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BOIS NOIR IN TRENTINO: FIELD OBSERVATION ON THE RECOVERY PHENOMENON

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In the province of Trento, the 2010 grape harvest, recorded over approximately 10,000 hectares, was equivalent to a production of 125,012 tonnes. In this most recent vintage, the ratio between white and red varieties was 70 % to 30 %. The major part of grape production (more than 55 %) in Trentino consists of Chardonnay and Pinot grigio varieties. The widespread presence of these two varieties makes the Trentino vineyards particularly susceptible to grapevine yellows.

In Trentino the first affected plants were observed in the mid-eighties; the analyses carried out in the following years identified the presence of Bois noir (BN) phytoplasma (Dal Ri et al., 1991). At the moment grapevine yellows are not a limiting factor in the viticulture production anywhere in Trentino. The BN disease occurs in all vine-growing zones of the province, but the incidence is generally low and the cases of vineyards with high rates of symptomatic plants are very rare. BN infected grapevines were found in almost all the main cultivated varieties, but mostly in Chardonnay and Pinot grigio (Gelmetti et al., 2009).

The manifestation of BN symptoms in the vineyards, the study of the disease evolution and the recovery phenomenon were carried out by means of vineyard mapping system. In 2010 the maps were produced in Chardonnay vineyards in two different areas: Vallagarina and Valsugana. In Vallagarina the disease evolution was followed in the period 2003-2010 in a vineyard planted on 1990. In Valsugana (Vindimian et al., 1997) the study comprised five Chardonnay vineyards planted between the years 1989 and 1991, where the presence of BN infected vines has been recorded between 1990 and 2010. Comparing the maps of the last 20 years (Valsugana) and the last 8 years (Vallagarina), it has been possible to quantify a very important aspect of the epidemiology of BN: the recovery phenomenon. Field observations have made it possible to determine the number of plants which have shown symptoms for a single year, for various consecutive years and for non-consecutive years and to determine the relationship between symptom intensity and the recovery phenomenon.

Key words: Bois noir, mapping vineyard, symptom intensity

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