

Q: What makes a good vine?
A: One that gives the earliest possible economic yield.

It's a serious question that needs a serious answer. At Misty Valley we have been working on the many steps to this answer for years.

Step 1

We are delighted to see that the industry will soon be introducing a New Zealand Standard for grafted grape vines. We have been working closely with the New Zealand Grape Vine Improvement Group and New Zealand Winegrowers to see that this standard is meaningful and ensures the delivery of consistent quality vines. At time of writing the standard is likely to be made up of three key points:

- 1. Sanitary status.** All grafting material will have been tested annually for Leaf Roll Virus 3 as a minimum. (The goal being to eliminate GLRV3 from the New Zealand vineyard.)
- 2. Physical Dimensions.** The grafted vine will conform to a set of dimensions and standards to ensure a minimum grade.
- 3. Provenance.** The rootstock and scion material will be traceable to a known source.



Riesling vines first year, Blenheim, March 2005

Perhaps the most important part of the whole process will be independent audits carried out on the nurseries selling certified vines; to ensure what they produce does reach the standard.

We eagerly await the introduction of this standard for the 2005 grafting season, but don't expect any noticeable changes to our vines. We know we are producing at or above the standard already.



Second year Sauvignon blanc vines, Rapaura, March 2005

Step 2

Every year several of our new clients approach us with a question that goes something like this: "Your vines grow so strongly, what is your secret?" Now there are some things we can share and some we can't. Our method of production is unique in New Zealand. Everything we do is related back to producing a vine that will give the best possible vineyard establishment.



First year vines, stony soils, Blenheim, March 2005

Of particular note is our natural advantage of a long northern growing season. Our vines are planted in our frost free fields early, (from October) and continue growing right through until June. This very long growing season enables the natural accumulation of high levels of carbohydrate for strong early season growth after planting.

As every experienced viticulturist knows, it's that strong, even, early season start that gives the economic return in the first year of crop.

Step 3

Quality is everything. There are too many physical attributes of a good quality vine to list here, but there is one that all viticulturists should be aware of. That's the need for a perfectly healed callous union. The quality of the union is the Achilles heel of the vineyard.

At Misty Valley every graft union is inspected no less than five times by five different graders on its journey through the nursery. This is our assurance to you that you will have the best possible chance of planting a vineyard that will give the earliest economic return.

Step 4

Everything we do can be undone by you. Site preparation is beyond our control but fundamental to the success of your vineyard. Our next issue will deal with the basics of site preparation.

What is a good vine? It's a vine made through a multitude of steps in the nursery, where the focus is on the needs of the grower to establish a strong healthy vineyard, which will provide a good early economic return.



Peter & Trish Cashin's first year Sauvignon blanc, Spring Creek, March 2005

Varieties Available

Variety	Available	
	'05	'06
Cabernet franc	✓	✓
Cabernet sauvignon	✓	✓
Chardonnay	✓	✓
Dolcetto		✓
Flora	✓	✓
Gamay noir		✓
Gewurztraminer	✓	✓
Malbec	✓	✓
Merlot	✓	✓
Montepulciano		✓
Nebbiolo		✓
Petit verdot		✓
Pinot blanc	✓	✓
Pinot gris	✓	✓
Pinot noir	✓	✓
Pinotage		✓
Riesling	✓	✓
Sangiovese		✓
Sauvignon blanc	✓	✓
Semillon		✓
Syrah	✓	✓
Tannat		✓
Viognier	✓	✓

Number of vines	Standard certified grade (Elisa)	Premium certified grade (PCR)
<100	\$6.00	\$6.50
101-500	\$5.35	\$6.25
501-5,000	\$5.10	\$5.60
5,001-10,000	\$4.90	\$5.40
10,001-50,000	\$4.50	N.A.
>50,000	P.O.A	N.A.



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