

'Dog Book' queries collared



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AT THE RECENT AWRI Roadshow in the Hunter Valley, Louise Eather (viticulturist – Orlando Wines) asked a commonly asked question about how the recommendations in the *Agrochemicals registered for use in Australian viticulture*, commonly known as the 'Dog Book' are determined. She asked specifically about Scala and why it is restricted to 80% capfall.

About 20 years ago, wineries started providing their growers with an 'export harvest interval' for a range of recommended fungicides and insecticides. The interval represents the withholding period (WHP) or minimum number of days before the last application and harvest. It is sometimes much greater than that set out on the label, but is necessary to ensure that export wine does not exceed the maximum residue limits (MRL) set by our trading partners.

The Dog Book, in its 'recommendations' tables, outlines the preferred chemicals registered for use against the most common pests and diseases in Australian vineyards. It indicates a WHP that will satisfy the lowest MRL for any of Australia's major wine markets. In some instances, such as the case for elemental sulfur, the WHP will be set in order to minimise the impact on fermentation.

The label says seven days, but I'm not allowed to use it after 80% capfall! What's going on?

The Dog Book recommendation for pyrimethanil (Scala) is "...use no later than 80% capfall" to satisfy the requirements of export markets that have zero tolerance for residues (such as China) or that have very low residue limits (such as Ontario, Canada). If the product is used after 80% capfall, research has shown that detectable residues are a possibility.

How are the recommendations (i.e. 80% capfall) determined?

In setting the recommendations, the persistence of the chemical, both on



grapes and through to winemaking, is considered. To help inform the decision, the AWRI requests chemical companies, who seek to register new products, measure residues on grapes at harvest and track the fate of residues through fermentation. Other supportive data include research funded by the Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation, and Dried Fruits Research and Development Council.

How can the recommendations be changed?

The Dog Book recommended restriction on use can only be changed when all our export markets have residue limits that are the same or greater than the Australian MRL. Then, provided there are no fermentation issues, the label WHP can be adopted. This harmonisation of MRLs is the goal of industry bodies such as the GWRDC and Winemakers' Federation of Australia; and the AWRI is engaged in supporting their bids.

When can I follow the label WHP?

A winery or grape purchaser might allow the Dog Book recommendations to be ignored if the wine made from

the grapes is intended for sale within Australia, or to an export market that has an MRL that won't be exceeded if the chemical is used.

The 2011/2012 'Dog Book' edition comes as an insert in this edition of *Grapegrower & Winemaker*. If you know of others, who are members of the Australian wine industry and would like to receive a copy please contact The Australian Wine Research Institute on 08 8313 6600 or email: enquiries@awri.com.au

An electronic version, which is updated throughout the year, is available from the AWRI website: www.awri.com.au

Marcel Essling is the viticulturist at The AWRI and is responsible for the Research to Practice program for grapegrowers. Ask the AWRI is a new monthly column, which will focus on viticulture and oenology issues. Many of the topics and questions used in the column will be sourced from the AWRI Roadshows and events held throughout Australia.

If you have questions you would like to see covered in this column, or wish to discuss anything written above please contact the editor Jen Barwick, editor@grapeandwine.com.au. 