

Bianco d'Alessano

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Background

Bianco d'Alessano (bee-AHN-koh dah-less-AHN-oh) is grown throughout Puglia (southern Italy), particularly in the vicinity of Taranto. It is used in the DOC wines of Gravina, Martina Franca, Locorotondo, Ostuni and Lizzano. Most often it is used as a component of a blend with varieties such as Verdeca; however, a recent revival has led to an increase in varietal wines. It is also grown in Calabria. Synonyms include Acchiappapalmento, Bianco di Lessarne, Iuvarello Nuiono and Verdurino. The global area is 419 ha (2010) with almost 100% in Italy. There are a few hectares in Australia and at least four wine producers.

Viticulture

Budburst is late and maturity is mid to late (end of March/early April in the Riverland). Vigour is high. Bunches are large and well-filled to compact with thick-skinned medium berries. Yield

is moderate to high. Spur pruning is successful in Australia. This variety performs well in hot climates.

Wine

Bianco d'Alessano wines are straw-coloured with good acidity, and often with a tannic and textured palate. Descriptors include fresh pear, citrus and savoury. Consumer interest has been good in Australia. Salena Estate's Bianco d'Alessano (from Riverland fruit) was awarded 'Best Wine of Show' at the Australian Alternative Varieties Wine Show in 2010. Prior to that show, few people had heard of this variety. For more information on experience with this variety in Australia, refer to *Wine Vitic. J.* 26(1) (2011).

For further information on this and other emerging varieties, contact Marcel Essling at the AWRI (marcel.essling@awri.com.au or 08 8313 6600) to arrange the presentation of the Alternative Varieties Research to Practice program in your region.