

GRAPE PRESS

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The Quarterly Newsletter of the Virginia Vineyards Association

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Summary: VVA Winter Technical Meeting

Mizuho Nita and Tremain Hatch

The VVA winter technical meeting was held February 17-19 at the OMNI hotel in Charlottesville, VA. Here are some highlights of the research reports presented on Friday.

Doug Pfeiffer and Tim Jordan, Virginia Tech, Entomology

Doug Pfeiffer reported on Pierce's Disease (PD), suggesting that the Tidewater region should continue to monitor for three or more nights below -9.4 C (15 F) for reduced risk of PD; if current trends continue, a high risk

season is predicted for eastern Virginia. Mating disruption for grape root borer (GRB) continues, and in response to successful results in our VVA-sponsored research and substantial industry-wide interest, EPA Registration is being sought for a GRB mating disruption product, possibly available in 2012.

Preliminary research on brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB) is targeting the biology and management of this emerging pest in Virginia viticulture.

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Vine Spacing: An Opinion from the VVA Annual Technical Meeting 2011

Andrew Hodson, Veritas Vineyards and Winery.

“It depends,” is how Tony Wolf answered the question, “What is the optimal vine spacing?” and he was absolutely correct. But somehow to a lot of people in the audience that seemed a bit of a cop out. Why would Tony Wolf advocate at least 5 feet spacing when Lucie Morton is telling all her clients to pack ‘em in no more than 4 ft and generally a meter? Surely our two most respected and experienced viticulturalists cannot be that far apart in their opinions.

Did Mark Greenspan's talk help? Not for me — I left the meeting thinking that

the golden rule in vine spacing is that there is no rule.

Let's review what Mark Greenspan had to say posing the question, “Is the trend toward high density planting going

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The question of vine spacing has produced quite a lively debate. Read responses to Mr. Hodson's article on pages 6-7 of this issue of the Grape Press!

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President's Corner ...

Bill Tonkins, VVA President

The main purpose of this edition of the Grape Press is to update members that did not attend our winter technical meeting, held February 17-19 at the OMNI hotel in Charlottesville, VA, where the First Lady of Virginia, Mrs. Maureen McDonnell, accompanied by Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry, Mr. Todd Haymore, presented Grower of the Year award to Rock Stevens (see Page 8 in this issue). Congratulations Rock!

We had almost 200 people registered for the 2-day meeting as well as about 100 for the Thursday afternoon session on Hot Season Grape Varieties. This together with a record number of 32 vendors made for a very successful

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Pete Johns, Dave Collins, Paul Anctil, Tony Wolf, Tom Kelly, Tremain Hatch and Pat Cushing



Regional Reports

Central Virginia

Turtle Zwadlo, Pollak Vineyards

After what has felt like the proverbial long cold winter, spring is rapidly approaching. As usual I find myself going from having plenty of time to being on the verge of seriously behind schedule. The installation and planting of another acre and a half of vineyard isn't helping alleviate that feeling. Luckily the finish pruning is complete and all off season tasks in the existing vineyard blocks should be wrapped up in a matter of days. Bud vitality surveys look promising for a positive bud break which on our property historically ranges from as early as March 28 in the Chardonnay on our highest elevation to as much as 14 days later in the Cabernet Sauvignon.

In our region the late fall/early winter weather was ideal and we felt confident with the vines cold heartiness. Although the average temperatures during the winter months were well below normal we didn't experience any overly dangerous lows. Dry conditions continued through the winter but we seem to be trying to catch up now with close to 6 inches in the last 30 days.

This week I will begin scouting for signs of bud swelling and for the presence of climbing cut worm. The sprayer will also be prepped this week as I can expect my first spray for CCW to be applied in the next 7 to 10 days. Grape Berry Moth traps are going out as part of Tim Jordan's research at Virginia Tech. Last season our first positive catches of GBM were observed on April 15.

I am awaiting the results of our soil samples

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so fertilizer can be applied and am hoping to see an increase in pH in our Cabernet Sauvignon block where we have continued our soil remediation project.

The winter technical meeting was a wealth of information as always, many thanks to the long list of folks who make that possible. One of the big take home messages was that high density planting may not be achieving our goal of decreasing vigor in our Virginia climate. Proper vine spacing seems to be a function of site characteristics. Certainly an expensive and time consuming endeavor to find what is best for your vineyard. The meeting also highlighted that as an industry we are all equally disadvantaged in regards to Brown Marmorated Stink Bug. The impact of this pest can potentially be severe in both the vineyard and the winery. I encourage us all to communicate frequently as we try to discover how best to deal with BMSB. The upcoming reformatting of the VVA website should facilitate a more "real time" discussion opportunity. Good luck to everyone this season.

Northern Virginia

Dean Triplett, Greenstone Vineyard

Winter of 2010-11 is just about history and as always it can't leave a moment too soon. Not that it was a terribly harsh winter here in Northern Virginia. We certainly didn't get the huge snowfall we got last year. And we didn't hit any records for extreme low temperatures either. It was just a colder than average, windy winter all season long. Or at least that's the way it seemed. As far as snow accumulations, we received 10 inches of snow here in central Loudoun County on January 26th. Because of the colder than normal temperature's, the snow remained on the ground for quite awhile. Other than that we just got a couple of dustings of snow throughout the season.

It appears we'll be entering the growing season with a water deficit. Fortunately we had two pretty good rain events on March 6th and 10th which have added about 4 inches to our total. Still this is not enough to totally make up for the lack of precipitation throughout the late fall and winter months.

Our coldest temperature this winter was around 8 degrees F. on January 24th.

We have not seen any sign of winter damage to any of our vines. Talking with other growers tells pretty much the same story. Pruning is almost done and we look to be in good shape for bud break, whenever that might occur. So far, this year seems to be closer to what I'd call

normal. We had a couple of days in the 50's and 60's, but the nights have been in the low 30's and upper 20's. So while we're seeing signs of life in the very early budding trees and bushes, the buds on the vines are holding tight. Still, we did put on the first spray last year on April 10th, so anything can happen in the next four weeks.

We're expanding our vineyard here at Willowcroft in 2011. We're planting about an acre total of Albarino and Muscat Ottonel in a field next to our Parker vineyard. We've ripped out about a quarter acre of Riesling from one of our leased vineyards and will be replanting with Petit Verdot. Plans for this year include switching GDC trained Albarino vines in my vineyard over to a hybrid Smart Ballerina system. I had originally planned on switching to either Lyre or VSP training systems.

