

NEWS RELEASE

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The Australian Wine
Research Institute



THE UNIVERSITY
of ADELAIDE

New home for grapevine virus testing

The Australian Wine Research Institute (AWRI) and the University of Adelaide have jointly announced that plant virus testing and elimination services formerly provided by Waite Diagnostics have been transferred to The Australian Wine Research Institute.

The services offered, which include testing for 12 grapevine viruses and phytoplasmas, as well as other pathogens responsible for diseases in canola, lucerne and other crops, will continue to be provided by the same experienced personnel, with no interruptions during the transition.

AWRI Managing Director, Dr Dan Johnson, has welcomed the opportunity provided by the transfer, saying: "Testing of grapevines for viruses is a priority for Australian viticulture. The AWRI is proud to add this capability to the wide range of services it offers to the grape and wine community."

The University's Dr Nuredin Habili, lead researcher and long-time manager of the virus testing service, says the change "will result in a one-stop shop for the majority of testing requirements by grapegrowers and winemakers".

Waite Diagnostics was founded in 1997 by the late Bob Symons (FAA, FRS) (1934-2006), Professor of Biochemistry, within the University's Department of Plant Science. Since that time the service has made a major contribution to the health of Australia's grapevine planting material, through commercial application of cutting-edge virology research and diagnostic technologies.

The University of Adelaide's Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Peter Rathjen, was himself a student of the late Professor Bob Symons and a successor as Professor of Biochemistry at the University of Adelaide.

Professor Rathjen hailed the vision demonstrated by Professor Symons in establishing Waite Diagnostics. "As founder of virus testing services at the University's Waite campus, Professor Symons – arguably one of the greatest scientists in the University's history – was doing exactly what our University does so well: leveraging our research strengths and matching our intellectual capability to industry need," Professor Rathjen says.

"Waite Diagnostics is a perfect example of how the University can and does create innovation in South Australia, translating research and innovation into commercial advance and employment.

"We are pleased that the AWRI is leading the next chapter of this important service," he says.

Grapegrowers interested in accessing virus testing and elimination services should contact AWRI Commercial Services on 08 8 313 6600 or commercialservices@awri.com.au. Detailed information about sample requirements and the specific pathogens for which testing is available can be found at www.awri.com.au/commercial_services/virus-testing.

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The Australian Wine Research Institute is the Australian grape and wine industry's own research organisation. It supports a sustainable and successful grape and wine industry through world class research, practical solutions and knowledge transfer. AWRI Commercial Services is the commercial arm of the AWRI and provides advanced analytical and consulting services to grape and wine producers and partner organisations on a fee-paying basis. Net proceeds from AWRI Commercial Services are re-invested into research at the AWRI.
Website: www.awri.com.au.

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