



REX'S PRACTICAL TIPS #10

Focus on Botrytis

Every year our wine industry sees the introduction of many new chemicals for the control of diseases and pests in our vineyards. In recent years we have seen the introduction of a whole host of new Botryticides. We have probably never had such a wonderful arsenal of chemicals available for Botrytis control.

The question is:
"Which ones work the best?"

Let's draw on the knowledge of some of the most experienced disease controllers in the country, specifically those hardy grape growers in the wet and humid districts from the Waikato north.

One thing that these growers have learnt over the years is that good Botrytis control is a matter of choosing good chemicals and applying them with impeccable timing.

The Botrytis control afforded by a programme which includes the Anilopyrimidine group (Scala, Pyrus, Switch) and Teldor is probably as good as anything we have seen in living memory.

It's impossible to know when Botrytis infection periods will occur, so those growing Botrytis sensitive grapes such as Sauvignon blanc, should err on the

side of caution and maintain a full programme.



The following is the tried and true programme used by experienced growers in our most difficult grape growing regions.

Spray One:
Euparen Multi at 5-10% flowering – probably the most difficult growth stage to assess.

To make life easy I use the following rule of thumb: 5-10% flowering is when the average number of open flowers per bunch is between 10 and 20.

NB: If a spray is due and flowering has commenced, put the spray on before bad weather.

Spray Two:
Switch Scala or Pyrus at 80% flowering

At 80% flowering the most advanced bunches will have berries approximately match head size with just a few bunches not yet flowering.

Spray Three:
Teldor at pre bunch closure

Timing of crop development is critical here. I describe pre bunch closure for tight bunched varieties as the last day on which you can easily push a Schlage key between the berries in the bunch. Any later and adequate spray coverage cannot be achieved. Here the timing varies between variety and season. For those varieties that never close, common sense must prevail.

There has been the odd Teldor residue showing in some wines recently, but always under legal limits. Bayer New Zealand believe that for most of our markets a withholding period of 60-75 days will give residues under the legal limits.

Where growers are forced to achieve a nil residue due to artificial buyer demands, late capfall is the last opportunity to use this excellent Botryticide.

With this programme, a Scala spray late in the season is still possible, but experience in the North has shown that if the above three Botrytis sprays are well timed, additional Botrytis sprays to complete the season are rarely required.

Rex.



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