



## CERTIFICATION MANUAL

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Function:	Requesting Body	Consultant	Certification Body	
<i>Seal and Signature:</i>				

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## PARAGRAPH ONE: GENERAL INFORMATION

### 1.1. Preamble

The Consorzio per la Tutela dei Vini Valpolicella was founded on February 9, 1925, under the leadership of Gen. Brugnoli and took the ancient coat of arms of the vicariate as its logo. However, it wasn't until February 15, 1970, that the consortium was properly incorporated with notary deed no. 270119 by notary Castagna. Then it got its supervisory role on July 28, 1980. Following Legislative Decree no. 61/2010 the consortium was chosen to carry out the tasks of protection, promotion, enhancement and information to consumers on the PDOs protected under the *erga omnes* scheme with Ministerial Decree 25 January 2013, later reaffirmed by Ministerial Decree 14 March 2016.

The RRR Project (Reduce Respect Retrench) came about in 2011 with the aim to protect the environment and to take care of the health of citizens and workers in Valpolicella while also exalting the intrinsic value of the wine production. This idea was conceived precisely to meet the new demands of consumers on the one hand and of Valpolicella's residents on the other, not to mention the workers that labor in the vineyards, and is made up of the three parameters that characterize “sustainable” agricultural production: Environmental, Social, and Economic.

Over the years the project has developed around various themes at the heart of the territory. At first, the method of mating disruption was furthered and managed to deal with the European grapevine moth, a biotechnological preventive abatement technique alternative to synthetic insecticides. Later on, real genuine defense specifications were created that prohibit active ingredients bearing particularly serious warning labels (point 3.2.11).

Weekly meetings open to all industry workers and consultants have always been held to compare notes and analyze and come up with defense strategies which the consortium then conveys to its members with on-topic bulletins. Viticulturist training is ongoing, with demonstration days in the field where the topics have evolved over the years: starting from sprayers with low-drift systems and practical demonstrations on functional control of the sprayer, moving on to weed control methods in the rows instead of chemical weed killers. Another important part of training is the conventions that the consortium offers to give the area's viticulturists the latest regulatory updates and news on technical themes.

The project *bore its fruits* in 2018 when the protection consortium decided to step forward as a “partner” in sustainability certification through an accredited third-party body for the entire process.

### 1.2. Motives and Goals

The goal of this manual is to establish a product certification process applicable to all production of Valpolicella grapes and wine made following the best practice protocol called “RRR” – Reduce Respect Retrench.

The goal of this project is to urge partners to carefully and meticulously apply agricultural and socioeconomic best practice and that they pay special attention to safeguarding the agroecosystem and meeting the health requirements of the bystanders and workers.

### 1.3. Certification Requirements

A necessary, but not sufficient, condition to getting the RRR sustainability certification is that all the company's vineyards—even if outside the Valpolicella D.O.—be certifiable following the protocols of the National Integrated Production Quality System (NIPQS).

To reach the necessary and sufficient conditions for “RRR” sustainability certification, in addition to the last certification you have to certify the “social” sustainability aspects applied at your company and—except for companies converting to the organic method or already organic-certified—apply the integrated defense specifications stated in Annex a) to the manual.

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## **1.4. Description of the Certification Applicant**

The Consorzio per la Tutela dei Vini Valpolicella has about 1660 viticulturist members and 220 that are “vertical companies” or bottlers; the vineyard surface area it is responsible for stretches across about 8396 hectares (20,747 acres).

For the purposes of this manual, the consortium steps up as the creator as well as manager of the project and of the relations with the CB for that which concerns the certification process, gathers its members’ applications, prepares and updates Quality Manuals, Technical Production Standards, and Defense Specifications.

Valpolicella is north of Verona. Its territory borders on Lake Garda to the west and on the Lessini Mountains to the east and north; it thus sprawls across the hilly strip at the feet of the Veronese Prealps, which in turn comprise the Eastern Alps range.

Valpolicella is essentially made up of valleys that run from north to south, valleys ideally in the shape of a fan. Its landscape is mainly hilly with gentle slopes and divides at low altitudes.

The production area described in the Production Rules is made up (totally or partially) of 19 municipal territories: Sant’Ambrogio di Valpolicella, Fumane, Marano di Valpolicella, San Pietro in Cariano, Negrar, Pescantina, Dolcè, Verona, San Martino Buon Albergo, Lavagno, Mezzane, Grezzana, Cerro Veronese, Tregnago, Illasi, Colognola ai Colli, San Mauro di Saline, Cazzano di Tramigna, and Montecchia di Crosara. The first five lie within the Classic area, while the municipalities of Grezzana, Cerro Veronese, and part of the city of Verona lie within the Valpantena subarea.

## **1.5. Structure of the Body Requesting Certification**

**Board of Directors**

**Legal Representative (Chairman of the BoD)**

**Director**

**Agonomic Division    Technical Div.    Communication and Promo    Protection    Administration**

A “Certification Committee” made up of three members is formed in the Board of Directors whose purpose is to evaluate and then submit the strategic aspects of the RRR certification process to the BoD for deliberation.

In short, the operational framework of the different parties and their responsibilities is:

OPERATIONS	TECHNICAL DIVISION	CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE	BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Drawing up and later reviewing the manual and forms	Draws up	Evaluates	Passes resolutions
Membership fees	Processes	Evaluates	Passes resolutions
Plant protection defense specifications	Draws up	Approves	
Getting certified	Works out	==	
Training	Plans and Manages	Evaluates and Passes Resolutions	
Initial Internal auditing	Manages	==	
Picking samples for pesticide residue analysis	Manages	Chooses the sample	
Final internal auditing	Works out	Passes resolutions	

## 1.6. Scope of Application and Prerequisites

This manual shall apply to grape growing exclusively for the grapes for production of the different types of Valpolicella D.O. wine and the wine made out of those types. Therefore it is mandatory for companies to apply the IPR over the company’s entire vineyard surface area for the grapes for producing Valpolicella wine.

One of the prerequisites of the RRR certification is for the company to adhere to the NIPQS and get agri-environment-climate conformity and the NIPQS mark from a third-party body authorized by the Ministry of Agricultural and Forestry Policy on the entire company vineyard surface area, as set forth in Law no. 4 of 3 February 2011 and Ministerial Decrees no. 4890 of 8 May 2014 and no. 1347 of 28 April 2015. For any crops besides vineyards, it is optional for the company to request NIPQS certification on its own. Alternatively, you can proceed with NIPQS certification with the organic certification as set forth in EC Reg. 834/07 and as amended.

Companies that certify their sustainability by joining integrated production programs will then receive the NIPQS Integrated Production certificate for all their grape-producing crops and the RRR Sustainability certificate only for the grapes in the Valpolicella D.O.

Companies that certify their sustainability by joining organic production programs shall handle that certification with their own inspection body, and shall receive the *RRR Sustainability* certificate only for the grapes/wine in the Valpolicella D.O. once the company’s compliance with the “Ethical/Environmental” requirements not required by organic certification have been verified.

RRR Certification is open to companies that are members of the consortium and companies that produce Valpolicella D.O. wine that have not joined the consortium for which “*erga omnes*” is in force.

