

NEW SHOOTS ON THE VINE



The next crop of budding grapegrowers and winemakers will soon emerge, thanks to a new program.

Local grapegrowers and winemakers have joined forces with Marcellin Technical College to create future career pathways for young people in the McLaren Vale region.

The new study program, which will be offered at Marcellin College as a Certificate III in Viticulture/Water Management, will provide 10 to 30 traineeships among McLaren Vale grapegrowers, vineyards and irrigators.

'We developed the program in response to an approach from McLaren Vale grapegrowers last year,' says Jim Fenoughty, Principal of Marcellin Technical College. 'The industry is traditionally seasonal, with backpackers and casual workers hired for short periods,' Jim says.

'Local growers are now concerned about workforce sustainability and skills shortages, particularly given the imminent retirement of many of the older generation of grapegrowers in the region.'

'The grapegrowers and winemakers are so keen to get young people that they can train their way. There are also

opportunities for continuing employment with the growers after the traineeships are complete.'

Jim says the new program will offer worthwhile qualifications in many career pathways. 'While we're trying to develop workforce sustainability in the grapegrowing industry, this qualification can lead to other things, such as horticulture, council work, nurseries, parks and gardens and irrigation.' John Petrucci, of Petrucci Vineyards, has been integral to the development of the program. He's been a McLaren Vale grower for 30 years. Along with many fellow grapegrowers, John has become increasingly concerned about the future of the industry and the importance of training young growers.

'We saw a need for a program to get young people involved in the industry,' says John. 'These traineeships will be a great thing for the area and for its young people. They get training and employment opportunities in their own region, and the industry gets a sustainable workforce.' John is pictured with Marcellin Technical College student Ben Palmer.

The program allows students to complete their SACE while completing a traineeship. The placements will provide hands-

on training similar to other trades, where students will have time working with grapegrowers on-site during vintage and pruning times. This will be interspersed throughout the year with other competencies like chemical handling, tractor driving, pump repairs and irrigation. The hands-on component will be complemented by studies at Marcellin.

City of Onkaparinga Economic Development Officer Glenn Hickling says council helped set the scene for the new program through its work as part of the Southern Adelaide Economic Development Board.

'The board set up a Water Industry Forum Group, whose members included Marcellin Technical College,' Glenn says. 'As a result, the need for workforce planning and skills development in the irrigation and horticultural industries was identified. Marcellin took this idea forward and developed their program.'

'We are very supportive of courses like these that fill skills shortages in our region.'

For further details on the new program call Gianni Petrucci on (08) 8186 9700.



LOCAL YOUTH STEP UP

Local young people are helping to design the next generation of Onkaparinga Youth Services.

Southern Junction Community Services has entered into a partnering relationship with us to run our three youth centres.

The city's youth are now having a say on the types of services and activities that will be offered and are being invited to join reference groups at the centres to work with staff and other agency representatives in developing ongoing programs.

To set the ball rolling, three special events were recently held. The VOLT Youth Enterprise Centre, Aldinga Beach, Reynella



would like to see at each centre. A good range of ideas were recorded and these will inform the first stages of shaping what is offered. Jordan Corfield, Sarah Wright and James Wright are pictured at the event held at the VOLT in Aldinga.

Our aim is to provide a variety of after school, school holiday activities and special weekend events to young people, with a focus on art, recreation, music and culture.

Our age bracket for these activities is 8-25 years, paying special attention to those aged 10-18.

The idea is to provide services and activities that allow as many young people as possible to participate and places for local young people to come together.

By engaging young people in interesting activities, we hope to increase opportunities for them to build positive connections with youth workers, their peers and their communities. Our vision is for Onkaparinga Youth Services to encourage and support young people to reach their full potential.