Primary Industry Minister, Kon Vatskalis, today visited Territory Grapes at Ti Tree in Central Australia to learn more about the commercial table grape industry, worth up to $20 million to the Territory every year.

Mr Vatskalis met with Territory Grapes General Manager, Andrew O’Bree, who gave the Minister a tour of the 5,000 acre property.

“It’s an impressive set-up and quite a sight – thousands of grape vines set against the dusty red landscape of Central Australia,” he said.

“Territory Grapes forms part of the Table Grape Growers of Australia group of properties, and is the largest in the NT with an annual production value of up to $10 million.

“While last year wasn’t the best for Territory Grapes due to poor weather conditions, the property still managed to turn out 87,000 boxes of grapes.

“In 2004, they hope to increase production to 100,000 boxes for the year.”

Mr O’Bree told the Minister they plan to pull out around 120,000 acres of old vines in the next couple of months, and replace them with 80,000 acres of new vines that will be ready for commercial production within three years.