## 1.7. Reference Documents

### 1.7.1. Legislative References

- Presidential Decree 08/21/1968 (DOC recognition) amended with Ministerial Decree 03/21/2010 (DOCG recognition) amended with Ministerial Decree 08/02/2019 (Valpolicella DOC, Valpolicella Ripasso DOC, Amarone della Valpolicella DOCG, and Recioto della Valpolicella DOCG wine Production Rules)

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- LAW 12 December 2016, no. 238. Overall rules for grape growing and the production and sale of wine.
- Law no. 4 of 3 February 2011 and Ministerial Decrees no. 4890 of 8 May 2014 and no. 1347 of 28 April 2015.
- EC Reg. 178/2002 + EC Reg. 852/2004 (Food production health regulations)
- EC Reg 1107/09 (Release on the market of plant protection products)
- Dir. 2009/128/EC (Sustainable use of pesticides)
- Dir. 2009/127/EC (Pesticide spraying machines)
- Legislative Decree 150/2012 (Transposition Dir. 2009/128)
- Ministerial Decree 02/24/2014 (National Action Plan – NAP)
- Decree of the Regional Government no. 1082 of 30 July 2019 (Guidelines for proper use of plant protection products)

### **1.7.2. Regulatory References**

- Integrated production IOBC-WRPS, objectives and principles. 4<sup>th</sup> edition 2018
- General Technical Guidelines for Integrated Production of Annual and Perennial Crops. IOBC-WRPS, 4<sup>th</sup> edition 2018
- Guidelines for Grape Production III. 4th edition 2016, IOBC WPRS.
- The “General principles and criteria for the farming practices of integrated production” and “General principles and criteria for the post-harvest and plant crop transformation steps”, approved on December 4, 2014, by the Technical Scientific Body (TSB) under art. 2 paragraph six of Law no. 4 of 3 February 2011 and as amended.
- Procedure for entry, management, and control in the scope of the NIPQS/2020, rev. 09 of 10/29/2019 and as amended, approved by the TSB on 10/29/2019.
- Veneto Region Integrated Production Rules (current year).
- European Regulation for organic production 834/07 – 889/08 and as amended.

## **1.8. Definitions and Abbreviations**

**Plot:** The whole of lots of land with the same quality, location, and “landscape”.

**Applicant/Producer/Operator/Company:** Viticultural or wine company that requires certification and participates in the process.

**Technical Division:** pool of technicians belonging to the consortium that manages certification and internal auditing

**Grape product:** The fruit of the *grape (Vitis vinifera)* in its different varieties listed by the Rules for the different DOs.

**Wine product:** Obtained from vinification of the grape product certified as expressed by the Rules for the different DOs.

**Noncompliance:** Nonfulfillment of a specific requirement.

**RRR Project:** The body of procedures for creation and management of the sustainable vine growing and wine producing protocol regulated by this manual (*see Section 1.1*).

**Protocol/Manual:** the set of rules that the Operator is obliged to follow to get certification.

## **1.9. Acronyms used**

ABp: Agricultural Best practice

BoD: Board of Directors

OC: Outside Consultant

CtV: Consorzio Tutela Vini Valpolicella

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DO: Designation of Origin (Controlled or Controlled and Guaranteed)

IPR: Integrated Production Rules

CF: Commercial formula

PM: Production manager

TDM: Technical Division Manager

AI: Active ingredient of a pesticide

PP: Plant protection product

IP: Integrated Production

NIPQS: National Integrated Production Quality System

MRL: (Synonym of MRA) Maximum residue level

MRA: (synonym of MRL): Maximum residue allowable

NC: Noncompliance

CB: Certification Body

## 1.10. Operating Procedures

The viticultural or wine company voluntarily requests to enter the RRR Certification program, sending the consortium the application form (Annex f to this manual). The final deadline for application for the current year is set year-by-year by the CtV.

The Technical Division reviews the application, may ask the Applicant to integrate or update the application with the required documents during the first application, mainly: “Vineyard register” valid this year and “field maps”, or in any event geo-referenced images, of vineyard land and—only for those who also run vineyards outside the Veneto region—the “Usage Plan” for the land from the related company file.

Having received that requested, the Technical Division tells the relevant party whether its application was accepted and officially starts the certification process for the company with registration in the designated “Applicant list” and by assigning a company identification code, if not assigned in previous years.

The Technical Division registers them on the National Agricultural Information System website for NIPQS certification.

The Identification Code assigned to each company is made up of five figures and does not change in time. The first two figures are the same as the last two of the year of application (for example, they will be: 18 for a company that entered the RRR Project the year 2018), while the last three figures will follow a chronological order within a certain year. The first two figures will be separated by the last three with a *slash: /*. So an example of an Identification Code would be: 18/059.

After signing up on the NAIS website, the NIPQS-certified companies are also asked for documents that attest to compliance with the current regulations on agricultural best practice (if currently valid ones are not already available), and to be exact:

- ✓ Pesticide container disposal document from last year
- ✓ Sprayer functional control attestation, currently valid
- ✓ Approval to purchase and use pesticides (license), currently valid
- ✓ Chemical analyses of the soil not more than five years old
- ✓ Certification of compliance with ethical, social, and economic practices (Ann. g. to this manual)
- ✓ Copy of ID card of the company’s legal representative, currently valid

Instead, only the companies certified as set forth in Reg. 834/07 (organic farming) are also asked for:

- ✓ Compliance certificate
- ✓ Justification document

The companies are given instructions and indications for successfully fulfilling certification requirements, the forms, and technical contact person phone numbers. The Technical Division shall hold periodic joint meetings with the Applicants to update, train participants, and correct any errors in their application of the manual.

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In the rare event of localized instances of inability to apply the restrictions required by the RRR defense guidelines, you can ask the Technical Division for an exception. After an on-site inspection and verification of the circumstances, it may issue a written exception stating the actions agreed upon. (Ann. i) to this manual)

Throughout the course of the growing season, the company shall undertake to record all the farming practices that require the input of raw material and all information requested by the NIPQS certification system in the Field Book and the Logbook. These records may be made on a specific IT platform provided by the CtV upon getting certified.

It shall also undertake to fill out and give the Technical Division a copy of these records and other documents that might be missing by July 31st.

The Technical Division will assess all of the Field Books and Logbooks, together with other documents submitted previously, using the checklist (Ann. c. to this manual) and if noncompliance is encountered, the relevant party will immediately be informed so that it can appeal or handle it, if necessary.

The names of 25% of the applicants will be randomly drawn by July 15th. A sample of their grapes will have to be taken for multi-residue analyses of the pesticides employed, and at the same time, an audit on compliance with the protocol conducted at the company (based on the Audit Plan – Ann. e. to this manual – and using the checklists in Ann. c.).

Companies are eliminated point-blank from the RRR Project in these instances:

- Notice to quit, where the company tells the consortium by email or letter that they want out of the RRR Project and certification procedures, and that they are no longer required to comply with the Certification Manual;
- The CB finds serious noncompliance during an audit which requires the company’s elimination (non-certification: the company may be re-added the next year).
- The company not answering the OC or the TDM’s communications requiring a response, reminders, or requests (for example, to provide documentation) for over 30 days.

At the end of the internal audit, no later than August 31st the Technical Division will report on the status quo of the certification process to the Certification Committee which will assess the actions to take to solve any obstacles to certification that came up during the internal audit and shall then submit for the board’s approval.

