

OVER 25 YEARS OF EXTRAORDINARY RESULTS



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***Phylloxerated Vineyards Completely Restored to Full
Production With Natural Products from New Zealand***

**Protocol of Bio-Start products that saved over 15 commercial
New Zealand vineyards from replanting just introduced
into North America by Soilweb, Inc.**

GILROY, Calif. – A line of natural products developed by Bio-Start, Pty. Ltd. of New Zealand has provided the grape industry with the first fully-successful alternative to replanting phylloxera-damaged vineyards or applying pesticides.

Since appearing on the market in 1997, the independently-tested Bio-Start program has completely restored more than 15 phylloxerated commercial vineyards in Marlborough, New Zealand's premiere wine growing region, to full production in as little as one growing season. Comparable results have also been reported by growers in Australia.

As well, more than 120 Marlborough growers without a phylloxera problem have adopted the program on an annual basis on about 80% of the district's 6,250 planted acres, because of the demonstrated effect Bio-Start's products have on vine vitality and increased yields of high-quality fruit. Among them are some of the region's most prestigious labels, including Fox's Island, Canterbury House, Geesons, Cloudy Bay, Montana, Hunter's Wines, Saint Clair Estate Wines, Grove Mill, Wakefield Downs, and Serins Estates.

Soilweb, Inc., founded by agronomist Jim Barlow, has just introduced the Bio-Start program into North America, and is assisting growers in the proper use of the

proven protocol – which consists of four products applied in specific combinations at certain times of the year.

“Bio-Start has an outstanding five-year history of total success in reversing phylloxera damage. Every expert I’ve talked to in the Marlborough district says the product has never failed to completely rescue damaged vineyards by restoring the vines to full health and production. Many see an even better fruit yield and quality than before the infestation. This is clearly the most inexpensive and effective solution available on the market today,” Barlow says.

Case Study

In 1997, a Semillon block near Nelson on the South Island owned by Marlborough District grower Owen Graham was so damaged that you could almost kick the vines out of the ground. Indeed, Graham was about to bear the expense of replanting and being out of production there for three years because of the phylloxera when Geoff Warmouth, the Bio-Start representative for his district, suggested he try the Bio-Start protocol instead.

According to Graham, “The block was down to producing 4 tons to the acre when it should have been over 5.7 tons. It was growing no new canes and we were down to spur pruning it for new wood. I was set to pull the block out, but Bio-Start performed a near miracle!

“The first year after treatment, the vines produced seven really good quality canes out of every head, and it produced 16.4 tonnes per hectare (6.5 tons per acre)...It was probably the best block in the vineyard for good cane. When it first started coming right, I really loaded the vines up with 70 buds to see if I could hurt them, but you would never even tell now that they had been diseased. People can’t believe they ever had phylloxera at all. Yet you can [still] dig up the roots and see the tiny insects with your naked eye.”

Graham now uses Bio-Start routinely throughout his vineyard. For photos and specific protocol information on the Owen Graham case, please click here (or go to): http://24.176.36.11/biostart2/case_history/index.htm

How Bio-Start Works

Largely unknown in the U.S. before now, the four Bio-Start products responsible for reversing phylloxera damage have been in development for over twenty-five years.

The present formulations were refined over the last twelve years by a team of New Zealand-based scientists, agronomists, and product designers. They have also been submitted to rigorous field trials and independent testing at Lincoln University in New Zealand, as well as universities, laboratories, and research institutes in Europe – including the Wageningen Universiteit and Melchemie Holland in The Netherlands, the Instituto Agraria St. Michelle in Italy, and the Royal Research Station of Gorsem in Belgium.

Rather than killing the devastating insects, the protocol uniquely discourages phylloxera from biting the plant's roots. The insects can still be found in the soil areas treated by Bio-Start, but in smaller pockets away from the roots where they remain harmless. New feeder roots grow and become colonized by beneficial symbiotic mycorrhizal fungi. The result is that phylloxera activity decreases while root growth is stimulated and the vines return to full production.

As Bio-Start's independent scientist Gerard Besamusca says of the protocol's startling results: "It is the entry of root rot fungal diseases like *Fusarium* and *Pythium*, where the insects feed on the roots, that causes the majority of damage to the fruit-bearing vines. If you can stimulate root growth, the plant is better able to withstand this disease pressure. Then there are the mycorrhizal fungi that Bio-Start promotes in the soil. There is a theory, as yet unproven, that these may be changing the quality of the vine roots so they are less attractive to the insect. This would also improve nutrient flows in the plant. But possibly the major factor is that the enhanced biological activity and diversity in the soil promoted by Bio-Start are also having a suppressive effect on the *Fusarium* and *Pythium*."

