

# Angove searches for environmentally acceptable products for its organic vineyard

Andrew Mole

## Training & Trellising

LAST YEAR ANGOVE viticulturist Nick Bakkum used 2500 WoodShield posts as replacements in the company's 66ha certified organic vineyard. Bakkum said they needed the plastic-coated posts because their certification said treated pine posts were a no-no. And he is about to install almost 70,000 of the posts across 90ha of new plantings – most in the Riverland but a few hectares at McLaren Vale as well. These are redevelopment projects, removing old plantings and trellis and replacing with new.

"We were approached by WoodShield to trial their posts and were happy to have a look at them," Bakkum said.

"They were easy to put in – we sink them about 600mm – but best of all they did not snap," he said.

"I reckon across the 2500 posts we lost about 15 or 20. If we had been working with standard pine posts that figure would have been at least 200 and probably more."

Bakkum said he was also pleased with the occupational health and safety benefits with the new posts.

"They are lighter to work with, easier to use and quicker to work with and there are no splinter issues," he said.

While the new posts cost more, Bakkum said that was more than offset by their better performance and fewer breaks as well as the OH&S upside.

"We are running two-wire vertical

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*Angove viticulturist Nick Bakkum*



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*The poly sheath flexes and expands and absorbs most of the shock of the post knocking process and there is no evidence of damage to the top plate of the post.*

Nick Bakkum

trellises and since the first WoodShield went in last April/May, we have run two barrel pruners through the area without any problems and harvest went just as smoothly," Bakkum added.

"The other thing about the traditional treated post is they simply are not as good as they used to be, say 20 or 30 years ago.

"They tend to rot too quickly at ground level and are vulnerable to any machine pass, meaning more maintenance work.

"Once when you put those posts in you counted on them being good for 15-20 years. Now it would be down to five or six.

"WoodShield claim these new posts will be good for 20 years – but I would be more than happy if we got 15 years out of



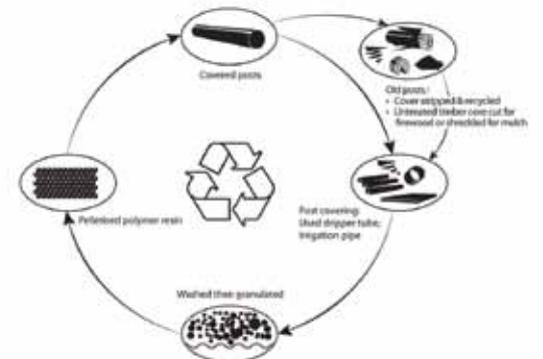
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An environmentally friendly solution was needed for the Angove vineyard and WoodShield was the post of choice.

them." The new plantings will be normal vines, not organic, and as Angove have deep-ripped the blocks Bakkum said the WoodShields will go in even faster.

When the first posts went in, Bakkum said at the time Angove's vineyard

contractor was just as impressed as he was.

"The polysheath flexes and expands and absorbs most of the shock of the post-knocking process and there is no evidence of damage to the top plate of the post," he reported. GW

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