The Applicant Company may challenge the decision made during the internal audit by sending a formal request for a review of the penalties suffered using the designated Complaint Form (Ann. h. to this manual).



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## PARAGRAPH TWO: CHARACTERIZATION OF THE PRODUCT

### 2.1. Characterization of the Product

The characteristics and general aspects are those of grapes for the production of different types of Valpolicella wine, and wine made out of those types, as governed by the related regulations to which reference is to be made.

### 2.2. Noncertifiable (Implicit) Normative and Reglementary Characteristics

The quality characteristics of grapes released on the market or made into wine on one’s own premises must meet the parameters required by the different D.O.s; they are not certifiable under these rules and the verification of their compliance is up to the Certification Bodies charged with this.

### 2.3. (Explicit) Certifiable Characteristics Included in Communications

Certification is geared towards Consorzio per la Tutela dei Vini Valpolicella member and nonmember companies that sell their grapes (fresh and/or dried) to the “vertical” companies with production of grapes and their transformation and to companies that transform RRR-certified grapes.

Thus, certification is for:

- *“Grapes obtained by applying the Consorzio per la Tutela dei Vini Valpolicella’s ‘RRR’ Protocol ;*
- *“Wine made with grapes produced by applying the Consorzio per la Tutela dei Vini Valpolicella’s ‘RRR’ Protocol.*

The GRAPES certified according to these rules may be sold by putting the statement “Grapes produced according to the ‘RRR’ protocol, Certificate no...” on the inherent documents. The number of reference to use is found on the certificate of compliance with the protocol that the CB gives the participating partner.

The packaged WINE may bear the CtV’s “RRR” logo on its label, whose use is regulated by a designated procedure (*Annex d* to this manual).

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## Paragraph three: TECHNICAL PRODUCTION PROTOCOL

### 3.1. Ownership

The sustainable viticulture practices given in the protocol below require the use of methods for production and for defense against adversities aimed at reducing the use of synthetic chemical substances to a minimum and rationalizing farming techniques following ecological, economic, and toxicological principles.

The objectives we mean to pursue are:

- Improvement of the health/hygiene safety and quality of the crops.
- Protection of the environment and the people that live in it.
- Guarantee of company profit
- Increase in the level of safety and professionalism of workers.

The technical/normative references used to prepare the rules are:

- The IOBC WPRS “INTEGRATED PRODUCTION – Principles and technical guidelines”, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. 2018
- Guidelines for Grape Production III. 4th edition 2016, IOBC WPRS.
- “Integrated Production Rules” (Farming Techniques) and “Integrated Defense Technical Guidelines” (Voluntary integrated Defense) approved with Plant Protection Organizational Unit Director Decree – Veneto Region, this year.
- Decree of the Regional Government no. 1082 of 30 July 2019 (Guidelines for proper use of plant protection products)

For that stated in the introduction, the sustainability has to develop making it a priority to enhance all the alternative options to chemical defense that could make it possible to rationalize the jobs that protect worker and consumer health while simultaneously limiting risk to the environment, in a context of sustainable agriculture. So particular emphasis must be placed on following current regulations and applying the general principles given in the aforementioned Annex III of Directive no. 128/09/EU, as well as all the pertinent prescriptions related to use of the plant protection products listed in the NAP. To this regard, you must also:

- adopt rational monitoring systems that allow adequate evaluation of the plant protection conditions of crops;
- opt for the use of biological control;
- opt for plant protection defense with a low amount of chemical products by adopting alternative farming techniques and means (physical, mechanical, microbiological, etc.);
- limit workers’ exposure to risk deriving from the use of plant protection products (personal protection equipment, etc.);
- rationalize the distribution of plant protection products, limiting their quantity, waste, and loss due to drift, runoff water, and percolation;
- limit point-source pollutants due to incorrect preparation of the solutions to distribute or due to their improper disposal;
- optimize management of warehouses where plant protection products are kept;
- recover or adequately dispose of the leftover plant protection products and their packaging;
- fine-tune adequate defense strategies that among other things allow preventing and managing the development of parasite resistance to the plant protection products.

### 3.2. Agricultural Best Practice

As mentioned before, the “Reduce, Respect, Retrench” production protocol sets the objective of fostering “sustainability” in Valpolicella grape production, thus guaranteeing corporate profit, respecting the

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environment and its biodiversity, and protecting workers’ and bystanders’ health as much as possible. From an agronomic standpoint, the production protocol has 12 paragraphs about the principal aspects of grape production technique.

The description of the rules is divided up into the following points:

1. Crop environment and vocation of the land for vine growing in terms of soil and climate
2. Maintenance of the natural agroecosystem
3. Varietal choice and propagation material
4. Arrangement and preparation of the ground
5. Crop rotation
6. Transplanting, planting
7. Soil management and pest control
8. Plant and fruit formation management
9. Fertilization
10. Irrigation
11. Plant protection defense
12. Harvest

Each of the points illustrated below can be divided up on different levels:

- ✓ **General principles**, that state general ABp rules and that are part of regular farming, or of the compulsory standards
- ✓ **Recommendations**, ABp advice, highly recommended but not obligatory for certification
- ✓ **Obligations**, ABp that are deemed essential and can’t be skipped. Their omission leads to penalties as set forth in the audit plan.

When managing grapes that belong to the Valpolicella D.O., you must follow the general rules and specifications for viticulture in the “Integrated Production Rules” (Farming Techniques) and “Integrated Defense Technical Guidelines” (Voluntary integrated Defense) approved with Plant Protection Organizational Unit Director Decree – Veneto Region, this year, found on the Veneto Region website at the URL: <https://www.regione.veneto.it/web/agricoltura-e-foreste/u.o.-fitosanitario>.

### **3.2.1 – Crop environment and vocation of the land for vine growing in terms of soil and climate**

#### **General Principles**

Assessment of the crop environment’s pedoclimatic characteristics is crucial as far as the vine’s needs.

The vineyards in the Valpolicella region are all considered to have a traditional vocation for cultivation, both from the standpoint of the land and because of their climatic characteristics.

The mild, not very rainy climate makes for regular ripening, with good sugar content and phenolic compounds.

The small-medium sized hills (no higher than 300 m asl) are comprised of medium textured, quite calcareous soil, imbuing the wines with very characteristic sensory profiles. The southern parts and summits of the range allow for excellent ripening, yielding wine profiles bursting with polyphenols and well-extracted fruit and blossoms. The marly calcareous soil of the highest slopes brings exceptionally ripe phenolics, from which come very colorful wines, with good tannin content and sensory profiles featuring blossoms and red fruit. These environments are commonly found in the area of the DOC as identified in the Valpolicella wine production rules.

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### **3.2.2. Maintenance of the Natural Agroecosystem**

#### **General Principles**

Biodiversity is a natural resource and cuts the use of synthetic chemical substances, protecting the main organisms that aid in the natural limitation of adversities. We have to protect the environmental resources and respect the natural agroecosystem.

#### **Recommendations**

When it's necessary to use synthetic pesticides, try to use active ingredients with a lower environmental footprint and beneficial entomofauna.

