



GUIDELINES FOR PLANTING DORMANT GRAPEVINES

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1. COLLECTION OF VINES

- Phone ahead of time for a collection date.
- Please verify that the correct number of vines, as well as scion and rootstock clones, have been loaded onto the truck as per order. Vines are supplied in **bundles of 50**.
- Vines need to be kept moist during transportation. Vines will not be loaded if there isn't a protective tarpaulin or covering for them.
- Transport during hot days should preferably be avoided.
- **Keep tags for planting records.**
- In many instances your grapevine order may contain more than one source of scion and/ or rootstock material. All this information is to be found on the tags and your delivery note. Please ensure that each lot is planted separately and the changeover in the vineyards is marked clearly.
- Call us immediately if you are not satisfied with your order in any way.
- All our vines have been **certified by the Vine Improvement Association (VIA)** and meet the following standards:
 - a. Graft union is strong and firm.
 - b. At least 1 mature shoot above the graft union is 150mm long and 3mm wide at the internodium.
 - c. Rootstock is 200mm long and a minimum of 5mm at the internodium.
 - d. 2 Strong roots evenly distributed around base no shorter than 100mm.
 - e. No dead or damaged parts on the plant.

2. STORAGE PRIOR TO PLANTING

- **Vines should ideally be planted the day following collection.** If you are unable to do so, they can be packed into a harvesting bin filled with water for up to two weeks. Make sure that the water is replaced every third day and that the vines are in a cool, shady spot.
- If the timeframe is longer the dormant vines can be stored in cold storage for a few months. Pack the vines in an airtight plastic bag and ensure that the cool room has the correct temperature (1-4°C) and humidity control to keep humidity between 70-80%.
- When planting in the same season, remove vines from the cool room and place the vines upright in a bin and fill with water past the graft union. Allow them to stand in water for 24 hours before planting.
- Vines that have been in cold storage for periods **exceeding 6 months** need to stand upright for at least 5 days in water before they can be planted in the vineyard. The water level must be above the graft union but below the buds to prevent buds rotting.
- The sudden change from cold to warm temperatures stimulates bud burst and the vines need to be planted as soon as possible.
- Replace the water regularly if unable to plant the vines all at once.

3. PLANTING

- Vines must be planted before buds start to swell, except in the case of cold room vines, where it is preferable that the buds are swollen.
- Vines must not be planted in soil that is either too wet or too dry. In soils that are too wet, roots will die back due to oxygen shortages (waterlogging), i.e. they will turn black and start to rot.
- Don't transport too many vines from the storage area to the vineyard as drying out is a big risk. Only remove what you can plant in a certain time frame. Roots must be kept moist at all times during the planting procedure and vines that are waiting to be planted should be kept in the shade.

- Where vines are to be trimmed before planting choose the most upright cane and remove the rest.
- If cut back to four buds, the vines need to be re-waxed past the graft union. The wax used must have a high melting point and may not contain any hormones. **Re-waxing is not recommended under South African growing conditions.**
- Alternative planting methods include:
 - a. Where one cane has been left, cut back to four buds when the topmost bud starts to bud.
 - b. When planting **early in the season** plant the vines with all its shoots. Trim back the shoots when the topmost buds burst.
 - c. **When planting late in the season, plant vines as is and don't cut back at all.**
 - d. Hot water treated vines must be planted as is, and only cut back when the top bud burst.
- When planting with plastic, you can cut back earlier **but** the vines need to be re-waxed. The vines must not touch the plastic as it can lead to the wax melting and damaging the vine as well as the vine drying out. This can be prevented by placing a spade of topsoil on top of the plastic around each vine. **Re-waxing is not recommended under South African growing conditions.**
- Leave the remaining cane as long as possible and don't cut back to 2 buds.
- The temperature of the soil below the plastic is higher than under normal circumstances and care needs to be taken that the vines get enough water. Since temperatures are higher directly above the plastic, water loss also occurs via the graft union when planted on plastic, hence the need for re-waxing.
- Planting holes need to be large and deep enough to ensure that roots needn't be cut back too much. The reserves in the roots will ensure that the vine gets off to a good start. Where holes are dug with a spade under wet conditions, ensure that the sides are loosened with a fork to prevent a pot bound effect.
- Prepare a small mound of soil at the bottom of the hole and spread the roots over the soil in all directions.
- Don't trim the roots further back than 20cm.
- The graft union must be at least 50mm above the ground on even soils and 100mm on uneven terrain (to prevent scion rooting).
- Fill up the hole half way and compact lightly with your shoe where there is no irrigation. Where irrigation is available, fill the hole with sand up to ground level and water to allow roots to come into contact with the soil.
- Pull the vine up gently before the last firming down. This ensures that the roots penetrate at a steeper angle. Leave a small mound of soil at the base to compensate for settling.
- When **planting late in the season** place a mound of soil (molshopie) right over the graft union to lower the water loss. This mound can be levelled out with a spade once the leaves have appeared.
- It is recommended that newly planted vines receive a good watering directly after planting. Under dry-land conditions try to plant early in the season and use a watering cart to transport water to the vineyard.
- Don't place any additives like lime, phosphate, compost or manure in the planting hole. This should have been done with soil preparation.

4. AFTER CARE

- **Grapevines need regular watering after planting.** Make sure that the water penetrates deep down into the root zone.
- When planting with existing irrigation blocks that include mature vines, be careful not to over water your new block.
- Prevent **competition by weeds**. They will slow down vine growth and compete for food and water.
- After budding, protect the vine against insects and diseases.
- In areas that have **strong winds** during the growing season, girdling can occur at ground level. Vines can be tied to stakes for support.
- Black maize beetle can eat the bark just below the ground which also causes girdling. They are active in spring time (September and October) as well as March.
- Protect your vines from feeding damage by buck and rabbits.
- If vines need to be replaced at a later stage in the season make sure that the planting hole is double the size of the original hole.

For further information on replacing highly virus infected vineyards with new healthy vineyards follow the link below.

<http://igws.co.za/content/fact-sheets/leafroll>