



The November issue of the *Grapegrower & Winemaker* features the Penfolds Magill Estate cellar door, illustrating this issue's theme of cellar door and DtC sales.



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Hans Mick Editor

As the November issue of the *Grapegrower & Winemaker* is written, Australian wine exporters are nervously waiting for the next move by China as it ups the ante in the ongoing tense trade relations between the two countries. There have recently been punitive measures aimed at Aussie coal and cotton, after beef and barley had earlier been targeted, with fears that Beijing may soon impose tariffs on wine imports. There are potential triggers for such a move this month as China's anti-dumping probe enters its next critical phase. Many across the industry hope that this can be resolved without crippling damage to our producers.

On the home front, there are optimistic stirrings of renewed business for cellar doors as local visitors exploring their own backyards fill the void left by the absence of international tourists. 2020 has already seen a surge in online, mail-order and wine club sales as direct to consumer channels have been ratcheted up to find better ways to market in light of COVID-19 restrictions. Our theme this month is Cellar Doors & DtC Sales and you'll find the results from Wine Australia's latest Direct-to-Consumer Survey outlined on page 11. Journalist Samuel Squire provides further in-depth coverage of just how cellar doors and DtC sales have fared during the course of the pandemic in a special report on page 72.

Turning to the vineyard, viticulturist Ben Rose takes a look at why soil organic matter is so crucial for long-term vine productivity and soil health (page 16). We are also

introduced to Tasmania's new VinØ program, focusing on sustainable practices (page 20), while changes to SA's Plant Quarantine Standards are examined (page 24). We are also shown the results from a five-year project looking at ways to better grow Sangiovese in the King Valley (page 30).

Associate editor Sonya Logan informs winemakers about the benefits of utilising automated tank temperature control systems (page 44). Staying in the winery, engineering consultant Ian Jeffery delves into maintenance issues when it comes to refrigeration systems (page 50). The potential of fermentation sequestration and recovery is also explored (page 58). We change tack to meet this month's Young Gun, sommelier Liinaa Berry, whose journey from Mauritius to the Australian wine industry is unique (page 62). For our Behind the Top Drops column, we learn about the exceptional, blended Wolf Blass The Master Cabernet Sauvignon Shiraz (page 67).

With consumer habits continuously evolving, we shine a light on hybrid drinks in our regular Uncorked column. There seems to be momentum in the market behind these wine-infused beverages and we ask if these are here to stay or just passing through (page 78). Meanwhile, Sustainable Winegrowing Australia's newly launched sustainability trust mark has received praise from wine retailers, indicating its likely acceptance by consumers (page 82).

There's much more inside, so enjoy the read!