#### **Obligations**

In function of the specific production and environmental characteristics, choose one or more techniques and jobs to adopt in the various agroecosystems to strengthen the ecological diversity, like:

- Use of beneficial organisms (protection and documented surveys of the beneficial entomofauna present).
- Mating disruption for pest control
- Maintenance of untilled areas like shelter areas for the biological pest control, equal to at least 5% of the company's surface area (including the uncultivated company land).
- Planting of bushes and/or maintenance of natural biotopes.
- Alternate mowing of the interrows.
- Use of microorganisms for total or partial pest or fungus control with the products listed in the IPR (Ann. a)

### **3.2.3. Varietal Choice and Propagation Material**

#### **General Principles**

The varieties have to be chosen following the Valpolicella Wine Production Rules or the IGT Rules, consistently with the company's characteristics, while ecotypes and rootstocks have to be chosen in function of the specific pedoclimatic conditions for cultivation. Take particular care in choosing the rootstock, which has to be congruous to the type of terrain and, in relation to its intrinsic vigor, to the previously chosen training system.

#### **Recommendations**

Use a propagation material with these characteristics:

- certified as far as genetics/health;
- able to offer greater guarantees in terms of quality, too.

#### **Obligations**

For every new vine stock the propagation material must meet the European Union and national quality standards for the genetic, health, and agronomic quality aspects. The multiplication material for the vine stock must come with the "Plant passport" (EU Reg. 2016/2031) and certificates (Ministerial Decree 8 February 2005).

Use of genetically modified organisms (GMO) is not allowed.

Self-production of vine shoots is allowed.

### **3.2.4. Arrangement and preparation of the ground for planting**

#### **General Principles**

Jobs to arrange and prepare the ground for planting must be carried out with the goal to protect and improve soil fertility, preventing erosive events and its deterioration. They are to be defined in function of the type of terrain, slope, erosion risk, and the area's climate.

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The ground arrangement jobs must help maintain its structure, encouraging great biodiversity of the microflora and microfauna of the soil and a reduction of compaction phenomena, so that the extra rain water runs off.

Any basic correction or fertilization must be performed following the principles set forth in paragraph 3.2.9. *Fertilization*.

**Recommendations**

If available, use the pedological map of the area in question to help plan out the ground arrangement and preparation jobs. Soil management has to be implemented in function of the type of terrain, slope, erosion risk, and the area’s climate. Wherever possible, avoid plowing up the ground and plow into the subsoil at a medium depth together with tillage not exceeding 30 cm.

We also recommend a nematological analysis of the soil prior to replanting jobs.

On plots in the hills and mountains with an average slope of over 30%, you are only allowed to do precise jobs on the block, or others meant just to remove what’s left of the last vine stock and for regular management of grassing.

On plots with an average slope between 10 and 30%, beside the techniques described above, you are allowed to do jobs at a maximum depth of 30 cm except for the rippers for which this limit shall not apply.

**Obligations**

For ground arrangement and preparation jobs like ripping or moving the earth, the company must have a written assessment of the scheduled jobs’ impact on fertility; also state the amending and corrective jobs that will become necessary to keep the fertility levels and structure of the terrain unaltered.

**3.2.5. Crop Rotation**

**General Principles**

Crop rotation’s general objective is to preserve the soil’s fertility, limit problems linked to its weariness and to the specialization of pests, diseases, and phytophagans, to improve the quality of the crops. In general, we do not recommend the practice of continuous cropping, that is, replanting without a fallow year scheduled after the pull out, save for justified exceptions due to special agroclimatic conditions and taking into account the rootstocks’ characteristics.

You can do replanting without a fallow period only if there wasn’t plant mortality in the last crop due to agents of rotting of the collar and the root system, like *Armillaria* and *Rosellinia*.

**Recommendations**

If you replant a vineyard, we recommend you let the land lie fallow for a congruous number of years during which to practice extensive farming or cover cropping and/or abundant fertilizing with organic matter, taking into account the results of the physical/chemical analyses of the soil.

**Obligations**

You can do replanting without a fallow period only if there wasn’t plant mortality due to agents of rotting of the collar and the root system, like *Armillaria* and *Rosellinia*.

If pathogenic fungi are found in the ground, continuous cropping is allowed on the condition that you adopt at least one of the solutions listed below:

- remove the roots remaining from the last crop;
- adoption of nonchemical systems for limitation of adversities (soil solarization, antagonistic fungi, etc.)
- place the new plants in a different spot than the ones before them;
- use proper rootstocks

In any case, a certificate from a licensed technician (degree-qualified professional agronomist or agricultural technician) is needed.

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### **3.2.6. Transplanting, Planting**

#### **General Principles**

Proper planting must pursue the ends of reaching adequate production yields respecting the protective status of the plants and limiting the negative impact of weeds, diseases, and phytophagans, besides optimizing the use of nutrients and trying to save water.

#### **Recommendations**

Blocks must be made with plant spacing that—in relation to soil fertility and the characteristics of the rootstocks and varieties—makes it possible to achieve quantitatively and qualitatively adequate crops, keep the plants in a well-protected state, raise the efficiency of the fertilizers, and attain plenty of light and good airflow even on the inner parts of the foliage.

The training systems shall be those required by the production Rules of the D.O.s, choosing the “pergoletta” Veronese Arbor to help preserve the typical landscape of the Veronese vineyard, also bringing back the historic terraces with dry stone walls called “marogne”.

During the planting stage, we recommend using activated substrates or additions that foster rooting and the development of roots.

#### **Obligations**

Follow the vine density required by the rules of the DOs.

If the new block borders on areas visited by Vulnerable Groups or Surface Water Bodies or other Sensitive Areas, it is mandatory to adopt all the necessary measures to reduce the risk of drift and contamination following plant protection treatments required by current regulations (installation of live or dead barriers, ample safety distance from the boundary, etc.).

### **3.2.7. Soil Management and Pest Control**

#### **General Principles**

Soil management and the techniques for working soil must be aimed at improving the conditions of crop adaptation to maximize their yields, boost pest control, improve efficiency of the nutrients reducing losses due to leaching, runoff water, and evaporation, keep the terrain in good structural conditions, prevent erosion and landslides, preserve the content in organic matter, and foster the penetration of water from rain and irrigation.

#### **Recommendations**

If you use the technique of mulching, we recommend using biodegradable mulch material or potentially recyclable material.

Management of the grass along the row has to be done with mechanical jobs or mowing/cutting if the ground has been completely grassed.

#### **Obligations**

- On plots in the hills with an average slope of over 30%, you are only allowed to do precise jobs on the block, or others meant just to remove what’s left of the last vine stock and for regular management of grassing.
- On plots with an average slope between 10 and 30% in the first two years after planting, beside the techniques described above, you are allowed to do jobs at a maximum depth of 30 cm except for the rippers for which this limit shall not apply.
- In all other situations, you are allowed to do interrow jobs only in the first year; starting the second year, it is mandatory to practice grassing interrow.
- You are allowed to resort to chemical weed killing along the row only in the first two years of vine age, over a strip no more than 80 cm wide, and only products and doses given in the specific table of *Annex a* to this manual. From the third year on, it is prohibited to use weed killers along the row.
- Mulching jobs and biodegradable material are allowed over a strip no more than 120 cm wide.

