

ORGANICS/ BIO-DYNAMICS

Organic and Bio-Dynamic production is considered to have enormous international growth potential. Demand is being fuelled by greater consumer awareness on issues ranging from health and nutrition to food safety, labelling and genetically modified organisms. Growth estimates for Australia from the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation are 20-25% per annum. The number of certified operators in Australia is increasing at a rate of 7-8% per annum*.

The expansion in the number of certified Organic and Bio-Dynamic producers is reflected in the Mildura Region, but the local industry remains small. Produce grown organically or bio-dynamically includes wine, table and dried grapes, citrus, avocados, stone fruits, almonds and vegetables. Dry growing conditions are regarded as a considerable advantage, reducing the incidence of crop disease.

A not-for-profit venture, Organics on Eleventh, was opened in Mildura in 2002. Modelled on a food co-operative, the venture promotes and retails organic produce grown in the region.

*National Association for Sustainable Agriculture Australia

PROCESSING

DRIED FRUIT: An organic processing facility for dried fruit, Benburn Organic Packers Pty Ltd, has been established near Irymple, for de-stemming, sizing, cleaning and packing.

WINE GRAPES: Robinvale Organic Wines is certified by the Bio-Dynamic Research Institute of Australia, and its products are entitled to carry the international trademark "Demeter".

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