



Department of Agriculture and Food
Government of Western Australia



QUARANTINE WA

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Hear it on
the grapevine



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If you love a fine wine, you would probably have a fine old wine if the cost of it rose like bubbles in a sparkling rosé.

This is exactly what happened in the 1850s when grape phylloxera, a tiny aphid-like insect, reached Europe in a cargo of North American vines. Unlike the American species which had some resistance to phylloxera infestations, European vines were devastated as this pest spread across two-thirds of the continent.

In France's viticultural regions, wages were halved, businesses collapsed and much of the population emigrated. With imported wine soaring in price, drinkers turned to the cheaper but much more powerfully intoxicating absinthe.

Phylloxera is now in almost every grape growing country in the world. It's impossible to eradicate. The only remedy is to clear the vineyards, fumigate the soil and replant with resistant varieties, but some of these are starting to lose their resistance.

In Australia phylloxera is confined to quarantine zones in New South Wales and Victoria, and we don't want it in Western Australia! Fortunately it can't make its own way across the continent. However, it could easily hitch a ride.

If you were carrying grapes or vine cuttings from interstate and our inspectors confiscated them, you now know the reason. Agricultural equipment with vine roots and soil attached is also prevented from crossing the border. Please help us in protecting Western Australia by not carrying quarantine risk material — and we'll drink a toast to you.

For enquiries Freecall 1800 084 881.