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- If at the edges of the vineyard the use of mechanical means (anchors, etc.) is extremely difficult, for treatments just in those areas, **and only after written authorization from the Technical Division**, you are allowed to use graminicides as listed in Annex a) to the manual.
- If you do not manage fertilization with cover cropping of species suitable to increase the addition of organic matter into the ground, permanent grassing of the interrow is mandatory starting the vine's second year of age at the latest. Grassing can be spontaneous or artificial using small-sized species mainly of graminaceous and leguminous plants (for example, *Festuca rubra*, *Poa pratensis*, *Lolium perenne*, *Trifolium repens*) in function of the ground characteristics and amount of water in the soil. You are allowed to do sowing and covering jobs for cover cropping both on plains and in scenarios with average slopes from 10 to 30%. In the former case, cover cropping is to be done every other row.

### **3.2.8. Plant and Fruit Formation Management**

#### **General Principles**

Crop management like pruning, bending, berry thinning, etc., have to be practiced with the goal to foster the proper equilibrium between the qualitative and quantitative requirements of the crops and to improve the health conditions of farming.

These management methods must aim to limit the use of synthetic pesticides.

### **3.2.9. Fertilization**

#### **General Principles**

Fertilization's objective is to guarantee high quality crops in economically sustainable quantities, meeting the environmental protection requirements, maintaining fertility, and preventing adversities. Soil analyses done on correctly interpreted, representative samples are functional to planning fertilization and therefore it's necessary to have them available before setting the plan itself. The fertilization plan is for a uniform area at the company and sets the maximum amounts of annually distributable nutritive macroelements per crop or per growing season. Advanced fertilization or enrichment with phosphorus and potassium is allowed only in confirmed cases of deficiency of the soil.

Use of animal dung, runoff from enological factories, vegetal compost, and products permitted in organic production, is allowed in compliance with current standards and the specifications given in the technical regulations. In this case, the amount of fertilizing elements is to be weighed up on the basis of the amount of mineral fertilizers, and for the computation of the value.

#### **Recommendations**

- Upon planting, it is best to place the phosphorus fertilizers deep down in circumstances where no erosion risk subsists.
- Over the course of cultivation, leaf analysis or other equivalent techniques may be used as complementary tools.

#### **Obligations**

- Soil analysis the first year of participation, no more than five years old.
- First analysis of new blocks (nonmandatory analyses for surface areas under 5000 m<sup>2</sup>).
- Every five years (minimum) on the plots relevant for the IP, perform soil analyses at accredited laboratories as set forth in UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC Standard 17025:2005 and its updates, for the estimate of availability of macroelements and fertility, following these provisions:
  - at least one analysis per area that is uniform from a pedological and agronomic viewpoint;
  - the physical/chemical analysis of the soil must at least contain information on: granulometry, pH, cation-exchange capacity, organic matter, total lime, active lime, total nitrogen, exchangeable potassium and assimilable phosphorus, MG/K ratio, C/N ratio;
  - Once five years have passed from the date of the last analysis, you must redo only those analytical calculations that change noticeably in time (organic matter, total nitrogen,



exchangeable potassium, and assimilable phosphorus), while for those soil properties that do not change substantially (texture, pH, active and total lime) they are not required.

Plus:

- Based on the analyses, prepare a “Fertilization Plan” that identifies amounts and distribution timing per crop/season. The “Fertilization Plan” may be prepared in one of the following ways:
  - **By adopting** the instructions in the standard fertilization sheet given under (Tab. 1), using the standard values for quality and number of fertilizing units of the different products employed.
  - By applying the AgrelanWeb program on the Regional Agency For Environmental Protection website ([www3.arpa.veneto.it/agrelan/](http://www3.arpa.veneto.it/agrelan/)).
  - Based on the values provided in the “farming assessment” elaborated following the parameters set in the “Guidelines for the fertilization of integrated production”.
- break up the nitrogenized part into at least two rounds (spring of the current year and the autumn before or two rounds in the spring) if there are more than 60 kg/ha (24 kg/acre) of fertilizing units;
- you can add nitrogen prior to planting only with the application of soil amendments;
- the use of fertilizers must be planned with annual schedules that set the quantities and procedures for administration of the main elements.
- The amounts of macro-elements added by any system (fertigation, foliar feeding, etc.) and of any nature (organic or inorganic) have to be added up based on the analytical values and fall under the maximum threshold stated by the fertilization plan.
- That added in the autumn is to be recorded on the agricultural year after the one it was for.
- Companies that follow the organic production method as set forth in EC Reg. 834/07 and as amended must follow the instructions and restraints of the current industry regulations.
- During the training stage, the nitrogenized parts must be placed near the root systems not exceeding the following units:
  1. **Nitrogen: 30 kg/ha (12 kg/acre) 1<sup>st</sup> year; 50 kg/ha (20 kg/acre) 2<sup>nd</sup> year**
  2. **Phosphorus: 15 kg/ha (6 kg/acre) 1<sup>st</sup> year; 25 kg/ha (10 kg/acre) 2<sup>nd</sup> year**
  3. **Potassium: 20kg/ha (8 kg/acre) 1<sup>st</sup> year; 40 kg/ha (16 kg/acre) 2<sup>nd</sup> year**
  
- During the production stage, fertilization must not exceed the following units:  
Tab. 1 (yield from 3 to 5 tons)

Element	Reduction compared to the standard dose:	Standard Dose	Increase compared to the standard dose:
NITROGEN	20 kg/ha (8 kg/ac) for yields below 8 t/ha (3 t/ac) 20 kg/ha (8 kg/ac) in case of a large addition of organic matter 20 kg/ha (8 kg/ac) in case of addition of an amendment the year before 20 kg/ha (8 kg/ac) in case of excessive vegetative activity	<b>50 kg/ha (20 kg/ac)</b>	20 kg/ha (8 kg/ac) for yields foreseen at the maximum level of the rules 20 kg/ha (8 kg/ac) in case of a small addition of organic matter 15 kg/ha (6 kg/ac) in case of a major washing away in the winter (over 300 mm in the October-February period) 20 kg/ha (8 kg/ac) in case of scarce vegetative activity <b>Maximum increase: 40 kg/ha (16 kg/ac)</b>



PHOSPHORUS	10 kg/ha (4 kg/ac) for yields foreseen below 8 t/ha (3 t/ac) 20 kg/ha (8 kg/ac) if the soil contains a lot 10 kg/ha (4 kg/ac) in case of additions with amendments	<b>40 kg/ha (16 kg/ac)</b>	10 kg/ha (4 kg/ac) for yields foreseen at the maximum levels of the rules 10 kg/ha (4 kg/ac) in case of a scarce addition of organic matter 20 kg/ha (8 kg/ac) with high active lime 20 kg/ha (8 kg/ac) with a small amount in the soil 60 kg/ha (24 kg/ac) with a very small amount in the soil
POTASSIUM	30 kg/ha (12 kg/ac) for yields foreseen below 8 t/ha (3 t/ac) 30 kg/ha (12 kg/ac) with additions of amendments 40 (16) with a large amount in the soil	<b>80 kg/ha (32 kg/ac)</b>	30 kg/ha (12 kg/ac) for yields foreseen at the maximum levels of the rules 70 (28) with a small amount in the soil

- The agronomic use of purifying muds in the capacity of fertilizers (see Legislative Decree 99/92) is not allowed.

