

Genetic engineering could help wine industry face challenges

We are decades away from seeing commercially planted genetically engineered (GE) grapevines, but the research has already begun. All major grape-growing countries in the world are studying grape genomics and engineering, including Australia, Italy, Germany, USA and South Africa, with research mostly focused on disease resistance. When the pathogenic apocalypse descends on the world's grapevines, scientists will be ready to fight back.

The main public concern around GMO edibles is food safety, which I've never really understood. Crossing an apple with an apple breeds an apple. Genetically engineering an apple still makes it an apple. A safe, edible apple. GMO crops are subjected to rigorous safety testing – much more stringent than crops bred through traditional means (which is perplexing since genetic engineering typically changes a single gene with unimagined precision, but breeding randomly alters multiple genes with no way to predict the effect). Nearly all 'concerns' about GMOs are unfounded or simply stem from wild misinformation.

Talk around genetically engineered grapevines in the local wine industry seems nearly non-existent. Perhaps this is because any commercial reality is so far off. Perhaps keeping heads firmly in sand and succumbing to the oversupply of panic and the undersupply of facts is just easier. But when that next apocalyptic disease hits our picturesque vineyards, we'll be glad that salvation was already years in the making.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [MARTHÈLIZE TREDoux: IN DEFENCE OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS](#)