I ran into Chris Hill during the VVA winter technical meeting and he made the case for switching to what he calls Smart-one-legged Ballerina. In this system, the downward trained shoots are just on the southern side of the east-west running rows. If this proves successful, I'll try the same technique next year in one of our leased vineyards with Cab Franc and Merlot.

We had a number of rows in our Parker vineyard partially damaged by strong winds last fall so we'll be going on a post replacement program this spring. We'll also be adding more post extenders and catch wires to nearly all of our VSP trained vines this year as well.

The wines of 2010 are either waiting to be bottled, (whites), or are resting awhile longer in barrel, (reds). The quality seems to be quite high. I still maintain that the aromatic whites aren't quite as floral as we'd see with a cooler weather pattern from veraison to harvest. However they are more aromatic than I thought they'd be. I will be very curious to see how our winemakers handled the high brix readings at harvest. We should have some pretty powerful yet hopefully balanced whites from last year coming onto the market soon. The reds have the potential to be outstanding. It will be fun to sit in on the blending trials this summer.

At last count Northern Virginia has 64 wineries in its boundaries. This includes 6 new ones. Aspen Dale, Capitol Vineyards, Catoctin Creek, Crushed Cellars, Granite Heights and North Gate are all open to the public, open by appointment only or plan to be open in 2011. Another vineyard soon to be winery, located about seven miles south of Leesburg on Hogback Mountain road, is expanding their planting. The owners planted 5 acres last year to Chardonnay and

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Regional Reports

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Viognier. They are in the process of planting an additional 15 acres this year, all to reds.

Dave Collins, winemaker for Breaux Vineyards for 12 years, has taken a position with a new vineyard/winery venture in Maryland. Dave has been given an opportunity to become partner/manager of this new operation working from the ground up. They will be planting 20+ acres in 2011 with plans to start a 4000 case winery in the next couple of years. Dave has been a fixture in the Virginia wine-making community and has sold fruit to many wineries throughout the state. All of us in the Northern Virginia area want to wish Dave well and hope he has great success in the future.

Here's hoping that the late spring frosts of last year spare us this time around. And while I'm making my wish list let's hope that the brown marmorated stink bugs aren't going to be as terrible in 2011 as some would have us believe. I wonder if I'm pushing the envelope on my wish list.

Shenandoah Valley

Jim Benefiel, Benevino Vineyards

After a long dry growing season last year, we have endured a droughty winter in the Shenandoah Valley. Here at the north end, we received only eight inches of rain between November and February. Further south, as little as five inches of rain fell. This will doubtless have a debilitating effect on young vines and those on shallow soils. The results may not show until mid to late spring, when vines fail to thrive.

But hope springs eternal in the human breast! We have had good rain in March, just in time for the growing season. One can tell that the groundwater has—at least temporarily—

—been recharged, because the small, seasonal creeks are now flowing for the first time since last summer.

The winter was consistently cold, so no one is reporting any trunk splitting from early sap flows. The glassy-winged sharpshooter apparently will be held at bay in the Shenandoah Valley for another year, because we all had multiple nights below the critical temperature of 15 F. Our lowest overnight temperature of 2 F appears to be about the lowest in the valley, and it was in the middle of January when the vines were sufficiently winterized. Our own pruning continues to show minimal trunk or cordon damage.

As I write this in mid-March, the forsythia hasn't bloomed yet, and our vines typically leaf out about 4 weeks after the forsythia flush. So like all other growers, we hope for cool, cloudy, windy, rainy temperatures for the next month, only then to be followed by glorious sunshine and warmth. The harbingers of spring — Washington D.C.'s cherry blossoms — are currently forecast for an early appearance. We hope that schedule doesn't extend over the Blue Ridge into our valley.

Most of the winter activity has been the unglorious, but necessary (and sometimes, personally fulfilling) tasks of maintenance:

- Mending trellis — straightening slanted posts, splicing wire
- Training young replacement vines
- Repairing/tuning equipment
- Grading roads (no fulfillment here)
- Ordering supplies — fertilizers and spray materials.

Wineries in the Valley report a few small

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VVA Winter Technical Meeting

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Stink bug taint in wine, spray trials at harvest, and improved understanding of general biology are leading research concerns. Lastly, Tim Jordan reported on findings from a state-wide surveillance study of grape berry moth (GBM) in Virginia vineyards. Current research is focused on developing a forecasting model to predict and target optimum periods for managing GBM during the growing season.

Mizuho Nita, Virginia Tech, Plant Pathology: *Documentation of Grapevine leafroll disease in wine grape varieties and native grape species in Virginia, and examination of the movement of the disease for developing management strategies.*

Grape leafroll disease is caused by a group of viruses called grape leafroll-associated viruses (GLRaVs). On infected vines, both berry color and sugar contents can be reduced and negatively affect the wine quality. In the severely infected vineyard with a susceptible variety, the crop loss can be up to 30 to 50%. There are several unanswered questions on this important disease.

- A) In Virginia, no formal studies have been conducted to see the extent of infection and also which of leafroll-associated viruses are common.
- B) Uncertainty of the length of time that the disease requires to spread among vines.
- C) Anecdotal evidence of mixed infection was shown in previous studies, but no formal study was done to confirm it.

The VA Wine Board and the Viticulture Consortium East have been funding this study. Updates:

- A) Over 800 samples were taken from over 140 vineyards and 17 wild grape vines. RT-PCR assay was conducted at Dr. Nayapati's lab in Washington State University. Although many of virus-infected vines are from pre-90's planting (=no virus indexing), some newer vines were found to be positive for GLRaVs. Uniform or random spatial pattern is indicating spread by a wind-borne insect (mealybugs) and/or spread by the graft material (i.e., contamination of the vine prior to the planting).
- B) Results from a field experiment conducted in Winchester indicated that spread of the virus can happen within the first year of planting if infected vines exist nearby, and the infected young vine may not show visual symptoms. Mealybug populations were observed on newly planted vines, regardless of the treatment.
- C) Examination of statistics using >1,600 samples collected in Washington state showed that some of viruses are associated and others are disassociated. Thus there are potential synergistic or antagonistic relationships among these viruses. Also, grouping of viruses by potential vector were observed in the dataset, indicating the importance of vector management.

The other major benefit is the extension activities done along with the survey. I visited more than 70 growers, and most of time, disease management topics beyond leafroll were discussed. In addition, a master's level student, Mr. Taylor Jones, has joined our lab. We will

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Presidents Corner ...

