SAUVIGNON BLANC 2.0

Public Summary - September 2024

Summary of progress during this quarter

During the winter, DNA from new Sauvignon Blanc (SB) clones and commercial vines was analysed to identify the type of genetic changes that vary among individuals. The established sequencing and data analysis pipelines will be used to characterise the full scope of genetic variation produced during the Programme term. Six thousand new SB clones are currently being managed in controlled growth environments over the winter. Each has been assigned a unique ID, labelled, and registered in an online database which eventually will track their growth and key traits once they are in the selection vineyard.

Key highlights and achievements

- The newly produced vines have survived their first winter well, with almost no losses.
- A new primary screening and selection vineyard has been approved, based in Lincoln. This will be specifically suited to growing the new SB clones on their own roots, with frequent monitoring and screening for changes to selected traits of interest.
- Isolates of powdery mildew spores collected from local vineyards are being grown on grape leaves in preparation for susceptibility testing later in the growing season.
- Protocols are being developed for testing each of the key traits of interest prioritised by the Programme grantors: mildew resistance, yield, frost tolerance, drought tolerance, and new wine flavours and aromas.

Upcoming

- Establish a new grapevine selection vineyard to hold up to 6,000 juvenile SB clones, with appropriate wind and frost protection.
- Collect tissue samples from each vine and purify DNA for genetic selection.
- Work with the NZ wine industry to increase the collection of new clonal diversity from vineyards.
- Test trait-based assays for identifying differences in powdery mildew resistance.

Investment

Investment period	Industry cash	Industry in-kind	MPI cash	Total investment
During this quarter	$ 281,326	$ 6,600	$ 191,951	$ 479,877
Programme to date	$ 2,891,699	$ 178,858	$ 2,046,589	$ 5,116,473