

# PROSECCO: A GRAPE VARIETY FROM THE VENETO REGION OF ITALY



## **Michael Dal Zotto**

The George Alexander Foundation/  
ISS Institute Fellowship

Fellowship funded by  
The George Alexander Foundation



**ISS Institute**

Suite 101  
685 Burke Road  
Camberwell Vic  
AUSTRALIA 3124

**Telephone**

03 9882 0055

**Facsimile**

03 9882 9866

**Email**

[issi.ceo@pacific.net.au](mailto:issi.ceo@pacific.net.au)

**Web**

[www.issinstitute.org.au](http://www.issinstitute.org.au)

---

Published by International Specialised Skills Institute, Melbourne.

ISS Institute  
101/685 Burke Road  
Camberwell 3124  
AUSTRALIA

April 2009

Also extract published on [www.issinstitute.org.au](http://www.issinstitute.org.au)

© Copyright ISS Institute 2009

This publication is copyright. No part may be reproduced by any process except in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

Whilst this report has been accepted by ISS Institute, ISS Institute cannot provide expert peer review of the report, and except as may be required by law no responsibility can be accepted by ISS Institute for the content of the report, or omissions, typographical, print or photographic errors, or inaccuracies that may occur after publication or otherwise. ISS Institute do not accept responsibility for the consequences of any action taken or omitted to be taken by any person as a consequence of anything contained in, or omitted from, this report.

# Executive Summary

Since the 1980s the King Valley wine region of Victoria has been gaining a reputation for growing many different Mediterranean grape varieties. It is through the forward thinking and innovative approach the wine industry has taken that as consumers we are given the opportunity to taste such varieties as Pinot grigio, Arneis, Albarino, Sangiovese, Barbera, Nebbiolo and Prosecco. The focus of this Fellowship was Prosecco, a grape variety from the Veneto region of Italy.

Prosecco is a sparkling wine that finds its origins in the north east of Italy in the hills of Conegliano and Valdobbiadene and has been grown there for at least two centuries. Some say it was originally known as Pucino in the time of the Roman Empire. The variety produces a sparkling wine that ranges from the brut style to the Cartizze, which is a particularly sweet style that will range from frizzante to sparkling depending on the level of carbonation in the wine.

The Dal Zotto family has a very strong connection with this variety in that Ottorino Dal Zotto, Michael Dal Zotto's father, is from the Valdobbiadene area of Veneto. In 2000, the Dal Zotto family planted the first Prosecco vines in the King Valley in the north east of Victoria and in 2004, released the first commercial Prosecco in Australia. It is this connection to the variety that has driven Michael Dal Zotto to gain a more extensive knowledge of the variety from both a viticultural and winemaking aspect – to build his own brand and to make the findings from his overseas study program available to other wineries and those wishing to enter the Prosecco market. This is in line with his vision to see Prosecco grow into an Italian variety that is embraced both by consumers and winemakers within Australia.

The skills deficiency that the Fellowship focused on was to develop a greater understanding of Prosecco winemaking, viticulture and marketing. That being the gaining of knowledge in establishing quality parameters to determine harvest of fruit and product position, the selection of the sites for establishing vineyards and winemaking techniques in particular relating to the charmat method. This method is used in the production of almost all Prosecco in the region. During this time the Fellow developed additional knowledge about which style of Prosecco was the most popular within the markets it was distributed in.

During his time in Italy the Fellow visited wineries and vineyards in both the Conegliano and Valdobbiadene areas of Veneto. He spoke to viticulturalists and winemakers and discussed the principles about the growing and making of Prosecco, together with the growth in popularity of Prosecco as a wine on a global scale. This region was chosen as it is the only region where Prosecco is grown, however, during the trip the Fellow observed that the region had expanded to as far as Trieste.

This was all achievable through the help of the oenological school in Conegliano and the Institute of Experimental Viticulture (also in Conegliano), that organised for the Fellow to visit various wineries, vineyards and consortiums.

The Fellow's learning reinforced the knowledge that different clones influence flavour and that certain clones assist in aromatics and flavour, whereas other clones provide more palate structure. This demonstrated the need to import various clones to assist in the making of a complete wine. Using the knowledge gained, the Fellow proposes to work with sommeliers (wine stewards) in helping to promote the variety within the Food and Wine Industry in Australia.

Since completing the overseas study tour, the Fellow has made himself available to the general winemaking industry, the AgriFood Industry Skills Council, industry bodies and educational institutions, for the sharing of the skills, knowledge and insights he has learned during the Fellowship.