

Protocols for fire managers to minimise smoke taint in wine

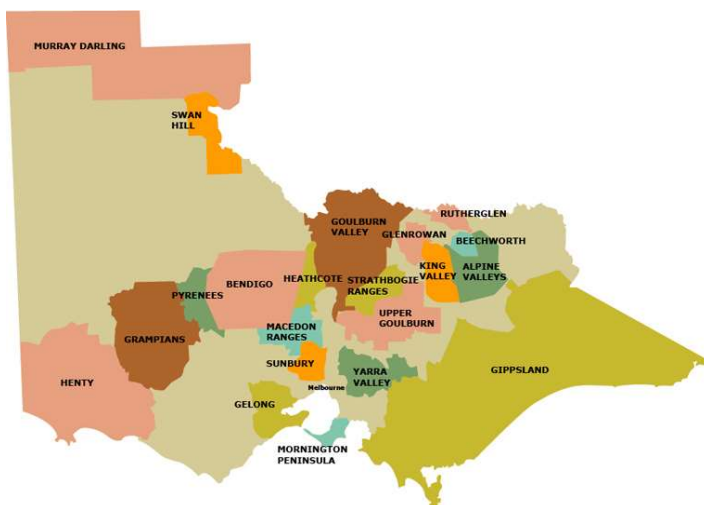
AGRICULTURE VICTORIA



Controlled burns at any time during the grape growing season may result in the absorption of smoke taint compounds into berries and leaves. The optimum time for prescribed burning is in late summer or early autumn. This coincides with key berry development phases when most grape varieties are very susceptible to smoke taint.

Wine grape production is a valuable industry to Victoria. It provides local employment and supports many regional communities through tourism. The following protocols aim to provide advice to fire managers on how to reduce the risk of berries absorbing smoke from prescribed burns and how to minimize smoke taint compounds in wine.

- Identify and contact vineyards and wineries located close to land where FFMVic or CFA controlled burns are likely to occur.



- Conduct twice-yearly meetings with local and regional wine industry associations (see map) to discuss the current Joint Fuel Management Program (JFMP) for the region.
- Invite growers and industry to raise concerns to FFMVic over controlled burns when the JFMP is released.
- Encourage growers who are concerned about specific burns to use the Planned Burns Victoria System on the FFMVic website to see when burns are planned and if necessary to set up automatic notification about timing of specific burns.
- Update vineyards and wineries prior to burns so that FFMVic and CFA are informed of seasonal issues that may assist fire managers with planning and undertaking burns. Continued communication may give fire managers the opportunity to burn in other areas or to undertake extra burns due to an early grape harvest.
- Prioritise burns so they occur after harvest in areas considered to be at high risk of contaminating vineyards with smoke taint.
- Avoid inversion layer conditions which prevent the smoke plume from rising and burning late in the day
- Plan to avoid burns creating smoke that immediately drifts into vineyards, as research has shown that fresh smoke poses a much greater risk than older smoke.
- Avoid repeated exposure of a vineyard to smoke during the season as smoke has a cumulative effect for taint.
- Conduct smoke modelling to estimate smoke dispersion during and after burns.

ACCESSIBILITY

For more information see factsheets at <http://www.hin.com.au/current-initiatives/smoke-taint-research> or contact Agriculture Victoria Research on 136186 or Ian Porter at La Trobe University on i.porter@latrobe.edu.au, 1300 528 762

