



# Adoption strategies

The *GWRDC Strategic RD&E Plan 2012–17* identifies increasing the rate of adoption of R&D outcomes in the Australian wine sector as a priority.

## Discussion paper

The Australian wine sector is faced with the challenge of capturing comparative advantage through constant innovation in grape and wine production techniques, packaging technologies and various route-to-market strategies. GWRDC's investment in research and development (R&D) serves to ensure the Australian wine sector has the information necessary to remain innovative.

In the future, GWRDC will place an even stronger emphasis on extension and adoption of R&D. This will involve consideration of extension and adoption of R&D from the initial project design through to completion of the project. A combination of existing and new extension and adoption strategies will be used to support the delivery of GWRDC investment outputs and to help achieve best practice.

The value of GWRDC's investments is only truly realised when R&D outcomes are taken up and effectively implemented.

## GWRDC's current investments

The GWRDC currently invests in extension and adoption through:

- GWRDC Regional Program
- GWRDC Innovators' Network
- GWRDC electronic extension tools (website and e-newsletters)
- The Australian Wine Research Institute
- National Wine and Grape Industry Centre
- National Wine Extension & Innovation Network.

## GWRDC Regional Program

The Regional Program seeks to actively encourage and support innovation, extension and adoption in the Australian wine sector by helping winegrowers and winemakers adopt new tools and research findings to support a competitive Australian wine sector.

The program allows winegrowers and winemakers to:

- identify their region's highest priority innovation, extension and adoption issues
- evaluate new concepts and technology in their own region to measure regional benefits of adoption
- identify aspects of production that will ensure the region is sustainable into the future
- assist with the uptake of new tools and research findings.

Each Australian wine region can participate in the Regional Program. The maximum amount of funding available is based on the value of winegrape levies paid in the region, with higher producing regions able to access a greater proportion of the total funding pool. To ensure that meaningful

activities can be undertaken, regions with lower levels of production are clustered together. In total, there are 11 regional clusters. GWRDC partners with a regional industry organisation (Regional Partner) in each of the 11 regional clusters to administer the program.

### **GWRDC Innovators' Network**

The GWRDC Innovators' Network is a network of people actively engaged in winegrape production in the Australian wine sector who want to stay across the latest information and tools. Membership is free.

Members include viticulturists, consultants, industry development officers, grower liaison officers, agribusiness representatives, chemical resellers and state government extension officers. Members help spread knowledge to others in their regions through their networks and feed relevant information back to the GWRDC.

GWRDC sends members a monthly e-newsletter of the latest research and news, and we hold extension events in eleven regional clusters.

### **GWRDC website and e-newsletters**

A searchable database of the final reports of all GWRDC's research and development investments is available on the GWRDC website.

The website also contains all other extension materials, such as factsheets, guides, case studies, calculators, the GWRDC's R&D@Work newsletter in *The Australian and New Zealand Grapegrower and Winemaker* magazine and the Innovators' Network e-newsletter.

### **Australian Wine Research Institute (AWRI)**

GWRDC has provided significant funding to the AWRI to undertake extension activities to the broader Australian wine sector.

The extension services include:

- *Agrochemicals registered for use in Australian Viticulture* (dog book)
- AWRI eBulletins (practical advice for grapegrowers and winemakers)
- free searches and access to the John Fornachon Memorial Library
- regional roadshow and seminar program
- technical issue telephone 'hotline' (free service for levy payers)
- technical review (abstracts of current grape and wine technical literature).

### **National Wine and Grape Industry Centre (NWGIC)**

GWRDC's Knowledge Development and Management from Topical Research & Development project with NWGIC aims to capture the most topical research findings from the NWGIC and other national and international sources.

Extension activities include:

- National Spring Vine Health Field Day workshops
- other topical workshops
- production and distribution of the Grapevine Management Guide
- annual Field Day.

### **National Wine Extension & Innovation Network**

The National Wine Extension and Innovation Network (NWEIN) will coordinate wine sector extension and innovation services to ensure those services are delivered in the most timely, client-focused and cost-effective manner.

