

Wine Grape Testing Rebate

The Victorian Government has established the Wine Grape Testing Rebate to assist Victorian wine grape growers to establish the extent and impact of smoke exposure from the 2019-20 bushfires on the 2020 vintage.

The program offers a rebate of up to \$1,200 to Victorian wine grape growers on samples submitted for smoke testing between 1 January 2020 and 30 April 2020.

The program is open to all Victorian wine grape growers.

The only activity eligible for this program is the testing of samples of whole wine grapes, fresh grape juice or fermented grape juice for the effects of smoke exposure.

Samples may be submitted to either the Australian Wine Research Institute (South Australia) and/or Vintessential Laboratories (Victoria) for analysis of smoke-related compounds in grapes and wine.

In order to apply, applicants must:

- a) be the owner, operator or share farmer of a Victorian business producing wine grapes
- b) own or operate a vineyard located in Victoria
- c) have an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- d) demonstrate that grapes or juice were submitted for analysis between 1 January 2020 and 30 April 2020.

Applicants are required to pay for the smoke testing, before applying for the rebate.

One rebate of up to \$1,200 will be offered per business.

Please submit all paid invoices or receipts for analytical laboratory services with your application.

Further eligibility criteria are contained in the attached Guidelines.

Please read the Guidelines before completing the Application Form.

Completed application forms, together with supporting documentation must be submitted to Rural Finance by **31 October 2020** via:

Post: Rural Finance, PO Box 1313, Bendigo Central 3552

Email: governmentservices@ruralfinance.com.au

Fax: 5441 8901

For further information please contact Rural Finance on 1800 260 425.

1. About the program

The Victorian Government has established the Wine Grape Testing Rebate to assist Victorian wine grape growers to assess the impact of smoke exposure from the 2019-20 bushfires on wine grapes grown during the 2019-20 growing season by offering a rebate on the costs of laboratory analysis of wine grape, grape juice and wine samples.

The program offers a rebate of up to \$1,200 to Victorian wine grape growers on samples submitted for smoke testing between 1 January 2020 and 30 April 2020.

The program is open to all Victorian wine grape growers including wineries that grow their own grapes. Regional Wine Associations and wineries may also apply where they have a pre-existing agreement with growers to test grapes.

2. Objectives

- Support Victorian wine grape growers with access to information about the impacts of possible smoke exposure on grapes grown in the 2019-20 growing season; and
- Support grape growers to make sound, evidence-based decisions about the harvesting and handling of grapes that have been potentially exposed to bushfire smoke.

3. Eligible Activities

The only activity eligible for this program is the testing of samples of whole wine grapes, fresh grape juice or fermented grape juice for the effects of smoke exposure. Only samples of grapes or juice from grapes grown by the applicant are eligible. Applicants who both grow their own grapes and buy in grapes may claim a rebate only for testing of their own grapes.

Samples may be submitted to either of the commercial analytical laboratories in Australia offering analysis of smoke-related compounds in grapes and wine – the Australian Wine Research Institute (South Australia) and/or Vintessential Laboratories (Victoria). Samples submitted for analysis between 1 January 2020 and 30 April 2020 are eligible for the rebate.

Some Regional Wine Associations and larger wineries or companies may have paid for testing of samples from multiple growers. Regional Wine Associations and companies in this position should include a statutory declaration with their applications – see Supporting Documentation below.

4. Ineligible Activities

Wineries may not apply for the rebate for testing of grapes that have been purchased from another grower unless there is a prior agreement between the grower and the winery that such grapes will be tested by the winery. In that case, the winery, not the grower, will be eligible for the rebate.

Please note that the Wine Industry Technical Support package soon to be launched will provide access to technical support for wineries seeking assistance with winemaking interventions and sensory assessment.

Samples submitted for testing before 1 January 2020 and after 30 April 2020 are ineligible for the rebate.

Samples from grapes grown outside Victoria are not eligible for the rebate.

5. Applicant Eligibility

In order to apply, applicants must:

- a. be the owner, operator or share farmer of a Victorian business **producing wine grapes**
- b. own or operate a vineyard located in Victoria
- c. have an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- d. demonstrate that grapes or juice were submitted for analysis between 1 January 2020 and 30 April 2020.