The Bio-Start Protocol

The success of the Bio-Start program is based on a proven protocol of four products, which can be initiated at any time of the year. However, Soilweb's Jim Barlow

points out that late summer is one of the best times to get the program implemented, because of the flush of new root growth that appears in grapes at this time of the year.

“The Bio-Start keeps those new roots healthy throughout the winter, which gives you a larger base for the spring root flush and a bigger and faster recovery of the vines and foliage.”

The four products included in the protocol are:

- **Mycorrcin.nzTM** (My-core-cin), which is applied to the soil when watering in new plantings and down the row of established vines.
- **Mycorrcin Plus.nz 5-10-5TM**, which stimulates a different range of beneficial soil microbes in the root zone and has its role in phylloxera suppression during the spring season in particular.
- **Foliacin.nzTM**, a foliar spray material that produces bigger bunches and leaves with less bunch rot problems. “A big surprise has been the dramatic effect this product has on root branching when applied to rooted cuttings at planting,” says Barlow.
- **Digester.nzTM**, which was developed as a stubble digester to aid in the proper decomposition of plant organic matter by the natural soil fungi and bacteria. In the phylloxera protocol, the Digester product is applied to the soil in late fall.

About Bio-Start Ltd.

New Zealand’s leading biotech company, Bio-Start, Pty. Ltd. has been producing biological products to promote soil and plant life, while increasing crop yields and quality, since 1992. The current generation of advanced products being used to reverse phylloxera damage were released in 1998. The principle product development personnel at the company have been involved in biological product formulation technology for over 25 years. The Bio-Start company distinguishes itself in the priority they give to investing in research and development that is conducted by outside, independent scientists.

Bio-Start’s range of environmentally-safe solutions to common problems include **animal products** for sheep, dairy cows and beef to stimulate beneficial digestive microbes for better health and feed conversion; **pasture products** to lift the nutritional

quality of pastures; and **horticultural products** for the agricultural crop, greenhouse, and nursery industries.

About Jim Barlow and Soilweb, Inc.

Soilweb was founded in 1998 by Jim Barlow, a university-trained agronomist who has been a soils consultant to family farms for many years. A graduate of the Crops Science Department at California State Polytechnic University, with a degree in Fruit Science (1974), Barlow's first association with bio products began in the mid-1970s, when he served as the Product Technical Representative and Sales Manager for Agronomics, Inc., and introduced four biological specialty products for crop production into Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua.

Early in his career, he spent six months in Israel at the Kibbutz Kfar Blum in Upper Galilee, studying international agriculture production and marketing; two months in Guatemala conducting on-site research for an academic paper on Benlate (Du Pont Fungicide F1991) in the control of various pests in strawberry plants in tropical regions of high rainfall; and worked as a production manager for commercial operations in cut flowers, avocados, and tropical fruit.

His other experience in the field includes: serving as the Regional Manager for Advanced Ag Associates in Idaho, responsible for sales and customer service to seven large family farms totally 10,000 acres in the Sacramento Valley of California, and later working in the international sales department of Bonanza Seeds, supplying vegetable seeds to Latin America, Pacific Rim, and European markets.

Barlow has also served as the Executive Director of the non-profit International Eco-Agriculture Technology Association, representing product manufacturers and consultants in the sustainable agricultural industry.

Committed to the potential of applied soil ecology as a powerful tool for growers, Barlow co-founded a commercial soil microbiology analysis laboratory in 1996 (based in Corvallis, Oregon) that used a new procedure for testing the microbial life in soil, which had been developed by a major university. The state-of-the-art facility produced reports for growers using a scientific model of desired microbe populations that should be living with plant roots for best plant health and productivity.

Soilweb, Inc. is committed to finding and marketing the best biological products that can address major pests and diseases as solutions for sustainable agricultural. In addition to its North American launch of the Bio-Start protocol to reverse phylloxera damage, the company is currently evaluating products and protocols to address biological suppression of Sclerotinia rot disease in lettuce, pest nematodes in many crops, Pierce's Disease and other aspects of plant protection and production. Soilweb also provides independent testing of new products through a network of leading laboratories, and counsels growers on the best ways to implement the principles of sound soil ecology.

On August 24 through September 5, 2001, Jim Barlow will be visiting New Zealand to obtain the latest information on Bio-Start's newest developments. Visit www.soilweb.com after September 10th to view a report of his findings.

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