



National EcoVineyards Program – open call

Selection of up to 4 x EcoVineyards participants (EcoGrowers) in each participating region to establish demonstration sites

Background

Winegrape growers throughout Australia are being supported in their actions to enhance soil health and increase functional biodiversity in their vineyards via the national EcoVineyards program from July 2022 to June 2025.

Growers will have access to new region-specific resources, events, the establishment of up to four demonstration sites in each participating wine region and support from Regional On-ground Coordinators (ROCs). Over the next three-years, there will be many learning opportunities and strong regional collaboration to help future proof fruit quality, productivity, and the resilience of Australian vineyards.

All growers will benefit through the information-sharing activities associated with the EcoVineyards program including various grower events and resources (fact sheets, podcasts, webinars, social media posts etc.), grower discounts on supplies (where negotiated) and field walks associated with each demonstration site.

This national program is funded by Wine Australia and delivered by Retallack Viticulture Pty Ltd with significant support from regional communities. The Wine Grape Council of South Australia (WGCSA) is a founding partner.

Participating regions



For more information about the national EcoVineyards Program see www.ecovineyards.com.au

- Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/ecovineyards>
- Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/ecovineyards/>

For more information about the open call see <https://ecovineyards.com.au/ecogrowers-open-call/>



Strategic outcomes and focus areas

The national EcoVineyards program aims to accelerate adoption and practice change outcomes specified in Wine Australia's Strategic plan 2020-25 specifically:

- to increase the land area dedicated to enhancing functional biodiversity by 10 per cent, and
- to increase the use of vineyard cover crops and soil remediation practices by 10 per cent

The focus areas of the EcoVineyards program are:

- functional biodiversity,
- ground covers (including cover crops), and
- soil health.

We wish to partner with innovative and self-motivated wine grape growers who are willing to establish a demonstration site on their property to showcase the use of functional biodiversity, ground covers (including cover crops) and/or soil remediation practices.

EcoGrowers demonstration sites (up to 4 in each region)

Benefits to the EcoGrower

Each selected EcoGrower will benefit from:

- Dedicated access to a designated Regional On-ground Coordinator (ROC) for approximately 15 hours per financial year x 3 years = 45 hours total, to assist with the planning and execution of the biodiversity action plan and the management of related expenses - standardised templates for this will be supplied by Retallack Viticulture. Approximate value up to \$4,500 (ex GST).
- Development of a Biodiversity Action Plan in Year 1, and case study in Year 3. Approximate value \$1,200 (ex GST).
- Benchmarking soil health to assess the chemical, physical and biological attributes of the demonstration Site in Year 1 and 3. Approximate value \$1,000 (ex GST)
- EcoVineyards demonstration site grant of up to \$4,000 (ex GST), with the final \$500 payable on completion of the case study in Year 3.
- Extras package: EcoVineyards corflute promotional sign, Ocloc photo point, Ocloc predator bird perch, 2 x microbat boxes, an EcoVineyards hat, Arborgreen sample pack (tree guards, stakes and weed mat), calico strips to assess soil microbiology, native grass seed sample pack and booklet. Approximate value \$850 (ex GST).
- Inclusion in relevant promotional activities.

Cash contribution by each participating EcoGrower (growers will be selected via an open call)

Each EcoGrower will be asked to contribute an upfront cash contribution of \$3,000 (the equivalent of \$1,000 per year) and in-kind contribution 1-2 days per year to secure their place in the EcoVineyards program.

This will cover attendance at workshops/field days in addition to the time required to prepare, plant, and maintain their demonstration site.

Grower benefit of \$11,550 / \$3,000 = 3.9 x return on investment

EcoVineyards funding per contracted EcoGrower		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	TOTAL
EcoGrower	ROC time (EcoGrower) 15 hours per year plus an additional 6 hours both in Year 1 (Biodiversity Action Plan) and Year 3 (case study)	\$ 2,100	\$ 1,500	\$ 2,100	\$ 5,700
	EcoGrower funding (extras package value \$850 and soil health benchmarking \$1,000) and demonstration site \$4,000	\$ 3,350	\$ 2,000	\$ 500	\$ 5,850
	Sub-total (ex GST)	\$ 5,450	\$ 3,500	\$ 2,600	\$11,550
	EcoGrower contribution (\$3,000) in year 1 (ex GST)	\$ 3,000			\$ 3,000
	Return on investment				3.9

Potential demonstration site ideas

We welcome a broad range of project ideas.

Some examples have been captured in existing case studies <https://ecovineyards.com.au/casestudies/> and may include (but are not limited to):

- Incorporating a diverse mix of:
 - grasses and forbs in the mid-row and/or undervine area,
 - woody prostrate groundcover species and/or low growing shrubs in and around the vineyard,
 - ground cover species (including cover crops) selected for their functional biodiversity and/or soil health benefits.
- Quantifying the benefits of a range of soil remediation practices on soil and plant health (including high fungal compost and compost tea preparations).
- Enhancing functional biodiversity outcomes and ecosystem services.
- Enhancing soil health in resting vineyards or restoring unprofitable vineyard sites to native vegetation for potential biodiversity benefits.

We do not want to duplicate effort where insights have already been gained but welcome the application of existing knowledge in new regions to accelerate practice change.

We will be developing a series of native plant community lists and resources for each region to assist in decision making processes.

Eligibility

We invite wine growers located within (or near) participating regions to express their interest in participating in the national EcoVineyards program. We will select up to 4 EcoGrower participants per region on merit (via this competitive open call) and who demonstrate a diversity of project ideas throughout a particular region.

Selection panel: The selection panel will comprise representatives from the partnering regional association, Regional On-ground Coordinator, Retallack Viticulture Pty Ltd and Wine Australia (including Evidn). Once selected, the EcoGrowers will be invited to sign an EcoGrower Agreement. The selection panel's decision will be final.

Timeline

Applications open: 17 October 2022

Applications close: 16 December 2022

For more information about the open call see <https://ecovineyards.com.au/ecogrowers-open-call/>

Please send your application to Nikki Zorzi from the EcoVineyards team admin@ecovineyards.com.au by **COB Friday 16 December 2022**. Late applications will not be accepted.

Successful applicants will be notified in February 2023

Application (see separate 'EcoGrower demonstration site application' word file)