



1 January 2015

Powdery mildew

Conditions have continued to favour powdery mildew growth. The risk rating remains at a very high level.

Downy mildew

The Mudgee region has experienced a wet month with rain over Christmas. Several vineyards have developed downy mildew primary oilspots from an infection period early last week. With storms forecast for the weekend the risk level has increased to moderate.

Botrytis

As veraison progresses, berries are softening and sugar levels increase which also increases the risk of *Botrytis* infection. *Botrytis* is currently rated low risk.

Light Brown Apple Moth

Both districts appear to have good control over light brown apple moth (LBAM) this season with few reports of caterpillar activity. The same situation applies for vine moth and the risk level remains minimal.

Spray Diary completion

With harvest of early varieties close, now is the time to ensure spray diaries are complete and ready for grape purchasers to review. The receiving wineries will be checking withholding period compliance before issuing bookings for each individual vineyard block.

Forecast: Warm to hot in both regions. Possible storms in Mudgee	
Pest / Disease	Risk
Powdery mildew	
Downy mildew	
<i>Botrytis</i>	
LBAM	
Vine moth caterpillars	
Shoot growth controlled	

Interpretation guide

	Very high risk
	High risk
	Moderate risk
	Low risk
	Minimal risk



Phenological development

South Eastern Australia has been subject to unusually cool conditions over the last four to six weeks. This may have the effect of slowing grape development which, prior to this period, was advanced by one to two weeks.

Riverina

Pinot Noir is currently the earliest variety with veraison at 30%. Other varieties are also starting to soften and accumulate colour.

Forecasts based on long term average (LTA) phenological data are for harvest of fruit for sparkling base wines to commence in the week beginning 19 January.

Mudgee

The rate of fruit development has slowed however, veraison is being reported in all varieties. Current estimates are for harvest to commence of sparkling base material in the week starting 19 January followed by dry whites in the week starting 26 January and reds in mid-February. This is currently 10-12 days ahead of the LTA.



E-L 33 Berries still hard and green



E-L 35 Berries begin to colour and enlarge



Downy mildew in Mudgee

Several vineyards in Mudgee have developed downy mildew oilspots over the weekend, following storm activity last week. Oilspots in older leaves tend to be confined within veinal areas (see Figure 1 for an oilspot on the upper surface of a leaf). Depending on the spray program the central part of the oilspot may develop areas of dead tissue with a brown colouration. The underside of the oilspot with sporulation in the whole of the infected area is shown in Figure 2.

Management of downy mildew is difficult at this stage of the season because of the withholding periods of the major fungicide formulations (the shortest being 30 days). Spray decisions should consider forecast weather conditions and the requirements of the purchasing winery.



Figure 1. Downy mildew oilspot on the upper side of a mature leaf.



Figure 2. Underside of the downy mildew oilspot on a mature leaf in Figure 1.

Botrytis management

As veraison progresses, the risk of *Botrytis* infection increases. *Botrytis* infections establish through damaged grapevine tissue and natural openings. Insect damage provides ideal entry points for *Botrytis*, particularly where scarred areas allow the softening berry skin to tear (Figure 3). The damage caused by LBAM caterpillars can occur deep within bunches and may go unnoticed. Monitoring for berry damage at this time of the year will guide spray decisions later in the season, particularly if damage is identified and mapped.



Figure 3. Berry scarring by insects (left) or burning (right) provide entry points for *Botrytis* infection.



Fungicide resistance

If you suspect chemical failure to control downy mildew, powdery mildew or Botrytis, contact Barbara Hall at SARDI for information about how to collect and where to submit samples for testing.

Phone: 08 8303 9562

Email: barbara.hall@sa.gov.au

Pilot heatwave service for Australia

Last year the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) introduced a pilot service for predicting heatwave activity. The service is not the Official Forecast data but it does provide an indication of heatwave activity and risk. The prediction models being used show the development and extent of the heatwave predicted for this weekend (Figure 4). This information may be used to inform irrigation scheduling in advance of the heatwave to minimise fruit and vine damage.

