



Grapecheque- Interactive group learning for informed decision making

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Grapecheque is an innovative program for the delivery of extension services to wine and table-grape growers throughout the state of Victoria.

The program has the objective of getting growers working together to determine and address common local issues concerning the development of high quality, sustainable businesses, and the provision of access to best practice and quality management systems. The approach is based on group training techniques using adult learning principles

Grapecheque facilitates informed decision making by:

- introducing growers to new and existing technologies, and;
- assisting them with implementing these technologies into sustainable business enterprises

The approach

Grapecheque facilitators interact with a network of grower discussion groups who set their own agenda for learning at group meetings. The facilitators develop a schedule of events to suit the particular needs of each group, including;

- vineyard walks
- focused discussions
- presentations from technical experts
- bus tours, and;
- equipment demonstrations.

The facilitators work cooperatively with local viticultural associations, local wineries and growers to provide support in organising events and in providing the facilities for seminars and field days.

Advantages of Grapecheque

Growers have identified some of the advantages of the program as being:

- *Having access to experts and the information they provide-* Participants are able to meet researchers and discuss technical issues with them.
- *Knowledge of current Research and Development-* Grapecheque facilitators have access to a large variety of information and contacts, which they can access on behalf of the group. Facilitators also assist with

accessing funding for research projects within the groups.

- *Small groups provide a comfortable environment, where people openly talk about issues -* There is a strong sense of comfort within the groups, where people are able to discuss issues in a controlled environment.
- *Seeing how things work before they try them-* Ideas can be gathered whilst visiting other vineyards, as well as seeing new practices being undertaken in others' vineyards.
- *The learning styles used are very appropriate to growers needs, as opposed to formal courses-* Growers feel that because Grapecheque is designed to facilitate adult learning, they learn a lot more than they would reading a book.



Strathboogie Ranges Grapecheque group

Further Information

For further information about Grapecheque, please call the Customer Service Centre on 136 186, or visit <http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au>

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