OR be a Regional Wine Association or winery or company that can demonstrate that it has paid for testing on behalf of growers who meet the above criteria.

Applicants should provide their Property Identification Code (PIC) where they have one.

Applicants who don't have a PIC are strongly encouraged to obtain one from Agriculture Victoria (<https://pic.agriculture.vic.gov.au/>) as vineyards are required to have a PIC for biosecurity purposes.

6. Application process

Applicants should have submitted samples to either the Australian Wine Research Institute, Urrbrae, South Australia and/or Vintessential Laboratories, Dromana, Victoria for analysis. Applicants should pay all invoices for smoke testing before submitting their application. Rebates will be paid to eligible applicants **after** they have paid laboratory invoices.

To apply for the rebate, applicants must complete the Wine Grape Testing Rebate application form (paper copy or online) and submit it together with the following supporting documentation.

1. Evidence of location in Victoria – one of:
 - Rates notice
 - Lease agreement
 - Share-farming agreement.
2. Evidence of payment – one of:
 - Tax invoice for laboratory testing
 - Receipt for laboratory testing
 - Bank statement showing payment to testing laboratory
 - Credit card statement showing payment to testing laboratory.
3. Evidence of meeting the qualifying period – one of:
 - Laboratory analysis report
 - Tax invoice for laboratory testing.
4. For Regional Wine Associations and wineries or companies that have paid for testing on behalf of growers:
 - A statutory declaration that testing has been undertaken and paid for by agreement with eligible growers for grapes grown by the growers.
 - The statutory declaration must include the following details of the growers with whom the Association, winery or company has a prior agreement:
 - i. Name of grower
 - ii. Grower's business name
 - iii. Grower's business address
 - iv. Grower's ABN
 - v. Number of samples submitted for each grower.

One rebate of up to \$1,200 will be offered per business, regardless of whether that rebate is claimed by the grower or by a third party (Association, winery or company). Where there is a prior agreement between growers and third parties to conduct testing, whichever claim is received first will be paid.

Applicants who have had more than one batch of samples analysed should submit all supporting documentation in one application. Please do not submit multiple applications.

The rebate will be paid via electronic funds transfer into the bank account nominated in the application form and may take up to four weeks to process.

Complete applications will be processed in order of receipt.

By signing the application form, you are declaring that the information provided in the application form and supporting documentation is true and accurate.

Providing inaccurate, untrue or misleading information may be a breach of criminal law for which serious penalties may apply.

7. Further Information

Rural Finance

Telephone: 1800 260 425

Email: governmentservices@ruralfinance.com.au

Web: ruralfinance.com.au

Postal address: PO Box 1313, Bendigo Central, Victoria 3552

Agriculture Victoria

For more information about other bushfire recovery support being provided by the Victorian Government and Commonwealth Government, please contact Agriculture Victoria.

A range of other support is available to farmers affected by bushfire and potential applicants are strongly encouraged to participate in these programs.

Telephone: 136 186

Email: smoke.taint@agriculture.vic.gov.au

Web: <http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/emergencies/bushfires>

8. Evaluation of the Program

The Victorian Government may conduct an evaluation to determine the extent to which the program has met its objectives. Rebate applicants and recipients may be requested to provide information to assist in auditing during the program or the evaluation after the program's completion.

9. Confidentiality

Any personal information provided by the Applicant or a third party in an application will be collected by Rural Finance and Agriculture Victoria for the purpose of administration of the rebate program. This information may be provided to other Victorian Government bodies for the purpose of assessing Wine Grape Testing Rebate applications.

Data gathered through assessments may be compiled, aggregated and made anonymous by Rural Finance and Agriculture Victoria for reporting, evaluation and research purposes.

Any personal information collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred will be held in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) and other applicable laws.

Agriculture Victoria is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions' Privacy Policy can be found online at: <https://djpr.vic.gov.au/privacy>. Enquiries about access to information should be directed to the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions' Privacy Unit by email at privacy@ecodev.vic.gov.au.

10. Disclaimer

This publication may be of assistance to you but the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.

DJPR reserves the right in its absolute discretion to amend the guidelines without notice.