatment - Infield is well-placed to advise you on an integrated package tailored for your vineyard, including:

- > Rotary hoeing
- > Weed spraying
- > Seeding
- > Deep ripping to aid compaction
- > Spreading fertiliser and mulch

This autumn Infield is focussing on the use of Jeffries organic mulching products to condition the soil structure of your vineyard. Jeffries mulches also have a proven ability to conserve soil moisture resulting in large savings in the cost of irrigation. Even a shallow layer can slow down the evaporation process and conserve soil moisture, resulting in the need for less irrigation - an outcome that will benefit every grower.

We believe that there are a number of other cost saving benefits in using Jeffries mulching products including:

- > Improvements to the properties of the soil
- > Reduction in the risk of crop failure by moderating soil moisture and temperate fluctuations
- > Less need for herbicide and fertiliser applications
- > Reduced run-off and nutrient loss
- > Improved soil structure and water infiltration
- > Suppling soil nutrients as they are needed
- > Salinity management
- > Increased biological activity
- > Preventing erosion and water pooling
- > Encourages root establishment and growth

Jeffries organic composts and mulches are manufactured to the highest standards and can boast Australian Standard certification for the elimination of weed seeds and pathogens and organic certification to NASAA standards 5125m.

For further information about our mid-row treatment programs please contact:

Charles Rosback mob. 0417 853 032



#### THE OPTIMIST'S CREED

'Twixt optimist and pessimist  
The difference is droll;  
The optimist the doughnut sees -  
The pessimist the hole.

New York Sun 15/4/1904

#### FAIR COMMENT (INFIELD EDITORIAL)

*Breathing space, at last, after the auto-pilot days of vintage, and once again I have been entrusted with the production of another newsletter, but where to begin? Letters to write, emails to send, and the odd telephone call to make.*

*Casual discussions with colleagues help formulate ideas. Those ideas become words, words become sentences and several edits later they evolve into a useful piece of written prose. It can be a little laborious juggling the financials with creative writing but not entirely without its high points. Split personality aside, I'd rather think of myself as an integrated package. And no remarks about creative accounting please!*

*Research can begin as idle curiosity. During a recent attempt to trace the remnants of my New Zealand forebears, I chanced upon information from the Gisborne region. From a community of just 46,000 they produce a seasonal magazine of 28 pages, abounding with a wealth of information, and confirming my understanding that New Zealand has a very pro-active and competitive wine grape growing industry. An industry thinking globally when it comes to their research, resources and marketing.*

*The Adelaide Hills not only has to compete with the trendy wines from Marlborough, but cheap bulk wines from interstate, the ones readily found in the big wine retail outlets. In regard to our competitive Kiwi friends, this isn't cricket, it's hard business, although I can't help wondering if things would have been different on both sides of the equation if Trevor Chappell hadn't come up with that infamous underarm bowling tactic all those years ago.*

*The reality, however, is that NZ's determination to shine probably had more to do with events in the EEC, than any event at the MCG, and in the case of Marlborough, is the culmination of 30 years of innovation and hard work that the New Zealand government is probably eager to protect.*

*After living all my adult life in Australia, I have chosen to spend this part of my life in Adelaide Hills. I love the Hills: the people, the sense of community and my home now for ten years. We have every reason to be proud of our region and need to continue to protect and support it with our own vision of excellence, and remember always, to keep a watchful eye on our counterparts across the Tasman.*

.... Ed

FROM THE ARCHIVES . . .



Tom Ayers Rural Contracting c. 1996

All things infield

## Newsletter 30 April 2009

Proud to be part  
of the  
Adelaide Hills  
Wine Region

**infield**



Researched, written and compiled by Wanda Hopkins, except where otherwise acknowledged.

A special thanks Larry Jacobs, Hahndorf Hill Winery, Sylvie Clarke of WISA for her assistance and encouragement, Tina Hamden of Jeffries Soils, and for all other contributions, large or small.

Scanning of archival material courtesy of Kaaren Green.

If you would like to be added to our mailing list please email [wandah@infield.com.au](mailto:wandah@infield.com.au)

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