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meeting. Thank you Dean and everyone concerned for a well planned event.

There was an interesting range of speakers from our own Tony Wolf on the high points of the last 3 years of research into managing vegetative development of Cabernet Sauvignon to out of State speakers: Dr. Mark Greenspan on Planting Density and Dr. Craig Austin on the effects of canopy light environment on powdery mildew. You will have probably seen articles from Mark in *Practical Winery and Vineyard*, and the *Winey Business Monthly*. Some highlights of the research reports presented are included in this edition of the Grape Press and copies of presentations are posted on the VVA website.

We had Industry updates from Rock Stephens as Chairman of the Virginia Wine Board, Annette Ringwood Boyd and Amy Ciarametaro from the Virginia Wine Marketing Office, and Patrick Cushing from the Virginia Wine Council. Good news all round with exciting new developments – you can see some of their articles in this edition.

Most importantly, we had great participation from our members who shared their experiences on Albarino, Roussanne, Syrah and Norton grape varieties. Even more fun, we got to taste some 18 cases of wine, which were donated by our own members for the reception. Thank you everyone – super wine!

Also in this edition we have 2 new regional reporters or maybe not so new. Jim Benefiel of Benevino Vineyards has kindly agreed to cover the Shenandoah Valley, where the climate differs to that on the East of the Blue Ridge, and Dean Triplett, never one to take a break, has agreed to cover the North East of the Blue Ridge. Dave Collins I understand is moving out of state. Good luck Dave and thanks for your contribution in the past.

In your hands or on your screen you have articles from Andrew Hodson on his take on the hot topic of Vine Spacing. There is also a super response from Lucie Morton and responses from Dr. Tony Wolf and Chris O. Hill. These articles will, no doubt, open up a lively debate for future editions of the Grape Press.

We also have the first of many, I hope, articles from Christine Vrooman and Kelly Carr. Christine is going to provide a column on Ecologically Sensitive Viticulture (ESV) and Kelly is going to provide us with some "Comic Relief" over the foibles and faux pas that will be part of the establishment of a test vineyard

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Presidents Corner ...

that she, or rather her husband Larry, is putting in this spring. Kelly tells me that she “will grace the fields with her presence, and provide much needed aesthetic guidance and the occasional dribble of water.”

Much of what we are reporting today is in the past and some would say that a quarterly newsletter has no role in today’s on line digital era. On this matter, I would agree and disagree. I would agree that we need to get into the 21st century with our Web site. It is now over 10 years old and it has served us well and it continues to serve us well. Test it out. Just Google “Chardonnay grapes for sale in VA” and you will be taken straight to our VVA Exchange. It is working but it is not as user friendly as we would like. For example, we are bundling together changes and sending them to Lisa McCade our Webmaster for her to make periodic changes to the site. This can be slow and participation by others is not easy.

Efforts are, therefore, now underway to update the web site with a more user-friendly content management system and social media interfaces and blogging platforms that will provide forums for discussion and 24/7 viticulture news updates. We will have links to the Virginia Wine Board site, Virginia Wineries Association and VirginiaWine.org – that will give us access to the Commercial Grape Report and Grapes for Sale etc. The Grape Press will be visible on line to anyone with access to the Web. We will be able to provide more graphic information without the fear of files being too large to send by email and members not being able to download them to their computers. You will, for example, no longer have to copy and paste the links that are referenced in Christine’s article. In future you will simply click on the site. You will also be able to sign up to our Facebook page or blog so that you automatically get informed of news and changes to our site and can participate in the discussion.


It is the possibility of fast and responsive participation by members that makes me realize that a quarterly newsletter is still a worthwhile endeavor. I believe that it will allow us to digest all the correspondence and filter out what is important and as my sister Patricia says get to ask Tony, Doug, Mizuho and all the other great folk at Virginia Tech and around the world for considered views. It will give us time to pause and learn things that the Web has no time to explain; we will be able to go back over things to improve our understanding.

There are times for the quick tweets and zaps of electronic viticulture news on the web and time for the more interpretative pleasures

of our Grape Press. We have a new Chair of our Communications Committee to lead this effort - Turtle Zwadlo. I have charged him with bringing this fast tempo Web culture to us balanced with a more considered understanding through the Grape Press; hopefully starting by April 1. He will need your help so please volunteer and




join him in this exciting venture. He can be contacted at tzwadlo@pollakvineyards.com.

I look forward to seeing everybody at the summer social at Cave Ridge on June 11th and again at our Summer Technical meeting on August 10th. 🍇



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Vine Spacing:

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to end?” He was referring to an article he had written in the 2009 December issue of *Wine Business Monthly*. Bear in mind that what he was actually espousing was based on extrapolation of data from other researchers work.

He referred to data first brought to attention by Jim Wolpert in the ASEV 2009 Symposium on Rootstock. Wolpert said that in certain vineyards, vine spacing might be more important than rootstock selection. Wolpert referred to seminal research done by Archer and Strauss published in the *South African Journal of Enology and Viticulture* in 1985 describing the effect of vine density planting on the size of the root systems in three-year-old arid farmed vines. Hunter followed up fourteen years later on Archer’s study on the original vineyard with an article published in the same journal in 1998 relating root mass to vine density.

Greenspan graphed these data as root density (root length per unit soil volume) against vine density and showed that root density continues to increase with vine density, up to 8,000 vines per acre. We can, therefore conclude that in arid farmed vineyards, close spacing does not cause inhibition of root growth. Remember that the argument that close spacing causes competitive inhibition of root growth is often used to justify close spacing. However when he looked at above and below ground biomass, including roots and foliage, Greenspan concluded that vine-to-vine competition does occur as vines are planted close together.

He goes on to reference work published by Intrieri and Filippetti from the Proceedings of the ASEV 50th annual meeting in which the authors relate vine spacing to vine balance. Another word of caution here, the authors in this paper create a hypothetical model based on “scientific” observation on how the vine balance changes from its optimum at a given vine spacing. I quote from Bibiana Guerra who introduced the paper at the symposium, “For a change, the article does not describe the results of a viticultural trial (no “Materials and Methods”). It is not a review of the work of others. Instead, the authors evoke an imaginary vineyard, and walk us down the path of different planting scenarios to help us to visualize what would happen to the vines if we were to change the intrarow and the interrow spacing.” Come on guys, for real? A hypothetical model with no data asking us to evoke an imaginary vineyard!


I am sorry but to me this is scientific imagination; interesting to chat over with friends over a glass of wine but not the sort of information that would help you make the decision

whether to plant 750 plants as opposed to 2000 for an acre of vines, a decision that might determine your success or failure as a wine grower or as a quality wine maker.