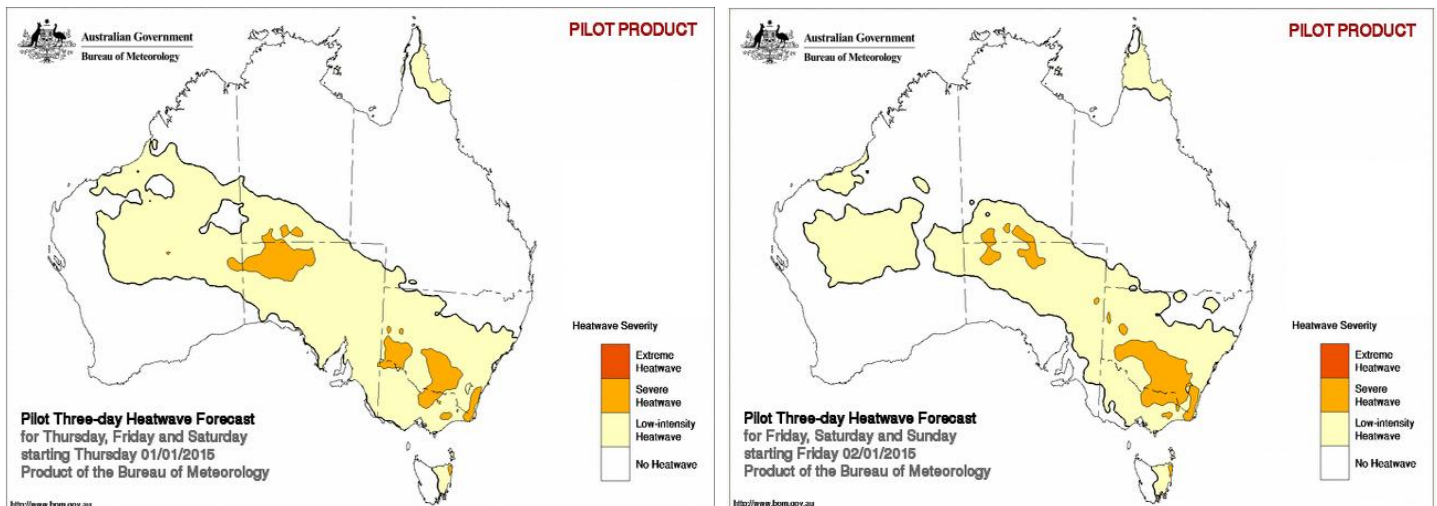


Figure 4. Images issued by the Bureau of Meteorology on 30 December 2014 showing the development and extent of heatwave activity across Australia this week.

Access the BoM heatwave activity resources here: <http://www.bom.gov.au/australia/heatwave/index.shtml>



Pest and disease survey

Thank you to all those who completed the pest and disease survey in late 2014. The final report is complete and a link to the abridged version will be available in the next edition of VineWatch.

Prize winners:

1st prize – Darryl Carter, Whyworry Wines, New England



Darryl and Robyn Carter in their New England vineyard

2nd prize – Marian Parker, Martindale Joint Venture, Hunter Valley

3rd prize – Peter O’Meara, Adina Vineyard, Hunter Valley

4th prize – Sam Gambacorta, Riverina

5th prize – Clayton Kiely, Tamburlaine, Orange

NSW grapevine planting survey

Your help is needed

Thanks to all those who have completed the survey. To enable us to get a good spread of responses across all regions, we need your help. All details you provide will be kept confidential and anonymity is assured.

You can access the survey here:

Grapevine planting survey

If you complete the survey and provide your contact details, you will go into a draw to WIN:

- 1st prize – \$1000 travel voucher**
- 2nd prize - \$100 Coles/Woolworths voucher**
- 3rd - 5th prize - \$50 Coles/Woolworths voucher**

Please complete the survey by 16 January 2015. It should take about 20 minutes to complete.



VINEWATCH

NSW DPI Viticulture Skills Development Program

If you would like to be kept up to date with the activities provided through the NSW DPI Viticulture Skills Development Program, please add your contact details here.

[Register here](#)

For further information about the program, please contact Darren Fahey darren.fahey@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Contact the AWRI for support:

The Australian Wine Research Institute provides technical support for Australia's grapegrowers and winemakers. This service is free and confidential. If you require additional assistance on grapegrowing, including the identification and management of vineyard pests and diseases or agrochemical advice, please contact Mardi Longbottom or Marcel Essling on 08 8313 6600 or viticulture@awri.com.au.

Disclaimer: The VineWatch bulletin is provided by The Australian Wine Research Institute to support grapegrowers in New South Wales, specifically the Riverina and Central ranges. This information is intended to be generic in nature. Always seek professional advice specific to your vineyard.