

Summary of progress during this quarter

Membership of the programmes Commercial and technical Advisory groups was determined this quarter, including highly experienced members of the NZ wine industry and international experts.

A determined effort by Plant and Food Research has resulted in the first batch of new Sauvignon Blanc vines within eight months of the programme start date, which will now grow in the greenhouse while production is increased for the next batch. Grapevine DNA sequencing is underway, to lay the groundwork for identifying beneficial traits among the new vines.

Key highlights and achievements

- The first batch of new vines have been produced. These will be hardened off and transferred to a glasshouse over the coming quarter.
- Membership of the Programme's Commercial Advisory group and Technical Advisory group has been confirmed.
- Genetic sequencing of two commercial clones of Sauvignon Blanc has begun, using a new sequencer installed to support the programme.
- Extra sequencing capacity is enabling research at University of Otago, with research teams at Lincoln University, AgResearch, Plant and Food Research and University of Auckland all planning to access this capacity for research spanning human health, biodiversity, and crop improvement in the coming months.
- The programme was presented at the International Symposium on Grapevine Breeding and Genetics in Landau, Germany, leading to several new international collaborations and expert advisors.
- A new rootstock drought trial has been planned for this spring. Grafted vines and a suitable vineyard site have been committed by programme grantors.

Upcoming

- New grapevine plants will be transferred to a glasshouse where they will grow until next winter.
- Grapevine DNA sequencing will focus on generating longer reads for improved genome assembly.
- Work on a database for new vine genetic and physiologic traits will begin.
- A field trial to compare the effect of different rootstocks on Sauvignon Blanc water use efficiency will be progressed, with the goal of planting in spring 2022.

Investment

Investment period	Industry contribution	MPI contribution	Total investment
During this quarter	\$ 351,358	\$234,238	\$ 585,596
Programme to date	\$ 481,113	\$ 320,742	\$ 801,855