Greenspan developed the argument from measuring biomass and vine spacing to vine balance and vine spacing. It is very hard to actually measure vine balance just as it is very difficult to measure wine quality. The measure most frequently quoted is the Ravax index which relates fruit weight to pruning weights.

One thing I have always questioned is how on earth can pruning weights give you a reliable measure of vigor if you have not taken into account the number of times you hedged in the growing season? I am no scientist but I find the measures of vine balance difficult to understand. I have difficulty in figuring out total leaf area to fruit weight and even worse, total leaf area to exposed leaf area ratio! I use the weight of fruit per meter of canopy, depending on varietal as it relates to bunch size, as the easiest to compute, the ideal being somewhere between 3.5 - 4.0 Kgs. per meter or 2.0 - 3.0 lbs. per foot of cordon. One of Mark Chien’s favorite remarks is that most of the discussions on viticultural practices are mere Band-Aids to poorly planned vineyards.

So let us go back to the original question and Tony’s remark, “It depends.” It sure does! It depends on every viticulturalist knowing what those “depending” factors are. They are the constant variables that we all encounter in designing every vineyard, things like: varietal/clone selection, rootstock, vine density (vine and row spacing), irrigation, trellis, pruning system, row direction, rainfall, the number of degree days of sunlight and last but not least the soil characteristics. So studies that describe growth characteristics in arid climates might not be so relevant to us winegrowers in Virginia where our biggest and most difficult to control variable is rainfall. It is easy to turn on the irrigation when you need it but we do not have that luxury. So we have to base our decisions on what we know of our growing conditions. If you were a Frenchman you would be talking “terroir.” Know your terroir, know your stylistic goals and then you can express the terroir in your wines.

The success of the vineyards and wineries in Virginia or anywhere else for that matter is related to planting the right vines in the right place at the spacing that is right for the optimum balance of the vine. Go figure, it all depends! 

Vine spacing response

— Lucie Morton

Andrew Hodson’s frustration with the clear-as-mud topic of grapevine vine spacing is completely understandable. There is one fact that people overlook —vine spacing is NOT a means of vigor control in most situations. Grapevines are indeterminate plants and will fill out any space they are given. They crave light and when they get it they grow! I’ve seen 32 ft cordons in older Cab Sauv vineyards in Northern Va. where winter kill took out 4 vines in a row planted to 8 ft spacing. Many readers will attest to struggling to contain even quadrilaterally trained divided canopies, especially in the early years and in rainy seasons.

Most Virginia vineyards have relatively small areas with the best soils and elevation and most need to be enclosed in expensive deer fencing. Thus, it makes sense to maximize the land by keeping tractor alleys narrow—unless you have a turf business. Slope steepness comes into play here also.

The reasons that high end vineyards

around the world trend to higher vine densities is multi-factored and fundamentally unrelated to vine vigor. High end vineyards are aiming for a life span beyond 25 years. As many a vineyard owner here has found or will find out, old vines decline in vigor and by the time this becomes clear, it is too late to interplant to fill in those gaps that would not be there if the original planting had been closer.

Another issue related to vine decline over time is trunk disease. Most old vineyards I’ve seen here have significant losses of fruiting capacity due to gaps in cordons caused by botryosphaeri, phaeoacremonium and other dieback fungi. Replacing cordons is a costly remedy with variable success.

Cane pruning can be a significant part of an integrated pest management strategy as they eliminate the insect and fungal community condos in the fruit zone represented by cordons. For effective cane pruning, a

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A response from Tony Wolf to the vine spacing question

Andrew's missive illustrates the frustration that many wine growers (and viticulturists) have with determining an appropriate vine density. Of the two dimensions in determining vine spacing (inter-row vs. intra-row), the intra-row space – the distance from one vine to the next within the same row – is typically the more perplexing. Row-to-row spacing has certain absolutes (i.e., canopy height to width ratio) that must not be violated, but otherwise is normally dictated by terrain, machinery width, or other practicalities.


There are indeed numerous, independent variables that would govern the final design decision. One that all parties to this conversation would agree on is that the site characteristics would have a bearing on dependent variables such as “vigor” and vine size. Deep soils with abundant nitrogen-releasing potential (organic matter), cation-exchange capacity and, most importantly, water-holding capacity, are great for producing 100+ bushels of corn per acre; they're not so good for high grape and wine quality. But until we cease planting vineyards on such high capacity sites, we're going to have to deal with the vigor consequences. Dr. Greenspan included soil conditions as well as the aridity of climate – and a number of other factors such as intended training system and inherent variety vigor – in concluding that there is justification for some latitude in arriving at an appropriate in-row vine space. He went so far as to suggest that variable vine spacing in a given row might be considered where topography and soil conditions vary along the row. That gets a bit messy, but it acknowledges that vine capacity (potential for vegetative growth and crop bearing) can vary over short distances due to soil differences. I've advocated an analogous approach with vine training along a given row, where “vigorous” portions of the row be trained to Smart-Dyson, and less vigorous portions, such as eroded knolls, be trained to simple VSP. The hardware requirements don't really need to change.

My answer to the question about in-row spacing is that a range of spacing be considered: 4 to 6 feet is a good working range for most varieties. Four feet might be more appropriate with predictably low “vigor” situations (steep slopes, shallow soil, size-limiting rootstocks, etc. etc.) and for head-training and cane-pruning. Six feet might be more appropriate with deeper, richer soils and where

cordon-training will be used.

What are the pros and cons of 3-feet in the row vs. 5-feet in the row, all other factors being equal? If we use 8-foot rows, cordon-training, and VSP training, the higher density planting translates to 1815 vines per acre; the wider spacing translates to 1089 vines per acre. The difference of 726 vines per acre translates (at roughly \$4/vine) to an increased material cost of \$2,904, as well as additional planting and training costs. It's true that the narrower spacing might reach full yield potential a year ahead of the wider-spaced vines. But will the increased establishment costs of the higher density planting be recovered, particularly if there is increased canopy management cost due to increased vigor?

What about fruit and wine quality potential? Is wine quality greater at the higher vine density? Unfortunately, there are few controlled studies under humid condition to definitively answer this question. And even trials conducted in arid environments provide somewhat equivocal conclusions.

