

## **St George QLD – Information on Local Horticulture.**

St George District has a proliferation of grape & horticultural farms in the district.

Table grapes, wine grapes, melons led the way, followed by pumpkins, onions and more recently garlic, broccoli and blueberries.

Statistical data for the Balonne Shire from 2001 states 320.58 ha of Grapes, 162.31 ha of Rock and Cantaloupe Melons, with 1 ha of Watermelons was grown. Onion and pumpkin commodity figures were outside of the scope of the ABSA survey in 2001.

Gillebri, originally a cattle and sheep grazing farm commenced growing cotton in the 1980's, it developed some of the non-useable sand blocks for Australian Wax flowers prior to branching in the production of rock melons. After 1994 the trade name Moonrocks was developed. The Moon family grows a variety of Garlic, Broccoli, and Onions.

Riversands Vineyards commenced growing grapes in 1992. The Blacket family purchased the farm in 1996 and have since turned it into a thriving business. One third of the 40-hectare vineyard grows wine grapes and the balance table grapes. The hot climate, drip irrigation and well-drained soils allow vines to thrive and produce wines of high sugar and fruity flavour. Wine grape varieties are hand-picked from January through to March. The chilled grapes are transported in bins to Ballandean Estate near Stanthorpe for processing.

In the recent years, Black Knight Table Grapes and others have commenced growing blueberries commercially.