## Resources

There are a number of different models proposed to explain how adoption happens. Rogers (2003) developed a 'diffusion of innovation'<sup>1</sup> model which categorised groups based on the time it takes them to adopt a new concept; innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards (Figure 1). Reducing the time for the 'diffusion of an innovation' is important to realising greater benefits for the wine industry. Critical to realising the benefits is understanding the likelihood of successful adoption of a new innovation.

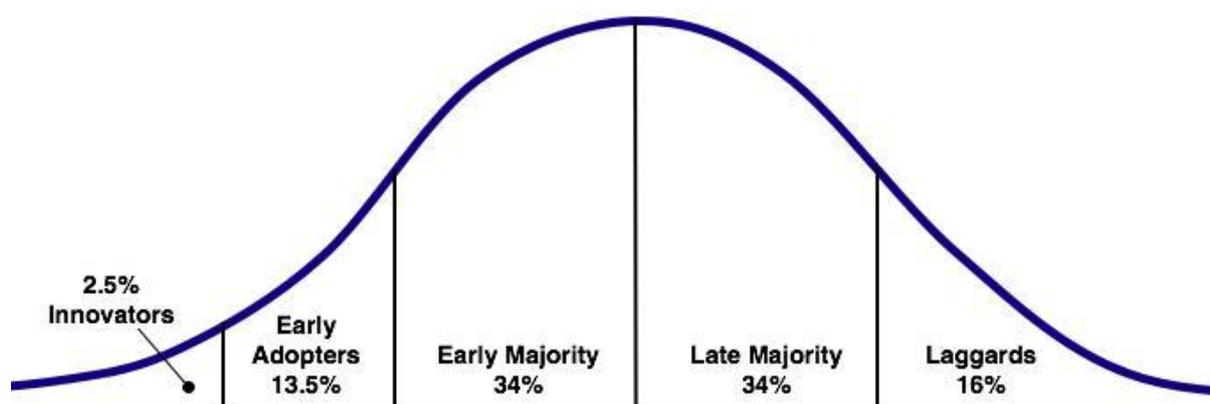


Figure 1: Relationship between types of adopters classified by their innovativeness

While the model is useful it is not perfect and, if used inappropriately, can easily be misinterpreted. The model does not factor in the size of the 'market' for the innovation, which can be described as the number of people the innovation provides a relative advantage for over the existing technology. For each innovation, a new curve must be considered as the curve aims to categorise groups based on their behaviour toward the innovation, rather than their personality traits.

Other Research & Development Corporations (RDCs) take various approaches to adoption based on their respective industry. GWRDC recognises there may also be opportunities to learn from other RDCs and the Primary Industries Standing Committee Research, Development and Extension Wine Sector Partners.

An adoption 'framework' of interest is ADOPT (Adoption and Diffusion Outcome Prediction Tool). The tool was developed by CSIRO with funding from Future Farm Industries CRC and aims to help research organisations and others increase their understanding of the factors influencing the adoption of agricultural innovations. More information on ADOPT can be found at [www.csiro.au/ADOPT](http://www.csiro.au/ADOPT).

The Stage Gate framework is a model often used to guide the launch of a new product into the market. The model consists of five activities (stages) followed by an equal number of management decision points (gates).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rogers, E. (2003), *Diffusion of Innovations*, 5th Edition, Free Press, New York

<sup>2</sup> Cooper, R. G. (1990), 'Stage-Gate Systems: A New Tool for Managing New Products', *Business Horizons*, May-June, pp. 44-54.

## Aim of workshop

GWRDC's stakeholders have identified adoption strategies as a high-priority area for future investment to ensure that the results of our investments in research and development are extended to the sector in a way that encourages the widest adoption of the results by the sector.

There are many opinions on the best means to encourage adoption of innovation in agriculture and the aim of the workshop is to identify future areas for investment by GWRDC that build on the work already being undertaken by the sector.

## Discussion questions

- How can the wine sector encourage an increased rate of adoption?
- How do we identify the target audience of R&D outcomes before investing in the R&D? What drives the target audience's interest in the R&D?
- How can the wine sector better coordinate its extension and adoption offerings?
- What information and tools do extension professionals (viticultural or winemaking consultants, industry development officers, chemical resellers, etc.) need from GWRDC to facilitate and increase adoption by levy payers?