Here's my persistent question: does going from 5 feet down to 3 feet in the row translate into an improvement in quality that consumers are willing to pay for? If you feel that it does, what is the basis for comparison? Are you comparing the results of a relatively high density planting established in (say) 2006 with that of a relatively low density planting established in (say) 1996? If so, what else has varied over that 10-year period that might improve quality? Different sites? Different clones? Different rootstocks? Perhaps different training? What knowledge/experience has been gained over that timeframe that might contribute to higher fruit quality? What are you doing differently in the cellar that might impact wine quality? Until one compares a high density planting with a low-density planting in a controlled, long-term experiment, I must retain a measure of skepticism as to the direct impact of a two-foot difference in vine spacing on wine quality. 

On Vine Spacing: Dear Andrew

Chris O. Hill

Your article is excellent. It does all come down to terroir. You did leave out a couple of variables though, that I would like to mention. One, is a vineyard design that gives you the optimal cold hardiness for dormant season buds and wood. If your cane diameter tends towards the bullish end of the scale, then your buds and wood are not as cold hardy as they might be if they lean toward a thinner diameter. This becomes extremely important when mid winter temperatures dip to between -7 degrees F and -15 degrees F. The hell with balanced vines for good wine, how about balanced vines for survival? This ties back into the summer rainfall issue and uncontrolled vigor. In closely spaced vines, using VSP, the number of shoots per vine is very limited. If vigor is greater than desired, you get very large canes and decreased cold hardiness. However, if the grower will consider dividing the canopy, in my mind, vertically, then you can leave more shoots per foot of row, spreading the potential vigor out over more shoots, hopefully achieving decreased cane size, and increasing winter hardiness potential. Leave the crop load that you desire.

Two, and you may have discussed this sufficiently, is soil type, particularly as regards soil depth. Nothing promotes less vigor and thinner cane diameter, in high summer rainfall regions, as does a relatively shallow soil depth. Shallow soil is a root bag. Put the vines as close as you want, use VSP, let it rain {within reason} and you may still achieve a balanced vine for good wine and winter survival.

The discussion needs to continue and thanks for carrying it forward.

Sincerely,
Chris O. Hill

2011 Virginia Grower of the Year Award

Rock Stephens | The Vineyard at Point Breeze

The Virginia Vineyards Association Grape Grower of the Year award was presented to John H. "Rock" Stephens of The Vineyard at Point Breeze, located on Virginia's Eastern Shore. Beginning in 2006, the VVA has presented the Grower of the Year Award to people deemed to be innovators and leaders in the industry. The criteria for this award are: an active member of the Virginia Vineyards Association with at least seven years of experience managing or operating a commercial vineyard of at least 5 acres. The nominee must be an active participant in the Virginia viticulture community with a history of service to our industry and must be well respected by his or her peers.

Rock Stephens, along with his wife



First Lady Maureen McDonnell & Rock Stephens


Kris, own The Vineyard at Point Breeze, a twelve-acre vinifera vineyard, located on Virginia's Eastern Shore. A graduate of Purdue University, Rock also has a Masters in Business Administration from Michigan State University and is a graduate of The Executive Program (TEP), Darden Graduate School of Business Administration, at The University of Virginia. After serving in the United States Navy, he retired as a Captain. He has been an active member of the Virginia Vineyards Association (VVA) since 1997 and just completed his second two year term as President in December 2008. In 2005 he was appointed by Governor Warner as a member of the Wine Board and was elected as Vice Chairman in 2007. In July 2009,

he was reappointed to the Wine Board by Governor Kaine. He is a member of the Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce, Virginia Vineyards Association, and the Virginia Farm Bureau. He has been making wine for over ten years and has won numerous amateur winemaking awards in international competition.

Virginia First Lady Maureen McDonnell presented the Grower of the Year Award to Rock Stephens at the annual Winter Technical Meeting of the Virginia Vineyards Association, February 18th, in Charlottesville. Mrs. McDonnell has been a staunch supporter of the Virginia Wine industry. The First Lady has hosted many tours of vineyards and wineries, spoken on numerous occasions both domestically and abroad, and generally supported the virtues of Virginia wine.



MASTER
PLANNING
PUBLIC AND
PRIVATE
BUILDINGS
UNIQUE
PREFAB
ICONIC
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NEW
STRUCTURES
VINEYARDS
WINERIES
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Leaning Green in Virginia Vineyards

Christine Wells Vrooman, Ankida Ridge Vineyards

Interest in eco-friendly farming and viticulture practices has surfaced around the world in recent years. Increasing numbers of European and California vineyards are reporting success with Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programs and “organic” and Biodynamic™ programs. Behind these approaches is the desire to give more thoughtful consideration to the long-term impact our vineyard practices and inputs have on soil health, indigenous flora and fauna, our workers and neighbors. In addition, many feel these practices can affect a vineyard’s expression of terroir in its wines (more on that later).



This column has been created to serve as a forum for discussion on these and other topics related to “Environmentally Sensitive Viticulture” practices in Virginia vineyards. As a grape grower myself, it is my intention to seek out expertise concerning vineyard practices that best serve both ecological and economic goals. The latest buzzword that sums this up (and carries a plethora of definitions) is vineyard sustainability.

Presently, strictly organic certification for vineyards growing vinifera grapes in the Mid-Atlantic region is thought to be unrealistic because of fungal disease pressure, specifically black rot disease. However, black rot control can be achieved with synthetic products which, while not “organic,” in fact are less toxic to the environment than copper, which is an organically certified product. Seeking organic certification under current definitions is not necessarily the goal of this vintner or many others interested in healthier vineyard practices. The goal is rather to create an awareness that softer practices with lower inputs can promote greater biodiversity and balance in the vineyard. Many believe that a greater balance in the vineyard will create better balanced wines.

We have a family operation with a small work force, where friends and family come to help, with children and dogs roaming about. For us, creating as healthy an environment as possible is a high priority. Beyond the human factor, there are beneficial organisms working behind the scenes that if protected, will help protect the vines through nature’s own wonderful system of checks and balances. Regarding current spray recommendations,

the current system of REIs and PHIs could be considered primitive in that it does not actually help us decide if we should be using certain products in the first place. An example of this would be over-use of insecticides where there is no demonstrated need based on trapping or economic threshold.

Most would agree that a vineyard does not have to be eco-friendly to produce a great wine. Some of the best wines in the world are made from grapes raised in conventional, high input vineyards. But on the other hand, some of the best wines in the world (e.g., Burgundy’s Romanée-Conti) are made not only from organically certified vineyards, but Biodynamically™ certified as well. Although the “level of green” in a vineyard truly may not directly determine the greatness of a wine, it is certainly a factor in the complex interplay of soil, climate, and grower practices that ends up being defined as the all important terroir factor. Below are a few links that offer discussion on the much talked about subject of terroir.

