

# TABLE GRAPES & DRIED FRUIT

## TABLE GRAPES

Table grapes are a large component of the Mildura Region's grape production accounting for 69% of the total Australian table grape production. The labour-intensive nature of the table grape crop (unlike dried or wine grapes) requires the industry to employ a great number of permanent and itinerant workers. Backpackers are drawn to the region 9 months of the year to assist growers meet the demand of harvest. Australian Table Grape Association recent reports indicate around 40 varieties of table grapes; where local growers to the Mildura Region produce over 20 varieties. 60% of Table Grapes produced in Australia are sold domestically and 40% are exported overseas. The three main export destinations are; Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia. The Table Grape industry is highly competitive with prices ranging from \$10 to \$30 per box depending on quality and current market prices.

### MILDURA REGION TABLE GRAPE SEASONALITY CHART

Table grape varieties	Availability of table grapes in the Mildura Region
Red Globe	Feb - May
Menindee Seedless	Jan - Feb
Crimson Seedless	Mar - May
Calmeria	Apr - May
Red Emperor	Apr - May
O'Hanez	Apr - May
Ralli Seedless	Jan - Feb
Red Rob	Mar - Apr
Cardinal	Jan - Feb
Stanley Seedless	Mar - Apr
Ribier	Mar
Nyora	Apr - May
Jade Seedless	Apr - May
Multi-use varieties for table	Unknown
Thompson Seedless	Feb - Apr

Total Aust production (t) 02/03	Total value of Aust production \$A Million 02/03	Total Aust exports (t) 02/03	Value of Aust export 02/03 \$A Million	Total production by tonne in *GI area, SA, VIC & NSW 03	Mildura Regions* estimated % of total Aust production 02/03
86,523t	\$171.7m	31,600t	\$96.5m	North West VIC - 48,408t Big Rivers NSW - 9,010t Lower Murray SA - 1,976t <b>Total - 59,394t</b>	69%

Source - ABS Wine & Grape Industry 2003.

\* To evaluate the Mildura Region Table Grape statistics the use of ABS wine and grape production data was used, and therefore includes the wider geographical area zones of Big Rivers NSW, North West Victoria and Lower Murray SA. Therefore the Mildura Regions estimated % includes the three geographical areas as data specific only to the Mildura Region has not been surveyed.

## GEOGRAPHICAL ZONE DESCRIPTION

Geographical Area Zone	Region
North West Victoria	Murray-Darling, Swan Hill and other
Big Rivers	Murray-Darling, Perricoota, Swan Hill and other
Lower Murray	Riverland and other

[www.growmilduraregion.com.au](http://www.growmilduraregion.com.au)



## PACKAGING AND PROCESSING SERVICES

Packaging and processing of table grapes is usually carried out in packing sheds and has recently diversified to field packing. Polystyrene boxes are usually used to pack bulk fruit for distribution and some are bagged for supermarket supply. Individual table grape growers generally carry out packaging services and smaller growers contract the larger grower/producer to package their fruit. There are certain skills to packing table grapes, and to ensure they are kept in optimum condition experienced pickers and packers are sought each harvest.

## CONTACTS

### Sunraysia Table Grape Growers Association Inc.

PO Box 4195  
Mildura VIC 3502  
Tel 61 3 5024 5692

### Australian Table Grapes Association Inc.

(Dept. of Primary Industry)  
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www.horticulture.com.au/industry/tablegrape.asp

## DRIED GRAPES

95% of Australia's dried grapes are produced in the Mildura Region. The success of the dried grape industry can be attributed to the dry climate, soil type and the irrigation systems in the area. The main varieties grown for dried grapes are Sultanas, Currants, Raisins and Sunmuscats. Thompson Seedless (GA Sultanas), normally grown for the fresh fruit market, can also be dried when excess has been produced for the table grape industry.

The industry was established in the early 1890s. At that time, the district's founding fathers, the Chaffey Brothers had around 8,000 acres of the region under irrigation, supplying around 3,500 pioneering fruit growers. However, in those days transporting fresh fruit by river to Echuca and by road to Melbourne took many days, and produce would often spoil. When a promised rail link to Mildura didn't eventuate, growers began drying their grapes for freighting to Melbourne and other markets.

Today the high quality, light golden coloured fruit produced in the Mildura Region demands a premium on domestic and international markets.

## THE AUSTRALIAN DRIED FRUITS ASSOCIATION

The Australian Dried Fruit Association (ADFA) was established by growers in 1907 to protect their interests, and has seen massive industry change over almost a century. The head office is located in Mildura.

At present an initiative to re-position the dried grape industry and stimulate investment is being developed by the ADFA in conjunction with a number of industry stakeholders and the Federal Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. The Australian Dried Fruits Industry Strategic Plan 2004-2007 will essentially drive the industry forward, increasing production and improving the viability of growers. Copies of the Strategic Plan are available from the ADFA.

The ADFA offers a wide range of extension and promotion services to the industry. It operates the ADFA Shop in Deakin Avenue, Mildura, as a shopfront for the industry with a focus on the tourist trade.

### CONTACT

**Australian Dried Fruit Association (ADFA)**  
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## DRIED GRAPE PRODUCTION – GROWER DELIVERY VOLUME BY VARIETY, TOTAL VALUE TO AUSTRALIA AND THE MILDURA REGION

Dried grape varieties	Hectares*	Mildura Region production (t) (Total received weight)	Mildura Region farm gate value 04 (based on average prices)	Mildura Region % of Aust production
Sultanas	8,490 incl Ha Thompson Seedless	22,034t	\$32m	99%
Currants	565Ha	2,334t	\$4.2m	80%
Raisins	1,250Ha	1,308t	\$2.2m	100%
Sunmuscat	247Ha	1,181t	\$1.7m	100%
Other varieties (Shirana, flame seedless, natural raisins)	177Ha	120t	\$168,000	
Naturals	unknown	421t	\$610,000	
GA Sultanas (Thompson Seedless excess from table grape industry)	See sultanas	509t	\$687,150	
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,729Ha</b>	<b>27,907t</b>	<b>\$ 41,6m</b>	<b>95%</b>

\* Hectares from 2003 SunRISE 21 Crop Report and the Murray-Darling Region. Hectares provided by 2003 SunRISE 21 Crop Report should not be used in correlation with the production volume listed above as the hectares provided refer to different regions and represent multi-use varieties that may be used for dried, table or wine purposes.  
Data source, Australian Dried Fruit Association - Australian Dried Grape Production - Season 2004

## PROCESSING & PACKAGING FACILITIES SUNBEAM FOODS

The Sunbeam Foods brand name is known by millions of Australian consumers. Sunbeam markets an array of dried fruit products, both domestically and internationally, including sultanas, raisins, currants, mixed fruit, apricots, prunes, peaches, pears and other niche varieties. Sunbeam products are packaged in a variety of forms, ranging from retail branded consumer packs to bulk industrial and food service products. The company has been at the forefront of new technologies and industry development. The Sunbeam head office is located in the Mildura Region, where its major dried grape processing facilities are located.

It is internationally certified to ISO9002 and HACCP Quality Standards. In early 2004, Sunbeam completed the purchase of the South Australian-based Angas Park Fruit Company, a major player in the dried tree fruit industry, with dried grape interests in the Mildura Region.

Sunbeam's website includes a comprehensive outline of the company's activities, educational resources and children's activities.

### CONTACT

#### Sunbeam Foods

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