



BRAGATO
RESEARCH INSTITUTE
RANGAHAU KAREPE, WĀINA O AOTEAROA

Circular Wine Programme

Winery participation and material supply guide



A practical, managed pathway for Marlborough wineries to divert solid lees and related winery residues from landfill and return organic matter and nutrients to land as a stabilised soil amendment.

Why participate?

Reduce landfill reliance

Divert solid lees from landfill at a time when disposal options are becoming more constrained and gate fees are expected to increase.

Support circularity

Help build an industry-led regional solution that recovers organic matter and nutrients for beneficial reuse on land.

Strengthen reporting

Receive confirmation of material receipt and volumes supplied to support internal reporting, audits and sustainability claims.

Benefits for wineries

- A practical, managed alternative to landfill for solid lees.
- Cost-effective disposal compared with current and projected landfill gate fees.
- Reduced exposure to future landfill constraints and organic waste disposal pressure.
- Receipt confirmation and volume records for winery reporting and audits.
- Participation in an industry-led circular solution rather than managing residues individually.
- Support for regional environmental goals, including diversion of organic waste from landfill.

Programme overview

The Circular Wine Programme is a four-year research and delivery programme focused on solid winery residue streams, including juice lees, wine lees, bentonite lees and filtration solids from rotary drum vacuum filtration, high-solids crossflow filtration and decanter systems.

Accepted materials are blended with compost, lime, biochar and other amendments to produce a stabilised soil amendment suitable for land application.

Regional target:

~2,900 t/yr

Programme aim: to divert at least half of the 6000 t of solid lees waste currently being sent to landfill each year in Marlborough

Book your load

Booking requirement

Bookings should be made 5 days in advance by phone or email.

Bragato Research Institute

Seth Laurenson
021 419 045
seth.laurenson@bri.co.nz

The Green Circle

Steve Brennan
022 097 9455
steve@greencircle.nz

How participation works

Material scope and exclusions

Lees supplied to the programme must be dewatered, non-flowing, “spade-able” and capable of forming a stable stockpile. As a guide, material should meet the same acceptance criteria for solid wastes at landfill, with no free-draining liquid.

- Target solids content greater than 50%.
- Material below 50% total solids may be declined unless otherwise agreed.
- Supplied lees must be free from contaminants, including PVPP and diatomaceous earth.

Supply and receiving model

The programme operates a networked model. Wineries may supply lees without receiving processed material back. Processed material may be applied to land that is not associated with the originating winery. Wineries are responsible for arranging delivery to the processing site, which can be done through their existing transport provider.

Regulatory compliance

All processing and land application activities are undertaken in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements and resource consents. Land application is managed under conditions that address nutrient loading, contaminants and environmental risk, including MDC requirements and permitted activity rules where applicable.

Participating wineries are provided with confirmation of receipt and volumes of lees received into the programme.

Processing site and consent management

Lees are processed at a consented facility located at 162 Mahers Road, Marlborough. The site operates under Consent No. U250967.01 issued by Marlborough District Council in March 2026.

The site is operated by The Green Circle (TGC), which is responsible for consent compliance and monitoring, operational management of materials, and maintaining records suitable for regulatory and audit purposes. **Site operating hours are 8am-5pm, 5 days a week.**

Pricing

The programme is intended to provide a cost-effective disposal pathway compared with current and projected Bluegums landfill gate fees. MDC landfill gate fees are expected to increase by 7% per annum.

Year (July-June)	Expected landfill prices	Project
	Price/T (ex GST)	Price/T (ex GST)
2026	\$ 205.00	\$ 205.00
2027	\$ 219.35	\$ 215.25
2028	\$ 234.70	\$ 226.01
2029	\$ 251.13	\$ 237.31
2030	\$ 268.71	\$ 249.18

A weighbridge fee of \$12 per load, excluding GST, will be charged back to the winery.

Programme funding model

The programme is seeking winery participation across the four-year research and delivery period. Each winery’s contribution will be based on an agreed estimate of its annual solid-waste volume supplied to the programme.

For the remainder of the 2026 season, material can be received under an interim invoicing arrangement while participation agreements are finalised. Any volume supplied, and gate fees paid, will be counted toward the winery’s annual commitment once the formal agreement is in place.