

Garganega

By Peter Dry

Viticulture Consultant

The Australian Wine Research Institute



AWRI

BACKGROUND

Garganega (pronounced gah-gah-NEE-gah) is one of the major white varieties of Italy with the largest plantings in the north east, particularly in the provinces of Verona and Vicenza. It has a significant genetic variability—at least four biotypes have been identified. Garganega is mainly used in the DOC Soave of Veneto, where it makes up a minimum of 70 per cent of the blend with Trebbiano and Chardonnay. It is also grown in Sicily (as Grecanico) and Umbria. There do not appear to be significant plantings in any other countries. In Australia, there are currently at least five wine producers according to the *Wine Industry Directory*. Synonyms include D'Oro, Dorana di Venetia, Garganega Comune, Garganega di Gambellara, Garganega Gentile, Garganega Grossa, Garganega Piramidale, Garganega Veronese, Grecanico, Grecanico Dorato, Lizzara, Ora, Oro, Ostesa and Ostesona.

VITICULTURE

Budburst is mid to late season, and maturity is mid-season. Bunches are medium to large and loose to well-filled. The medium berries have juicy pulp and neutral taste. It is vigorous with a semi-erect growth habit. Yield is moderate to high depending on the clone. On fertile soils, it may be excessively vigorous and prone to over-cropping. It generally requires good canopy management. The best Soave wines come from the least vigorous vineyards on the slopes and lower yielding vineyards. Cane pruning is used in cool climates, but spur pruning is successful in warmer climates. Susceptibility to botrytis is said to vary between biotypes; however, each of the seven clones currently available in Italy have low susceptibility to botrytis.

WINE

Garganega wines are generally light-bodied in a range of styles, including sparkling wine. When picked relatively early, wines are zesty with moderate to high acidity; descriptors include apple, lemon and almond. With greater maturity, wines are juicier and more mouthfilling; descriptors include green melon, pear and tropical.

This is an extract from the manual developed for the Research to Practice on 'Alternative varieties: emerging options for a changing environment' (Tassie, L.; Dry, P.R. and Essling, M. 2010). For further information on this and other emerging varieties, contact Marcel Essling (rtp@awri.com.au; tel. 08 8313 6600) at The Australian Wine Research Institute to arrange the presentation of this Research to Practice program in your region.