- <http://blogs.smithsonianmag.com/food/2010/06/randall-grahm-on-why-wines-terroir-matters>
- <http://www.winespectator.com/magazine/show/id/11473>
- <http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:csYzXmHyA6kJ:idrinkonthejob.wordpress.com/2010/01/02/debunking-terroir/+i+drink+on+the+job+terroir&cd=7&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us&client=firefox-a&source=www.google.com>

Where does Virginia stand in the area of terroir-driven wines? Would more eco-friendly vineyards give us better marketability for our wines? Whether or not this is the case, maintaining a balance of nature in our vineyards is not only a healthy choice for the land but for us and our workers as well.

For this column to better serve your interests and curiosities, I ask that you, the vintners and others involved in the wine industry of Virginia, submit to the email address at the bottom of this article, any questions, experiences, suggestions or expertise that can serve to educate or inspire discussion about eco-friendly viticulture practices and the wines they produce. Also, we will be utilizing a variety of platforms for discussion and the exchange of ideas. We have established a Facebook page, “Environmentally Sensitive Viticulture” as a

means for an open and immediate exchange of comments and questions amongst vintners. As the season goes on, we’d like to utilize the internet survey platform, “Survey Monkey” to gather information (all confidential) on your various viticulture practices, sprays used, problems encountered, etc. Such information will provide statistics on practices that can lead to more specific requests for advice and information from researchers, product purveyors, and professionals.

Possible topics planned for future issues of this column include:

- IPM Program in Virginia under development by VA Tech. Here is an example of an established IPM Program from NY : http://www.vinebalance.com/aem_link.php
- Discussion on Sustainable, Organic, Biodynamic: Their commonalities and differences
- La Lutte Raisonné: A description/designation of French origin that might be useful to us as we try to establish our unique “viti-mix” of sustainability here in Virginia. Note: we have much more in common with European viticulture than Californian.
- Sharing of new, successful eco-friendly practices in Virginia’s vineyards
- Excerpts and images from successful eco-friendly vineyards from other regions
- Systemic Acquired Resistance (SAR): What is it? Does it affect wine flavor? (Dr. Bruce Zoecklein has agreed to weigh in on this)

To sum up, the purpose of these articles is not to achieve universal agreement but to raise awareness of the issues at hand and bring new perspectives to them. Please offer any comments, questions, suggestions, experiences to: reply@ankidaridge.com.

And please sign onto the Facebook page, “Environmentally Sensitive Viticulture.”

I hope to see you there!



VVA Winter Technical Meeting

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finish up the survey project in 2011 by adding more samples from both commercial and wild grapes. Also, the assessment of grapevine viruses beyond GLRaVs will be conducted at our lab to confirm the relationship among viruses with VA dataset.

Results from this study will be used to identify vineyards where re-planting is needed; to test other insecticide options for mealybugs management; and to set a guideline for virus screening for clean plant material production.

Other grape pathology researches conducted in my lab are: *Development of Map-based grape and apple disease risk assessment system*.

The project was initiated during the spring of 2010 with funds from the VA Ag council

and USDA EIPM program. In collaboration with a team of researchers in VT's Center for Geographic Sciences (Mr. Peter Sforza and Mr. Seth Peery), and Penn State University's meteorology (Mr. Paul Knight), we have been developing the infrastructure for the proposed disease risk assessment system. Disease models have been translated into GIS language for map displays, weather data from various weather stations throughout the state were collected, weather data from the national weather service (both observed data and data from weather models) were stored on our computer server, and design of web interface has begun. The next focus on our project is the web-interface and testing of disease models using existing weather datasets.

Detection of common grape trunk/vascular

diseases using the real-time quantitative PCR techniques

A study to develop a real-time PCR procedure to detect some of important pathogens of grape trunks and vascular tissue have been proposed to the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences internal competitive grant, and the funds were granted. The ultimate goal of this proposed study is an establishment of a sound nursery practice to minimize the risk of infestation at the nursery level; however, we need to perform a series of preliminary studies prior to the start of more in-depth studies. Thus, in this study, there are two major objectives toward the goal: 1) Establishment of a modern lab where many of these trunk/vascular pathogens can be diagnosed using newer molecular diagnostic tools; and 2) Examination of grafted grapevines from nurseries.

We are in the process of establishing a protocol for detection of major trunk pathogens in collaboration with Dr. Elwin Stewart of Penn State University: Petri disease (caused by fungi *Phaeoniella chlamyspora* and *Phaeoacremonium* species), crown gall (caused by bacteria *Agrobacterium tumefaciens* and *A. vitis*), and Bot canker (caused by a fungus *Botryosphaeria* spp).

Fungicide updates: I also presented fungicide updates and results from fungicide performance trials conducted at Winchester AREC during the 2010 season at the VVA meeting. For more information, please visit my blog at <http://grapepathology.blogspot.com> and click on links to documents on your left-hand side, under heading "Links to the other resources".

Peter Sforza, Virginia Tech, Center for Geospatial Information Technology

A new GIS web tool for inspecting vineyard site suitability has been developed at Virginia Tech. This web based tool will allow users to investigate and compile attribute data including soils, climate and topography information for a potential vineyard site. The tool is still in the developmental phase. The tool is available at: <http://vmdev.cgis.vt.edu/Vineyards/>. Please give us feedback on this tool.

Chris Bergh, Virginia Tech, Entomology

Dr. Chris Berg presented two components of his grape root borer research program. The first component is inspecting the abundance and distribution of grape root borer in Virginia. This information can be used to clarify the

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Turning Water (and Sun, and Soil) Into Wine

Kelly Carr


What could be simpler? Stick some vines in the ground, water them a bit, and enjoy! Right? Larry and I have a few acres in the Shenandoah Valley. We love to spend time outdoors. We've had the privilege of visiting some of our local wineries and we thoroughly delight in the challenge of trying to define bouquets, flavors and aromas we experience in a glass of Virginia's finest. These lovely people look so relaxed and happy as they pour us the fruits of their labor. Let's see: They have land: Check. They have water: Check. They have sunshine: Check. All necessary ingredients accounted for. We are good to go!

This Spring we will plant a test vineyard, then. Larry will provide the Yin, and I will provide the Yang (thank goodness for me, it is the Yin that requires the heavy lifting - the Yang is more about the Feng Shui of the rows, the Ch'i of the wind...)

