

Research and Development in the Mildura Region



SunRISE 21 uses the latest digital mapping technologies to provide valuable information to local industry.

SunRISE 21 Inc.

SunRISE 21 is an incorporated, community based organisation specialising in mapping and spatial information services. Since 1995, SunRISE 21 has been expanding its expertise and capacity to provide powerful communication, management and planning tools. These resources are accessed by individuals, industry organisations, research agencies, businesses and government agencies; across local, regional and National programs.

SunRISE mapping and information products are customised to meet specific client information needs through integration, analysis and concise presentation of digital data from a range of sources.

SunRISE 21 employs seven, full and part time, staff. It has a voluntary Board of management comprising ten community leaders and key industry representatives. As a not-for-profit association, income generated and property owned by SunRISE 21 is used solely within the organisation for the benefit of the community.

SunRISE 21 recognises that the region supports a diverse range of industries with a unique climate, land and water resources. As such, the organisation uses the latest digital mapping technologies to provide information for industry planning, management and sustainable development opportunities.

www.sunrise21.org.au

Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)

CSIRO has conducted research for the horticultural industries from the Merbein site over a long period. The site has a long and rich history. Research commenced soon after the site was selected in 1919 by the Mildura and District Research Committee, with the Mildura Vineyards Protection Board taking control of the site in 1920. CSIR, the forerunner of CSIRO, assumed full responsibility for the station in 1927. The Station later became the CSIRO Division of Horticultural Research in 1967, with research embracing viticulture, plant physiology, biochemistry, fruit processing and fruit trees. Research expanded to include citrus breeding in the 1980s. The Merbein Laboratory became part of the CSIRO Division of Plant Industry in 1997.

There have been many achievements over the years. The early viticultural research was focussed on development of better and more efficient vineyard management practices and the introduction, breeding and evaluation of improved varieties and clones suited to Australian conditions. Significant achievements were new systems for lighter or minimal pruning of wine grapes, the first trials of grapevine mechanical harvesters in Australia, the introduction of nematode resistant rootstocks, improved trellis systems, improved Sultana clones and better methods for production and postharvest quality management of dried grapes. Several new varieties have been released from breeding e.g. the wine grapes Tarrango, Taminga, Tyrian and Cienna, the dried grapes Sunmuscat (a joint development with United States Department of Agriculture) and Carina, new muscat flavoured and seedless table grapes, new easy peel 'no to low pip' mandarins and three new grapevine rootstocks.

In May 2008, CSIRO announced the staged closure of the Merbein laboratory over a period of 12 to 30 months. Over that period, research on dried grapes, table grapes and citrus is to be wound down and then ceased, while research on wine grapes and rootstocks for wine grapes will be maintained, but to be transferred and operated from the Adelaide laboratory of the CSIRO Division of Plant Industry. CSIRO will cease research at the Merbein site in 2011-2012. However, a research farm at Koorlong is to be retained as a warm region trial site for research on wine grapes and grapevine rootstocks, with research at the site to be directed from the Division's Adelaide Laboratory.

www.csiro.au/plantindustry