

Bio Bill Yi Yang



<https://www.linkedin.com/in/bill-yi-yang-ph-d-12a7507b/>

Dr Billy Yi Yang is a trained chemist and winemaker with a deep passion for all aspects of wine growing. His winemaking journey started at Lincoln University, New Zealand, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Viticulture and Oenology (First Class Honours) in 2016.

During his time at Lincoln University, he became a travelling winemaker, working in wineries of various production scales in New Zealand and the US, acquiring practical expertise in the field.

In 2018, he began his PhD study at the University of Auckland, contributing to the MBIE-funded Pinot Noir programme (Breaking the Quality-Productivity Seesaw in NZ Pinot Noir Production, 2018 to 2022). After graduating in 2022, he joined the Hawkes Bay Wine Company, New Zealand, as a Laboratory Manager overseeing the QA and QC side of winemaking.

Billy embarked on the Waste to Treasure Programme in February 2024, focusing on creating and optimising facilities that convert grape marc into various products supplied to other researchers in the programme for diverse applications and further innovations. His work encompasses several key areas, including assessing grape marc biomass sources, developing and integrating efficient processes, optimising operations, ensuring sustainability, conducting economic analyses, collaborating on research, and conducting pilot testing. His work is critical in advancing the sustainable use of grape marc waste from the wine industry, contributing to renewable energy and sustainable industrial practices.

Bio Ralph Gonzales



<https://www.linkedin.com/in/ralph-rolly-gonzales-a493a4135/>

Born and raised in Manila, Philippines, Ralph Gonzales recently moved to New Zealand to join Scion as a postdoctoral researcher in the Waste to Treasure Programme.

Having left the Philippines more than a decade ago, Ralph has lived in different countries since then to pursue graduate studies and research opportunities. He was previously in Taipei (Taiwan), Seoul (South Korea), Daegu (South Korea), Sydney (Australia), and Kobe (Japan); now, he is very excited to be in Rotorua, and hopes to stay there much longer.

Prior to joining Scion, he was an assistant professor in Japan, working on membrane research, particularly on water and wastewater treatment, as well as resource recovery towards a circular economy. While the work for the Waste to Treasure Programme does not involve membranes, he is keen to learn more about bio-based materials derived from agricultural residues, particularly grape marc.

Outside of work, Ralph enjoys traveling and spending time with family and friends over food and drinks. He also co-owns a restaurant in the Philippines with his family where they serve family favourites and a variety of dishes inspired by their life. Ralph also enjoys going to karaoke and seeing his favourite artists in concerts. Sometimes, he also engages in outdoor activities, like hiking, camping, and climbing, but there are also days when he prefers to stay in the comfort of his home.