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### **3.2.10. Irrigation**

#### **General Principles**

Irrigation must meet the crop water requirement without exceeding the field capacity with irrigation, in order to limit water waste, leaching of nutrients, and the development of adversities. The use of efficient irrigation distribution techniques (e.g., drip irrigation, micro-irrigation, subirrigation, low-pressure sprinkling, etc.) and adoption—when technically feasible—of fertigation in order to improve the efficiency of the fertilizers and water distributed comprise the tools for reaching the preset goal.

#### **Recommendations**

We recommend proceeding with chemical/physical and microbiological analyses of the irrigation water every time doubt arises on its suitability for use.

For that which concerns the irrigation water quality it's best to have it checked and to avoid using both salt water and bacterially contaminated water or that contains pollutants.

#### **Obligations**

Drawing up an irrigation plan based on the water budget for the crop, compatibly with the characteristics and distribution means for the irrigation systems adopted, using specialized company supports (e.g., irrigation sheets or computer programs) and various technological tools (e.g., rain gauges, tensiometers, etc.).

As an alternative to the irrigation plan, the company must record on electronic media or designated sheets:

#### **3) Irrigation date and volume:**

- sprinkling and surface/gravity irrigation: date and volume of the irrigation used for each job; just companies with a company surface area (CSU) below 1 ha (2.47 ac) can give the volume of irrigation distributed for the entire growing season, in this case including statement of the dates irrigation started and ended.
- microirrigation: irrigation volume for the entire growing season (or for briefer intervals) including statement of the dates irrigation started and ended (Microirrigation systems: drip, spray, dripping tubes, soaker hoses, sprinklers)

In case of consortium or collective management of the watering volumes, the facility that manages the water resource may provide the above-mentioned data.

#### **2) Rain data**

- obtainable from a rain gauge or from a weather station, or have data provided from official or recognized Weather Services

#### **3) Watering volume:**

- For each irrigation job, the company must follow the maximum volume set in function of the type of soil taken from the table in the technical farming notes. Without specific instructions, the maximum volumes allowed are:

1. loose terrain 35 mm (14 mm) equal to 350 mc/ha (140 mc/ac);
2. medium-textured terrain 45 mm (18 mm) equal to 450 mc/ha (180 mc/ac);
3. clayey terrain 55 mm (22.5 mm) equal to 550 mc/ha (225 mc/ac);

Recording rain data isn't mandatory for non-irrigated crops, while in cases of emergency irrigation you are required to record the irrigation job and its justification through agroweather bulletins or other objective proof.

Surface/gravity irrigation is prohibited on new blocks, while for existing blocks the maximum limit is the assignment per hectare set by the Reclamation Consortium.

### **3.2.11. Plant Protection Defense**

#### **General Principles**

In compliance with that set forth in EU Decision no. 3864/96, plant protection defense must be implemented by using plant protection products with a low impact on man and the environment in the smallest possible amount (so only if necessary and in small doses), chosen from among those with efficacy characteristics sufficient to achieving defense of crops affordably, taking into account their persistence and residue.

When different strategies and techniques are possible, you must opt for the farming and/or organic ones that guarantee the smallest environmental footprint in the scope of sustainable agriculture.

Resorting to synthetic chemical products shall be limited to circumstances when an effective organic or farming alternative is not available.

Moreover, the developed areas, sensitive areas, and bodies of water on company premises have to be identified to be able to schedule and plan the implementation of all the mitigation and risk reduction measures against drift that would cause direct contamination of people and animals, pollution of bodies of water, contamination with unauthorized plant protection product residue on crops other than those treated, or damage to neighboring crops due to phytotoxicity.

The mitigation measures to adopt to reduce drift are:

- blow with wind at a speed under 2.5-3 m/s assessing air humidity, temperature;
- install physical protection barriers like grassy strips or bushes,
- stop distribution when you get to the end of a plot or row and spray the border row only on its inside,
- ascertain the passage of any vehicles, cyclists, or pedestrians that go by near streets open to the public or railways and adopt all the measures needed to keep from hitting people and/or vehicles in transit, and if necessary momentarily stop treatment
- change the characteristics of the spray supplied by using the anti-drift nozzles, anti-drift additives, supply pressure, forward speed, and fan capacity in order to create drops of a size that are less prone to drift.

Applying the IPR of the RRR Regulations, you can spray up to the *minimum limit* from the boundary, since all of the formulations in the IPD are in line with the current regional and municipal regulations.

The *minimum limit* from the boundary has recently been extended by regional regulations to 10 m in length. This length however can drop to 5 m by applying at least two of the techniques listed below:

Untreated observance strip	Treatment on the inside of the last three rows	Nozzles that abate drift by at least 50%	Anti-drift products that abate by at least 50%	Shrubs that are at least 1 m taller than the crop
5 m	X	X	X	
5 m		X	X	X
5 m	Tunnel sprayer			

**If there are crops in the last 5 m from the boundary, you can spray exclusively with a handheld nozzle, spraying on the inside. Furthermore, new blocks or replanted vineyards must have an uncultivated area of 5 m from the boundary.**

In order to protect the aquatic environment, while awaiting the regional transposition of Ministerial Decree 03/10/2015 on protection of water, SCI areas, and Nature 2000 sites, **it is mandatory to leave an untreated 5 m strip of compliance from the edge of bodies of water.** (for the identification of restricted bodies of water see the website <http://piave.veneto.it/web/utilita/cartografia>).

The creation of properly managed vegetated barriers (shrubs, planting of trees) **is a recommended action** for mitigation of the issue of drift and to thus keep drops of airborne pesticide from going and contaminating superficial bodies of water or surrounding uncultivated areas.

Every year the CtV's Agronomy Office publishes the list of active ingredients and Commercial Formulas (C.F.) that can be used and is Annex a) to this manual; it is updated annually or during the season if changes occur in the scope of plant protection defense. (Ann. a) RRR List of Usable Pesticides, year 2021).

The IPR are drawn up annually based on the Vine Defense Specifications published by the Veneto Region “Integrated Defense Technical Guidelines” (Voluntary integrated Defense) current year”. From this, strictly adopting the criterion of precaution, then the CFs bearing warning labels are removed as per the table:

CODE	Phrase H Descriptive	CODE	Phrase H Descriptive
H300	Lethal if ingested	H350	May cause cancer
H301	Toxic if ingested	H351	Suspected to be cancerous
H310	Lethal if touches the skin	H360d	May harm the fetus
H311	Toxic if touches the skin	H360f	May reduce fertility
H330	Lethal if inhaled	H361d	Suspected to harm the fetus
H331	Toxic if inhaled	H361f	Suspected to reduce fertility
H334	May cause allergic or asthma symptoms if inhaled	H362	May be harmful to breast-fed babies
H340	May cause genetic alterations	H370	Causes organ damage (specified)
H341	Suspected to cause genetic alterations	H372	Causes organ damage (specified) if exposure is long-term

Furthermore, aspects inherent to residual molecules are considered (very few are frequently found in wine, although under the legal limits, not counting the molecules that are not accepted as residue by the main trade areas in Valpolicella).

You can always use any of the active ingredients included in organic farming under EC Reg. no. 889/08 and as amended on the condition that they are regularly registered in Italy, except for the products that are classified as or bear warnings of risk as mentioned above.

