

New online tool to identify best rootstocks

Based on recent research, Wine Australia has released a free online tool to help winegrape growers determine the rootstocks that will best suit their vineyard.

The **Grapevine Rootstock Selector** takes the user through a series of questions about their vineyard:

- How would you describe your region's climate?
- During a drought, how much irrigation water are you likely to have?
- What is your desired level of vine vigour?
- What is the salt content of your soil?
- How does the soil drain at your site?
- What is the pH of your soil?
- Do you need rootknot nematode-tolerant rootstocks?

that allow growers to identify a small number of appropriate rootstocks (Figure 1).

The Grapevine Rootstock Selector brings together knowledge from Australian and international research about the specific characteristics of different rootstocks and is based on a tool first developed in 2002 by Yalumba Nursery.

Wine Australia developed the Grapevine Rootstock Selector in conjunction with Nick Dry of Yalumba Nursery, and Dr Rob Walker and Peter Clingleffer of CSIRO. It draws on published, peer-reviewed research by respected Australian and international research organisations on how the rootstocks perform.

Wine Australia General Manager Research, Development and Extension Dr Liz Waters said the tool helps to share the insights gained from rootstock research in a simple format.

'This work distils the comprehensive research in this area into a useable tool that allows grape growers to choose specific rootstocks suited to their individual vineyard's conditions', Dr Waters said.

'The tool provides growers with research-backed information before they talk to their local nursery about different rootstocks.

'Planting rootstocks is an excellent way to manage known risks to vine health and supports long-term vineyard sustainability. Research has shown that certain rootstocks have the potential to help improve resilience and efficiency in the vineyard, for example, some are highly suited to low-water environments.

'The Grapevine Rootstock Selector has gathered the relevant research literature into one place, to help growers who may be considering rootstocks to see what might be the best options for their vineyard.

The criteria used in the Grapevine Rootstock Selector were selected as they confer directly to important information about the planting site. The rootstock attributes are supported by published research, but have not been weighted. That is to say, if one reference or ten references support the presence of an attribute, the Grapevine Rootstock Selector will pick them the same.

Selecting appropriate rootstock is critical for success in your vineyard (see the article: A field tool for assessing grapevine planting materials page 7).

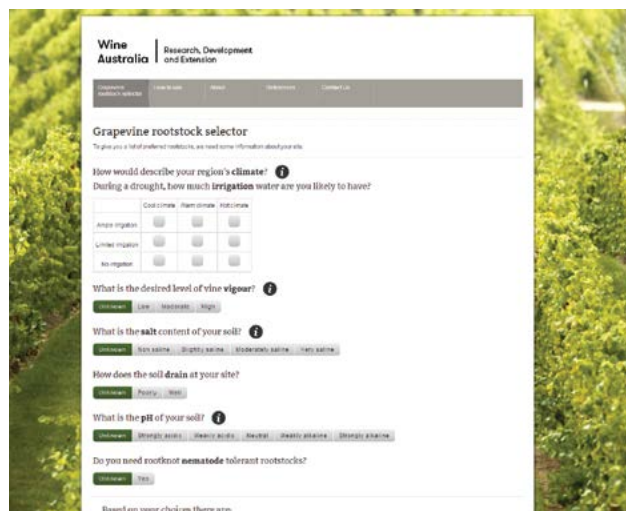


Figure 1. A screen shot of the rootstock selector website.