

# AWRI notes

## Key messages inspire delegates

The Australian Wine Industry Technical Conference is over for another three years and most delegates came away inspired. Industry members from Australia and from more than 13 overseas countries had a feast on offer with workshops starting on the Saturday; conference sessions, workshops, trade show and posters throughout the next few days; and concluding with workshops again on the Thursday. The conference program was again of the highest quality presented by 43 Australian and 15 international speakers. The more than 1,300 attendees were challenged in many of the sessions and workshops to take bold moves with the information they received. The perspectives were broad and the discussions lengthy, and covered the entire value chain from the dirt in the vineyard, to the consumers' lips, through to the shoe leather to be worn out in countries both traditional and exotic. Many sessions and workshops started at 8:30 am and several continued until past 6:00 pm, but the enthusiasm was maintained from the delegates eager to absorb the information.

the 14<sup>th</sup>



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The conference was officially opened by Rory McEwen, Chairman of the Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation, and former South Australian Minister, and he urged delegates in his forthright and passionate style to get actively involved in the development of the next GWRDC five-year plan. **Session 1** kicked off with a thoroughly engaging 45-minute presentation from economist, Phil Ruthven from IbisWorld. In this, his third AWITC appearance, Phil reminded delegates of the wine industry's cyclic trends and encouraged us with his prediction, based on



Dr Jim Kennedy (AWRI) giving his presentation *Interactions between aroma, flavour and mouth-feel* (also pictured seated L-R; Paul Boss, CSIRO, Leigh Francis, AWRI, Simone Mueller, University of South Australia and Session Chair, Louisa Rose, The Yalumba Wine Company)



Dr Leigh Francis (AWRI) giving his presentation *Linking wine flavour components, sensory properties and consumer quality perceptions*

more than 100 years of data, that the industry has good prospects ahead in the next five years and even better in the five after that. Comments from delegates following the next session, *Session 2*, were a mix of ‘confronting’, ‘uncomfortable’, ‘scary’, ‘fantastic’ and ‘essential to hear’ as we heard presentations on the World Health Organisation’s (WHO) approach to alcohol and wine and how industry is responding. The session, first up on the Monday was *Session 3*, where speakers delved into the technical aspects of wine’s flavour, aroma and mouth-feel, from a grape and wine chemistry viewpoint through to consumer triggers. Some of the work presented will be able to be applied in the vineyards and wineries to optimise the final wines. We were reminded, though, that it is not just enough to optimise the wine on the inside of the bottle; to be successful in the market the wine and the total package it represents must fulfil the consumers’ expectations. *Session 4* speakers presented information on key issues and the technologies available to produce wine to a reliable style. Presentations covered oxidation trials in the winery and laboratory; an Italian perspective on examples of technologies that assist with consistent production and generating efficiencies; software programs that optimise the supply chain process; and examples of where wine producers can find cost efficiencies. Following a lunch break, many delegates sat in on *Colloquium 1*, which presented an in-depth look at Innovation. Starting at 8:30 am on the Tuesday morning, delegates settled in to hear *Session 5* speakers talk about practical and innovative viticulture with perspectives given from Italy, the US, Germany and from Australia. *Session 6* continued the theme from the previous session where speakers looked at climate change issues, particularly with regard to reduced water availability. Following a break for lunch, delegates re-gathered in Hall B for *Colloquium 2*. Delegates were given more in-depth information on the environment, water and sustainability, with presentations on the Murray Darling Basin and the Basin Plan; ‘environmental credentials’; smoke-derived taint in grapes and wine; reuse of winery wastewater; production and sustainability challenges facing Langhorne Creek producers; and emissions trading in the agricultural context. The last day of the conference started at 9:00 am with *Colloquium 3*. The talks given in this colloquium – titled *Fresh Science: picked, pressed, packaged* – were an oral synopsis of several selected posters presented in the