In preparation for this new chapter in our lives, Larry had the foresight to sign us up for the 2011 Winter Technical Meeting (report provided elsewhere in this Grape Press). Ah, yes, we rubbed elbows with the cognoscenti of the Virginia Vitis community. There we were, clean, happy and dry, gathering tidbits of knowledge and listening to the lore of those who have gone before us. As the hours and days went by, though, a bit of reality started to set in. Oh, my. Fungi (and not the edible kind). Bugs (who knew they could even hold a glass of wine with their little antennae?) Hungry deer (and they are always under 21, so I think someone isn't checking ID.) Uncooperative weather. A jillion variables.

Ah, but never mind. The conference days were interspersed with tastings, luncheons, an evening social event with tables of lovely Virginia vintages and tasty hors d'oeuvres. This can't be hard - look at all these smiling, content, fulfilled people. We must join these fabulous entrepreneur farmers.

We will plunge in, full steam ahead! And now the endless choices and challenges: We will choose VSP trellising, for sure, unless, of course, we put in some Norton. We won't fence just yet, we'll share with the wildlife. Ten varieties, to see what works in our soil. Surely our hardpan soil will gift us with unique fruit that lends fantastic terroir to our first vintage.

Naturally, the sun will shine. We live the charmed life here in Virginia, so why wouldn't it? And so we embark on our quest to turn water (and a bit of soil and sunshine) into wine... stay tuned. 

2011 Legislative Summary

The 2011 Legislative session was a huge success for the Virginia wine industry! All of our bills have passed the General Assembly and are on their way to the Governor for his signature. We continue to solidify our presence in Richmond and have become an invaluable resource for legislative members that support Virginia wineries and vineyards. Here is a quick recap of our legislative victories this year:

The Governor's 2011 Budget:

1. Appropriation: We have secured a \$280,000 increase in funding to the Virginia Wine Board to account for increased revenue from the wine liter tax collections attributable to the sale of Virginia wine. In 2010 legislation passed that required all wine liter tax revenue attributable to the sale of Virginia wine to be reserved for the VA Wine Board and this year's budget amendment covers that increase. The money is used for marketing, education, and research related to the VA wine industry.

2. Winery and Vineyard Tax Credit Revenue Adjustment: We have also ensured that the revenue projection accounting for the \$250,000 winery and vineyard expansion tax credit (HB 1837/SB1264) remained in the final budget. After a last minute "fire drill" we are happy to report that we will be receiving BOTH the \$280,000 appropriation for the Wine Board and the \$250,000 tax credit. This funding was in jeopardy for several weeks!

Winery and Vineyard Expansion Tax Credit: HB 1837 (Garrett) and SB 1264 (Vogel):

This year the Virginia Wine Council lobbied successfully to help pass the Governor's Winery and Vineyard Expansion Tax Credit. Below are the key points that you need to know about the legislation:

1. The bill provides a tax credit to both Virginia farm wineries and Virginia vineyards with over one contiguous acre of planted vines for wine grape production.

2. The tax credit amount that may be claimed is 25% of qualified expenditures.

3. Qualified expenditures include: the purchase and installation of barrels, bins, bottling equipment, capsuling equipment, chemicals,

corkers, crushers and destemmers, dirt, fermenters or other recognized fermentation devices, fertilizer and soil amendments, filters, grape harvesters, grape plants, hoses, irrigation equipment, labeling equipment, poles, posts, presses, pumps, refractometers, refrigeration equipment, seeders, tanks, tractors, vats, weeding and spraying equipment, wine tanks, and wire.

4. The credit may be carried over for a period of ten years. For those wineries and vineyards with significant loss and depreciation and therefore no tax liability, they will still be able to apply for the credit, carry it for up to ten years, and apply it when they do have a tax liability.

5. The total amount of the credit that the state will issue in a given year is \$250,000. Therefore, if wineries and vineyards collectively apply for more than \$250,000 in credits, the Department of Tax will issue the credits on a pro-rata basis.

The tax credit will apply to "qualified expenditures" made in 2011 so make sure to keep careful records of any purchases that meet the definition of "qualified expenditures".

Excise Tax Reform on Direct to Consumer Wine Sales: HB 1979 (Greason) and SB 1083 (Hanger):

HB 1979 and SB 1083 provide Virginia wineries an exemption from payment of the excise tax on wine shipped directly to consumers outside of Virginia. Under the current framework Virginia wineries are paying the excise tax in Virginia and the state they ship into...resulting in paying the same tax twice. We have now removed this unfair application of the Virginia excise tax!

Restaurant Corkage: SB 1292 (McWaters):

SB 1292 permits restaurants with an ABC license to allow consumers to bring their own bottle of wine into the restaurant. Restaurants do not have to allow this privilege but if they do, they may charge the consumer a corkage fee. The Virginia Wine Council lobbied to get this bill passed because we saw an opportunity to expand the market for Virginia wines, especially in those restaurants that do not currently carry a Virginia wine on their wine list.

Vine spacing response

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shorter distance between vines helps the cane have more uniform bud push.

So how close is close? For the record, I have NEVER recommended a "new world" client plant meter by meter! Nor would I suggest that First Growth Bordeaux growers change their time-honored vine spacing. For me, a base spacing for high end vinifera and some hybrid vines is alleys of 7 ft to 8 ft and vine spacing of 3.25 to 4 ft. The density is from 1550 to 2000 vines per acre. As Andrew mentioned, we do not control our rainfall so I do not look to spacing to manage vigor.

A few years ago, I asked Gianni Zonin about the Barbourville changeover from wide to narrow vine spacing and he summed it up with two words: "wine quality." Sometimes

those seeking simple scientific evidence for such a complex issue will dismiss European attitudes as "tradition," but I call it experience. I've worked with growers around the world and have found that the high end growers either begin with closer spacing or go to it over time. I say high end because high-volume growers of lower-priced wines will find an economic advantage in low density planting.

EXCHANGE

Due to the large number of items for sale, I would direct our members to the following web site:

Virginiavineyardsassociation.com

Editors note:

Please take note of the change of email address for our office manager Kay Thompson vavineyardsassoc@gmail.com

Regional Reports

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vineyards being established, but the growth of years past has slowed. North Mountain reports they have purchased an additional 22 acres of excellent vineyard land and have begun planting. The first blocks are Petit Verdot and Cabernet Sauvignon. An original vineyard block of Vidal Blanc there has been removed, and will be replanted next spring.

