

OF CERTAINTIES & UNCERTAINTIES

With the bumper vintage last year a number of very predictable things happened. One was the lack of market for some grapes.

It is a certainty that some varieties will be overproduced as our industry matures. Some wineries appear to be a little uncertain about where their production is to be sold. Yes, we are heading into a time of sorting out.

Change should not breed uncertainty.

As a nursery we have begun to see many of our clients experimenting with new varieties. In particular, we need to mention the many enquiries we now field for the Italian Stallions, the French Wallflowers, and the Spanish Conquistadors. Are these enquiries a sign of winemakers and viticulturist looking to broaden their horizons and push out the boundary of New Zealand wine making with the next big flavour? Or, are they a sign of our producers nervously looking outside the square?

We think it's both of these and we think you should think about what follows before you jump to the greener grass on the other side of the varietal fence.

• Many of the 'new' varieties have been tried before by a previous generation.



They may or may not have worked for many different reasons. If you look hard enough there will be someone who remembers. Do your research. It's really expensive reinventing the wheel. Let's put it another way, choose carefully and experiment slowly. The vineyard you plant is a minimum of a 25 year investment.

• Check the provenance of what you want to experiment with and ask who will buy the production. Find out the answers to these simple questions: When does it bud out? When will it ripen? Is it sensitive to wind? What are the particular disease problems? Care needs to be taken in choosing a site for each variety. Many new varieties are now being planted from Central Otago to Northland. Clearly few varieties will perform well in all districts.

• Experimentation is a great thing. We regularly provide experimental vines free of charge to clients in return for feedback that will benefit all growers. A few bays of experimental vines on representative soils and average mesoclimate will give you sufficient information to determine whether winemaking trials are appropriate. A few kilos of grapes can be lost in a blend. A truck load needs a marketing plan.

Of course you should experiment with new varieties, if nothing else it's fun and you will learn something in the process. Above all, remember to look after number one. Number one is the bread and butter variety of your area, the one that currently pays the bills.

To be certain about your future you just have to remember this... Learn to do better what you already know well.



Varieties available for 2005 delivery

- Cabernet franc
- Cabernet sauvignon
- Chardonnay
- Gewurztraminer
- Malbec
- Merlot
- Pinot blanc
- Pinot gris
- Pinot noir
- Riesling
- Sauvignon blanc
- Syrah
- 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.



MISTY
VALLEY
NURSERY

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