technical poster display. The ASVO awarded a prize for the best presentation within this colloquium which was awarded to Anthony Saliba for the presentation of his poster (#67) titled *Targeting wine styles that consumers want*. Following the lunch break, delegates re-gathered in Hall D to hear the last two sessions of the conference which commenced at 1:00 pm. **Session 7** focused on the vineyard and comprised presentations on soil health, organics and biodynamics, with perspectives from presenters from the US, Germany, New Zealand and Australia. **Session 8**, the last session of the conference, gave delegates some understanding of consumer behaviour in China contrasted with established markets; key insights into how to communicate effectively with wine consumers in China; the challenges of the Priorat region in Spain; society's response to the climate change issue and how it is shaping consumption behaviour and buying choices; and concluded with four key things industry must do to move forward: (i) greater industry unity, (ii) taking back control, (iii) producers must 'stand for something' (with simple and meaningful messages), and finally (iv) the industry must 'focus' – particularly on its key wine styles that Australia is well known for, and that gives us a competitive advantage.

Of course, the conference sessions are only one part of this event. When the sessions were over on each day, delegates had a choice of attending a workshop, viewing the posters or attending *WineTech 2010 – the Australian Wine Industry Trade Exhibition*. Co-presented by AWITC and WISA, and organised by Reed Exhibitions, WineTech 2010 featured 167 international and national wine industry suppliers. With many of the conference delegates being decision-makers and highly relevant to suppliers' businesses, many



AWRI staff at our stand at WineTech 2010 – the Australian Wine Industry Trade Exhibition

companies took the opportunity to attract interest by launching new products and services at WineTech. One product on show at WineTech won WISA's 2010 WOW award for its innovative approach and positive financial and environmental contribution. Ocloc, the recipient of the award, is a trellis post repair clamp, which enables the reuse of broken posts previously destined for dumping. It generates savings not only for the vineyard's bottom line, but also relieves the pressure on the environment with reductions in disposal of CCA-treated posts. Some 3,000 visitors attended the trade exhibition. Many industry suppliers who invested in participating at the trade exhibition were delighted with the orders taken and the strong business leads generated. This type of result ensures that quality and diversity of industry suppliers participating is maintained for forthcoming trade exhibitions; which is of benefit of producers attending events in the future. The vibe at the trade show and conference was tangible and several people commented about the upbeat feel and the positive attitude industry members had about the future of the industry.

Whilst delegate numbers were slightly down on previous events, there were many more conference attendees than expected, and those that did attend made the most of their time. It was pleasing to see the strong support of the workshop program, which is testament to the quality of the workshops on offer. The ratio of workshop places filled to delegate numbers remained the same as in previous years. The AWRI staff contingent again worked hard and long and late hours to support our industry, academic and AWRI colleagues who had committed to run workshops at this event. It is a well-oiled machine, delivering a quality learning environment – a credit to the coordinators – which gives confidence to presenters and attendees alike.



Dimitra Capone, AWRI, presenting in the *Understanding wine flavour: grape and wine components important to wine quality* workshop

The technical poster display was at the main entrance to WineTech and with the more open layout, it optimised access for delegates. With over 210 posters on display, delegates were able to learn about a wide range of existing, new and emerging science and innovation being developed for the wine industry. Several posters were recognised for their quality, and prizes were awarded and announced during the conference sessions. Maurizio Ugliano from The Australian Wine Research Institute won the 'Best Poster' prize (sponsored by the *Australian & New Zealand Grapegrower & Winemaker*) for his poster *The role of copper and glutathione addition and oxygen exposure in the evolution of key aroma compounds of Sauvignon Blanc*. The Best Student prize, sponsored by the Wine Innovation Cluster (WIC) was won by Katie Dunne from Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research, University of Tasmania for her poster *Secondary spread may not be the main driver of within-season increase in the severity of botrytis bunch rot*. The 'Best Colloquium 3 Speaker' prize (presentation titles were selected from the poster abstracts), sponsored by ASVO, was won by Anthony Saliba from National Wine and Grape Industry Centre for his poster presentation *Targeting wine styles that consumers want*. If a delegate viewed each poster for five minutes, they would need some 18½



hours to view every poster – in recognition of this, the conference organisers have made all of the posters available for viewing by conference delegates via the AWITC website ([www.awitc.com.au](http://www.awitc.com.au)). Delegates were emailed access details, but they can also contact the Conference Manager for the access code.