As this spring progresses, come out to our verdant valley and take in our vistas. See what brought us to and keeps us in this bountiful place.

Southern Piedmont

Paul Anctil, Sans Soucy Vineyards

Activity in the southern grape growing region is generally focused around final pruning and getting equipment and other resources ready for the new season. We had a rather cold winter but not too much in the way of precipitation. I saw a few more dead vines this spring which apparently succumbed to those really cold nights back in December (9 F) and January (12 F) coupled with extended periods of very strong winds. January was drier than normal for this region, but February and March rainfalls have just about eliminated the earlier deficits.

The winter months were a bit cold but now we seem to be getting an early bout of warmer than usual temperatures! As I was finishing my final pruning, it was clear that the buds are swollen and I'm very concerned with bud break occurring much too early. Every one in Virginia seems to have problems with an Easter time frost, but in our area, false springs are a very significant threat.

A couple of the growers in our area will add a few rows to increase production. Some are expecting to try a couple of new varieties for our region. I am adding to my Tempranillo. We like the wine it produces for us and grows better than expected.

One growing concern for all of us is the increasing incidence of Stink Bugs! That is what we get for complaining about Lady Bugs over wintering in our homes. I for one will be closely watching for an effective solution against this growing and significant pest.



Editorial: A "Thank You"

We would like to thank the Virginia Wine Council and Patrick Cushing for the excellent work that they have done in working with Secretary Todd Haymore, Asst. Secretary Matt Conrad, and all members of the budget conference committee to ensure that our funding priorities made it through the General Assembly. In particular, we would like to thank all those members who have donated funds to make this possible and to ensure that we have a voice in Richmond. There is, however, still a need for more funds, as at the time of writing, we have not met our goals and more importantly the threats have not gone away.

The main threat that seems likely is the reintroduction of HR 5034, a federal bill that would give states blanket authority to ban direct to consumer interstate shipments of wine while allowing intrastate shipments to occur. This is a protectionist and anti-competitive measure that has repeatedly been found unconstitutional by courts. If this bill is reintroduced, as the wholesalers have threatened, we will need all stakeholders in the Virginia wine industry to contact their congressman to urge them to vote against the bill.

Some would say that we are not the Stakeholders and that this would be benefiting the wineries more than the independent growers in our industry. Our former President, Dean Triplett, would counter this by saying "a vibrant Virginia wine industry will be a home for the quality grapes of our small growers. Wineries and growers will always be connected at the hip, and as one goes, so goes the other." What Pat and the VWC is doing for our industry will be a never ending journey and your support is necessary, so please provide financial support.



VVA Winter Technical Meeting

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environmental and horticultural factors that influence the distribution of grape root borer.

The second component of this project inspects the efficacy of different trap types on grape root borers. The influence of trap type, color and aperture on efficacy in trapping grape root borer has been inspected and reported. This information will be helpful for the development of mass trapping protocols. Both components of grape root borer research will continue into the 2011 growing season.

Lynn Rallos and Anton Baudoin, Virginia Tech, Plant Pathology

The next presentation described experiments with "sentinel vines," potted grapevines sprayed with low rates of individual fungicides to determine the sensitivity of a powdery (or downy) mildew population to those fungicides, and how results with sentinel vines compared to those of field trials. Also briefly reviewed were a study on the stability of strobilurin resistance when use of those fungicides is discontinued, and new cases of fungicide resistance in other regions or crops that could shed light on what eastern

US grape producers may face next.

Molly Kelly, Virginia Tech, Food Science and Technology

This research project involves characterizing regional Petit Manseng grape and wine volatiles and aroma precursors. This variety shows substantial potential for the VA and NC wine industry. The characterization of the aroma profile of Petit Manseng wines from the mid-Atlantic region will provide insight into regional similarities or variations.

Once the characterization of the aroma profile is complete, sensory "profile maps" will be created demonstrating how regional wines differ from each other and thus provide information regarding the sensory uniqueness of NC and VA Petit Manseng. Once the specific sensory attributes that drive consumer likes or dislikes are understood, more informed production, winemaking and marketing decisions can be made.



Virginia Vineyards Association Grape Press

Calendar

March 29-April 1

Wineries Unlimited Trade Show & Conference, Greater Richmond Convention Center

Registration at 866-483-0172 or wineriesunlimited.com

April 7-8

Auction of assets of the Kluge Estate Winery near Charlottesville

VVA members are advised that Farm Credit has announced that assets of the Kluge Estate Winery near Charlottesville will be auctioned off in two separate events April 7th and 8th at the property. For more details, visit the VirginiaVineyardsAssociation.com website. Links to the auctions are listed in the News section.

April 13-15

New York Wine Industry Workshop, Ramada Geneva Lakefront Hotel, Geneva, NY.

This is Cornell Enology Program's annual technical meeting focusing on concepts and challenges specific to eastern, cool climate wine production. More details can be found at <http://grapesandwine.cals.cornell.edu>

April 15

New Grower Workshop. Farm and Home Center, Lancaster. PA

8am-5pm. This is an intensive and comprehensive overview of what is needed to start a commercial wine vineyard in the Mid-Atlantic region. Instructors are Mark Chien (Penn St.) and Joe Fiola (University of Md.) with grape growers to offer practical instruction. \$125 per person.

April 19

Pennsylvania Wine Association Annual Meeting.

8am-5pm with awards banquet. Penn State Conference Center, State College, PA. Viticulture, enology and wine marketing sessions. Awards banquet and annual PWA business meeting. Pesticide credits will be available. For information, please call 717-234-1844.

May 18

A Closer Look at Hybrid Wine Production: Vine to Bottle. Farm and Home Center, Lancaster PA

9am-4pm. This meeting will focus on innovative production of hybrid vines from vineyard to cellar. Speakers will be from industry and extension. The contents will be very practical.

June 11, 2011

VVA Summer Social, Cave Ridge Vineyard, Mt Jackson, Virginia

6:30pm. Join your fellow grape growers for an evening of food, wine, music and camaraderie. More details to follow at virginiavineyardsassociation.com under "events".

July 22-24, 2011

2011 Wine Bloggers Conference, Charlottesville Omni Hotel

The 4th Annual Wine Bloggers Conference is the premier conference for new media and the wine industry. The expected attendance for this event is 300.

August 10, 2011 (tentative date)

VVA Summer Vineyard Meeting, Rappahannock Cellars, Huntly, Virginia

More details to follow.

Feb 2-4, 2012

VVA Annual Technical Meeting and Trade Show, