



MITCHELTON WINES

Mitchelton's Murray River Water Savings

November 2006

Water is vital to Mitchelton Wines, and with the Goulburn River – Victoria's largest tributary to the Murray River system – currently under threat of drought, a new waste water management system has been developed to help the winery and the river deal with its water needs.

Mitchelton's new water management system will reduce Mitchelton's reliance on the river by 20 million litres a year – 15% of the winery's irrigation volume. The system will see wetlands built to recycle the winery's wastewater.

Mitchelton Vitiiculturist John Beresford believes the only way to maintain the quality of the wines produced as well as ensure sustainability of the site through the current drought and beyond, is to protect and support Mitchelton's most precious natural resources.

"At Mitchelton, we view ourselves as custodians of the land. Our goal is to work respectfully and harmoniously with the environment to develop a true understanding of the estate, thereby ensuring our wines are truly expressive of this unique site."

Previous water management systems relied solely on containment and evaporation. The new water management system provides for production expansion and recycling of water for irrigation. Wastewater is pumped to a solar-powered aerated primary pond, and through microbial activity, assists in precipitating solids and reducing BOD and COD levels. Water is then gravity-fed via convoluted channels planted with indigenous reed species to assimilate nitrogen and phosphorus. Treated water is finally sand filtrated and then sent to a holding reservoir for vineyard irrigation.

The system will be fully functional for the 2007 vintage. It is hoped that the new water management system will help regeneration of wetland habitats for local common and threatened waterbirds and frogs.

#

For further information:

John Beresford
Mitchelton
PH: 03 5736 2218
E: john.beresford@mitchelton.com.au