Gaining new insights and technical knowledge is just one attraction of the event. The networking opportunities were in abundance this year with many organisations taking the opportunity of so many industry members congregating in Adelaide, to arrange fun and informal satellite events throughout the week. The conference **Welcome Reception** on the Sunday evening gave delegates their first glimpse of the trade exhibition, and their first opportunity to renew old acquaintances whilst enjoying a glass of wine and finger food.

*In the winelight* was a new event to be held at the AWITC. Eleven post-graduate/PhD

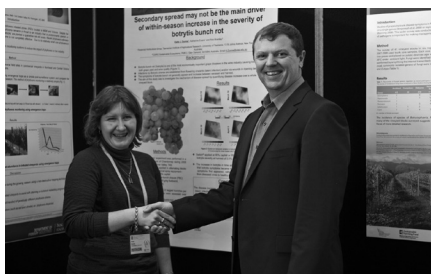
students were each given three minutes to explain their research by answering the question ‘What are you researching and why’ in a fun and entertaining manner. Each presentation was judged on communication style, clarity of information and engagement. The rules were very simple: submit a poster and use a one-page Powerpoint slide with no animation. We would like to congratulate Josh Lee Hixson from Adelaide University for winning both the judges’ and the people’s choice award.

The **conference dinner**, held on the Tuesday evening in a glittering environment, and sponsored by Amorim, presented some 11 different quality Australian sparkling, white and red wines matched to a four-course meal. Delegates whiled the night away mingling throughout the room, and many continued the conviviality well into the wee hours.

In the early stages of planning for this event, the organisers were very aware of the economic realities experienced by stakeholders. To conduct an event with the quality content required even more critically by the industry in 2010, the organisers needed some key things to align: first, the development of a program comprising a ‘dream team’ of presenters; second, financial support from business partners to make that happen; third, trust and commitment from industry suppliers to



Liz Bouzoudis, Winetitles and Eveline Bartowsky, poster coordinator, AWRI, with winner of the best poster prize, Maurizio Ugliano, AWRI



Stuart McNabb, Chairman Wine Innovation Cluster congratulates winner of the best student poster prize, Katie Dunne, Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research, University of Tasmania

support the trade exhibition; and lastly, commitment from producers to attend the event. The organisers are pleased that through unity, commitment and belief, the 14<sup>th</sup> *Australian Wine Industry Technical Conference*, and associated *WineTech 2010 – the Australian Wine Industry Trade Exhibition*, delivered against expectations. It is with much appreciation that the contribution of the conference planning and program sub-committees is recorded, as is the commitment from the business partners, particularly the principal partner, Vinpac International.

Did you miss all of the conference this year, or just some of it? Do you want to see any of the presentations again? The AWRI has arranged for all of the presentations to be recorded and these will be made available on the AWRI website ([www.awri.com.au](http://www.awri.com.au)). We expect the presentations to be available for viewing very soon. Delegates have access at no extra cost and will be notified when the presentations are available for viewing.

Our attention now turns to the production of the conference proceedings, which are edited and published. All delegates will receive a copy of the proceedings in the mail, as part of their registration fee. Delegates should ensure that any change of address details are forwarded to the Conference Manager (email: [info@awitc.com.au](mailto:info@awitc.com.au)).

In his closing summary at the conference, Conference Chairman, Professor Sakkie Pretorius told delegates a story about a boy who held the fate of a butterfly in his hands. He said that events such as the conference equip industry members with crucial information needed to make their businesses sustainable into the future. ‘What you now do with it, is in your hands.’



Conference Chairman, Professor Sakkie Pretorius

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## **Corrections to the AWRI's 'Dog Book' Agrochemicals Registered for Use in Australian Viticulture 2010/2011**

Page 13: The active constituent ‘potassium salts of fatty acids’ is incorrectly listed as belonging to fungicide activity group 2. ‘Potassium salts of fatty acids’ has not been assigned an activity group by CropLife Australia and is unspecified. For further information: contact Marcel Essling, Viticulturist on email [agrochemicals@awri.com.au](mailto:agrochemicals@awri.com.au) or by telephone 08 8313 6600.