

WINE INDUSTRY EYES NEW TECHNOLOGY

By Andrew Collins

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A technological tool being developed by the Gates Foundation to ease world hunger, is being considered for use by the Australian Wine industry.

The new technology was presented to wine industry stakeholders at the National Wine Centre this week by Phillip Pardey, a professor of Applied Economics at the University of Minnesota.

Professor Pardey says the new technology could benefit Australian wine grape growers.

"What we're trying to do is build bridges between those people who do crop models, in terms of modelling the impacts of new technologies or new management approaches to dealing with crop yields and bringing that to bear with economic modelling frameworks and drawing on a lot of work that I'm co-leading for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation trying to put a lot of those modelling frameworks in place to help them improve their own targeting of research dollars to agriculture, which they are gearing up to invest in a large way."

On a state and national level, Kym Anderson, professor of Economics at the University of Adelaide says utilising the technology being developed by the Gates Foundation is something to be seriously considered by the Wine industry

"If you take an example, like a Clare Valley Riesling producer, the question that might be in his mind...is in 50 years time is Clare still going to be the best location for Riesling or should we be moving into a warmer type grape, maybe shiraz as the dominant variety we grow because of changes in temperature and other aspects of the climate that are going to alter." he said.

"That sort of issue is the sort of thing we'd be looking at in a national context and see how the optimal location of production of different varieties changes as climate changes and also water availability of course - the two things go together."

In this report: Phillip Pardey, professor, University of Minnesota; Kym Anderson professor, University of Adelaide

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