### Recommendations

The phytometric interventions must be justified in function of the estimated risk of damage. The risk assessment must be made with adequate checking and monitoring systems that depend on the bio-epidemiological variables and dangerousness of the harmful agents. Definition of the timing and strategies to take opportune action may vary in relation to the nature and characteristics of the adversities. The justification for intervention, as set forth in Legislative Decree 150/2012 and the correlated National Action Plan (NAP) must come after company monitoring or zone characteristic assessments for uniform areas, and starting as of November 26, 2015, any crop disease consultancy received must be provided by licensed technicians in accordance with the abovesaid regulation. Throughout the course of the vine growing season, the consortium shall divulge a weekly bulletin with the main instructions for defense, also giving instructions for the agricultural best practice of the moment, and valid for the above-mentioned purposes.

A crop that is in optimal physiological/nutritional condition is more protected from the onslaught of physiopathologies and plant pathologies; the option to use innovative technical means capable of improving those physiological/nutritional conditions constitutes an indirect tool for inducing greater crop resistance to biotic and abiotic stress and integrated defense.

Therefore, we authorize the use of products classified as:

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Corroborant agents: substances of natural origin other than fertilizers which improve plants' resistance to harmful organisms, protecting the plants from harm not caused by parasites. These products are not released on the market as plant protection products and are not used for plant protection aims. (Presidential Decree 02/28/2012, no. 55 art. 2 paragraph four and Annex one of Ministerial Decree of agricultural policies no. 18354 of 11/27/2009).

Biostimulants: products capable of enhancing improvement of nutrition and development of plant species regardless of any nutritional elements there may be—with the exception of plant growth regulators which are prohibited—and of other products with a declared, specific plant protection function. (Legislative Decree 75/2010 and as amended).

In territories where vine moths are a major hazard, it is highly recommended to apply the mating disruption defense method, as long as the planting pattern allows for its efficient application. In territories where their presence isn't threatening or in cases of technical difficulty in disruption, if you implement defense by applying insecticides, when you choose the pesticide to employ you must rule out the family of phosphoric esters.

### **Obligations**

For defense it is mandatory to use the active ingredients listed in the “RRR List of Usable Pesticides” (*Annex a* to this manual) for the current year following the notes and usage limitations.

Any exceptions, even with territorial validity, are allowed only by authorization of the TDM.

Experimentation with pesticides or anything else that does not follow the rules in this manual implemented on set plots not exceeding 5% of the total—as long as they are well identified and marked—is allowed as an exception to the obligations required by the rules.

Moreover, the obligations under Legislative Decree 150/2012 on functional control of atomizers and disposal of empty pesticide containers must be met.

When you can choose between several options that are equally technically valid, you are obliged to always use the commercial formulas or farming techniques with an eco-toxicological profile that least affects the environment and people.

### **3.2.12. Harvest**

#### **General Principles**

The means of harvest and delivery to the storage/processing center must guarantee maintenance of the best quality characteristics and healthiness of the products. For these purposes, all surfaces coming into contact with the grapes (trailer tarp, bins, trailer vats, crates for partial drying, etc.) must have a certificate/mark of suitability for food contact. Delivery to the product processing/storage center must be made as soon as possible after harvest.

#### **Recommendations**

When to harvest is established based on having reached the minimum values of the ripening indexes set for groups of varieties with similar characteristics. If the degree of ripeness is not uniform, you must do several harvests so that the entire crop falls within the minimum values.

#### **Obligations**

- Use immediate or new or clean and authorized packaging for contact with edible substances, to guarantee health/hygiene safety.
- Keep the packaging properly and guarantee it doesn't have any contamination harmful to health.
- Correctly apply that required for management of traceability of the lots under Paragraph 4.2 of this manual.

### **3.2.13. Exceptions to the Farming Protocol**

Exceptions to the farming rules in this manual (*Section 3.2*) may be granted only when there are exceptional unfavorable exogenous events. These exceptions must be requested by those affected (individual cos. or members) and be duly justified with an ad hoc technical report. If the problem involves

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broad circumscribed territories, territorial exceptions may be granted. Every request gets assessed by the Management System Manager, OC, and TDM, which assess whether to grant it. The granting of an exception may have a retroactive effect, too, if specified, but still in the same production year.

### 3.3. Winery Best Practice

To get certification for “*Wines made with grapes produced by applying the ‘RRR’ Protocol of the Consorzio Tutela Vini Valpolicella, a company must follow some fundamental principles* (listed in the B3.3 checklist of Annex c – Applicant Company Sheet):

- Documented traceability, in all stages of processing, of the grape lots (and must and wine made from them) produced following the best practice under point 3.2, and their separation from other non-RRR lots (conventional);
- Proper washing and cleaning of wine barrels and winery equipment used to process and store grapes (and must and wine made out of them) produced following the best practice under point 3.2, so that the RRR lots don’t get contaminated by conventional lots.
- Processing where different masses come into contact (like cutting, assembling, *ripasso* operations) must be done only between RRR lots.

### 3.4. Other Kinds of Best Practice

In the capacity of the promoting body and manager of the RRR Project and through the designated figures, the CtV creates, updates, and verifies the whole of the “best practice” described in Sections 3.2 and 3.3 of this manual. However, the applicant company or certified company is also required to adopt sustainable practices of a non-technical or agronomic nature, but rather social, economic, and communicative. For the purposes of the RRR Project, the CtV considers the “best practice” described below done, given that the company signs a self-certification upon signing up for the RRR project where it guarantees to set them in action.

#### 3.4.1. Social Practices

For that which concerns, firstly, the management of the human resources that comprise employed company personnel, the company involved in the RRR Project ensures it will respect the main workers’ rights like application of a National Collective Labor Agreement, the freedom of association, equal opportunities, and child labor prohibition. Moreover, make sure not to resort to clandestine work and to hire personnel with qualifications consistent with the task performed, and to avail of workplace accident insurance.

The company shall make itself available to the local community and above all the neighboring residents, to gather information that helps improve the relations of life in common, and for reporting any problems; it shall also undertake to clearly communicate plans to construct new infrastructures or make changes to existing infrastructures that may cause inconvenience to neighbors in a timely manner. The company physically guarantees an entrance accessible to visitors and the disabled at its facilities.

#### 3.4.2. Economic Practices

The company shall undertake to identify waste and to adopt actions to reduce it. It shall also equip itself with human resource and investment management control systems that allow for reliable programmatic assessments in the short and medium-term. With the same expected timing, the company shall remain vigilant and active in financial risk assessment, both in the wine industry and considering the bigger picture. Lastly, the company shall undertake to make efforts to keep prices to consumers fair, based on its corporate policies and marketing choices, and to adjust to the regulations on the final payment deadlines that can be tolerated to avoid delays in payment to suppliers.

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### **3.4.3. Communication Practices**

The company shall adopt well-defined and demonstrable communication strategies concerning sustainability and the characteristics of the product it releases on the market; in association with the CtV, upon request it also shall give consumers information material on the sustainable viticulture protocol below, the RRR Project, with the goal to make the effectiveness of the practices adopted absolutely transparent and to promote company efforts and the project itself on the whole. Compatibly with the coordinated images and corporate design format used, the bottling companies shall undertake to put the RRR Project logo on the labels of their bottles and/or other advertising material.

