



THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE STUDY OF VIRUS AND VIRUS-LIKE DISEASES OF THE GRAPEVINE

RECOMMENDATION

The International Council for the Study of Virus and Virus-like Diseases of the Grapevine (ICVG), recognises over 70 infectious agents affecting grapevine (viruses, viroids and phytoplasmas), many of which can be highly detrimental to this crop, having a negative impact on plant vigour and longevity, as well as on the quality and quantity of the yield.

Certification of grapevine nursery stock is a powerful and effective tool to control these agents, that enables vineyards to economically and sustainably maintain quality and productivity.

Certified grapevines are derived from pathogen tested, clonally selected primary sources. The certification process should specify conditions to prevent and detect subsequent infection of nursery plants by regulated pests, ensure clonal integrity, and permit tracing the certified grapevines to the originally selected and tested plants.

Inadequate certification standards have repeatedly resulted in disease problems for growers and nurserymen.

Infected propagation material is largely responsible for the spread of diseases among and within viticultural countries. Thus, all efforts should be made to improve its sanitary conditions.

However, valuable grape genetic resources exist which are infected with virus but are essential to the preservation of world viticultural heritage.

In order to preserve valuable grape clones and varieties, we propose two sanitary classes. Certified selections should be tested for specific pathogens. Class 1 should include only grape nursery stock which tests negative for the most damaging diseases/pathogens. **It would be eligible to move between regulated areas under the control of individual National Plant Protection Organizations. Class 2 would be a specific pathogen-tested certification system for stock which remains within a regulated area and is only distributed with disclosure of health status. No other stock should move outside regulated areas.**

The agents that should be controlled by the Class 1 certification program are those associated with infectious degeneration and grapevine decline (nepoviruses); leafroll disease and associated closteroviruses (grapevine leafroll associated viruses 1, 2, and 3); rugose wood (GVA, GVB and GVD); and phytoplasmas (flavescence dorée, bois noir, and other grapevine yellows).



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In the future, technology should make it possible to exclude additional disease-causing viruses from the certified stock, including the causal agents of fleck and rupestris stem pitting. Until that time, a moratorium will be established for these viruses.

The regional certification standards for Class 2 stock should be created at a local level based on the rate of endemic infection, regional viticultural conditions, and the need for preservation of heritage germplasm.

As efforts are made to harmonize grapevine certification protocols, high standards are essential to ensure that no viticultural area is compromised by the introduction and spread of diseases.

Approved unanimously on September 17 2003 by the General Assembly of the ICVG in the course of its 14th Meeting at Locorotondo, Italy