

Reach the top recruiters instantly

 Click!

Publication: Times Of India Pune; Date:2008 Aug 21; Section:Times City; Page Number 4



‘Traditional cultivation practices need to change’

Size, colour and taste of grapes go a long way in deciding the quality of wine. To get these right, the vines must be planted, watered and nurtured properly. Diana Davidson, Australian viticulturist, who manages 5,000 acres of vineyard back home in addition to the 150 acres owned by her family, is in the city to guide the state’s grape farmers and help them grasp the basics of growing grapes best suited for wine making. Davidson speaks to TOI

What are your observations on the Indian grape farming for wine production?

I think there is a difference of approach in the way vineyards are managed in India. These land stretches need specific methods of administering fertilisers and irrigation. I observe that the same manure that are used for other crops are used for the grapevines. This is a problem, since grapevines need different fertilisers if the berries have to acquire some of the important properties. Studying the soil is very importance for planning the nutrient application for grapevines.

What are the peculiarities of irrigation?

Often, the vines are given more water than necessary. We observed that excess water can make the plant canopy look lush green though there is no material difference in the quality of grape. Here also, studying the soil is important, as different soils need different volume of water. Even different patches within the same stretch of land can have different water needs. All this determines the balance of sweetness and acidity in the berries.

How much more of grape plantation is feasible in India?

Any place where the temperature does not rise above 35 degree Celsius is suitable for grape plantation. However, other factors such as height from the mean sea level, distance from the coast or rainfall will have a bearing on the crop.

What is the optimum yield possible under best conditions?

Each bunch, not exceeding 250 grams, would be ideal. This is possible with 4000 plants in a hectare. Also mechanisation can add to the quality and yield of the fruit. However, we must bear in mind that each country will have land and climate of its own. India can’t expect to make French or Italian or Chilean wines, but can get as close as possible by adopting the right cultivation practices. In any case, we can certainly do a better job than we are right

now.