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## PARAGRAPH FOUR: MONITORING ACTIVITIES

### 4.1. Identification

This is the method that the protection consortium uses to guarantee identification of the lots of certified grapes and the wine made out of them and is summed up in the points below:

Grapes:

- The Partner’s identification code: stays the same as the one assigned when joining the RRR Project;
- Identification of the cultivated areas: a copy of the “vineyard register” and the maps or aerial photographs of the land parcels involved are acquired;
- A computerized register with the list of the participating partners with the main administrative and cadastral identification characteristics.

Wine:

- Use of delivery notes that give proof of the “RRR” quality of the grapes;
- Clear identification of the grapes laid to partially dry with “RRR” indication;
- Identification of “wine made out of RRR-certified grapes” with an ad hoc sign on the wine barrel.

If the agricultural enterprise is particularly complex due to numerous divisions of the land, diversity of the crop environments, etc., you can define small units called “plot”, which may be identified with sequential numbering or a proper name.

### 4.2. Traceability

This is the ability to reconstruct the history and to follow the production chain identifying all the inputs that come into play through documented identifications (related to material flow and to the workers).

Grapes:

It is done with chronological recording in the computerized or hard copy “field book” provided by the protection consortium of the operations that entail the distribution over the vineyard of technical tools and farming practices for training (pruning, mowing grass, irrigation, etc.).

When the operations between one plot and the next are different, not so much in terms of the date that may vary a few days, but in terms of the substance of the operation itself, the records must give the identification of the plot.

Wine:

A general requirement for all the winery operations is the physical and financial separation of the product under RRR protocol from “conventional” production products, together with the separation of every job in time (done with careful prewashing) and/or space (production lines and equipment designated for the RRR product). The procedure will be complete when the winemaker gets sent a copy of the RRR certificate of the grapes delivered. Separate accounts shall be used on the winery logs.



### 4.3. Management of Checks

The pre-audit checks and assistance are carried out by personnel from the protection consortium’s Technical Division or by the outside consultant, while audits for issuance of certification are done by the Certification Body.

#### 4.3.1. Eligibility Check

For new applications, the procedure for management of certification starts with a verification of the completeness of the required company documentation; if incomplete, the company is asked for integration and given deadlines to provide it. The TDM can ask the company for other documentation not given on the checklist (for example, a copy of the Winery Log) if pertinent and necessary to the checks in the circumstances.

Upon confirmation of eligibility of the new partner, an identification code is assigned and given to the company on electronic media or in hard copy:

- Excerpt of this manual;
- *Annex a* - RRR List of Usable Pesticides, current year;
- *Annex b* - Field book.

The table below sums up the documentation the company has to provide and the timing in which it must do so.

Documentation	Timing
Signing up for RRR Certification	At the beginning of each year, by the deadlines set by the BoD
Updated Computerized Vineyard Register	When you first register and after changes are made
Plot maps	One time only, plus any changes
Field book completely filled out	By July 31st every year
Logbook completely filled out (in hard copy or on a computer program)	By July 31st every year; integration if requested
Pesticide container disposal doc.	By May 31st, with subsequent update if necessary.
Sprayer functional control attestation	By May 31st, with subsequent update if necessary.
License to purchase and use pesticides	By May 31st, with subsequent update if necessary.
Chemical analysis of the soil for new partners	By May 31st, with subsequent update if necessary.
Technical report for earth movement/justification in case of immediate continuous cropping.	One time only, if necessary

#### 4.3.2. Checks on Grape Production and Wine Production Process

Once it has received the Field Books, Logbooks, and other required documents or attestations for the total applicants, the Technical Division proceeds with their examination and assessment. The compliance of the production process described with that required by the manual for certification and its annexes is verified using the NIPQS checklist integrated—for the Valpolicella D.O. vineyards—with Annex a) to the manual. In the event of noncompliance due to missing documents, the Applicant will be asked to integrate them in 10 days at the latest after the sending of the request email. Once that time has passed, if the documentation is still incomplete, the company is disqualified from certification for the current year.

In a sample of 25% of the applicants formed with a drawing by the Certification Committee, grape samples are taken at the Valpolicella D.O. vineyards to check compliance with the use of pesticides.

There will be an in-company inspection on the same sample to evaluate compliance, still using the NIPQS checklist.

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Once the partial grape drying and subsequent crushing is over, only the winemaking companies in the RRR Project undergo a pre-audit appointment where the elements of Wine Production Process traceability are verified.

The OC or the TDM shall reserve the right to ask companies for a copy of documentation being filled out to see how it is being updated and its correctness throughout the year (for example, the Logbook or Field Book).

At the end of the Technical Division's in-company inspection, a copy of the on-site inspection report is issued. Proof (of a documental or photographic kind) may be attached to the on-site inspection report in the CtV's possession to back any noncompliance claims, for in-house use; the references to that proof shall be specified in the report notes.

The audits mentioned above may regard both RRR certification, and at the same time, NIPQS certification, which is a prerequisite for it.

## PARAGRAPH FIVE: MISCELLANEOUS

### 5.1. Training

The consortium’s training activity unfolds throughout the entire year and is geared towards both certified partners and all producers in the territory.

The activity is rolled out with meetings, conferences or classroom seminars, technical circulars, and weekly bulletins during the growing season whose themes will be about the principles of sustainable production, the assessment of last year’s experiences, improvements for the future, the use of the designated IT platform, etc. During the summer, information meetings might be organized in the country with days mainly centered around the eco-compatible machines and techniques.

The Technical Division sets up the training program annually, which the committee for certification then assesses and the Board of Directors approves.

The CtV enrolls participants in these initiatives; partners participating in the certification program **are obliged** to participate in at least one annual training event.

### 5.2. Use of the RRR Logo

The RRR logo is registered in the Italian and English languages and has Rules for Use to be referenced for the visual and design provisions (*Annex d* to this manual). The two above-mentioned logos may not be used simultaneously or contextually on the same material or label: for example, on bottles or advertising material sent abroad the mark may be used in English, instead the mark in Italian, on advertising material or bottles for the Italian market. The logos are shown as follows:



To be able to use the RRR Logo on a label on your wine bottles, a company has to have received the ad hoc Compliance Certificate from the Certification Body (or from the consortium for vintages 2016 and 2017). The RRR logo must be used only on wine bottles from the vintages that the certificates received refer to. All media or material where the company (entitled to do so) puts the RRR Logo must be sent to the CtV for approval prior to printing, publication, or divulgence.

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### 5.3. Annexes

- a. **RRR Usable Plant Protection A.I. List:** list of the active ingredients in plant protection products whose use is allowed in the scope of the RRR Project.
- b. **Field Book:** has designated fields where to record every farming job during the vine growing season (fertilization, irrigation, etc.). The book can be replaced with electronic media that has all the boxes in the hardcopy version.
- c. **Database of the Applicant Company:** sums up the company’s details, checklists used, and internal audit records.
- d. **Rules for Using the Logo:** regulates the design use of the RRR logo on wine bottle labels and on the Internet.
- e. **Audit plan:** the items and aspects checked during audits are specified as well as the audit methods.
- f. **RRR Sign-Up Form:** to fill out and send to the CtV as a statement of commitment to join the RRR Project.
- g. **Sworn Statement Affidavit/Ethical practices self-certification**
- h. **Complaint Form:** sheet for the Applicant to send the consortium complaints and requests for a review of penalties applied
- i. **Exception request form:** sheet to send to the Technical Division to request an exception to use weed killers in limited areas adjacent to the land
- j. **Question and answer form** for “remedial actions”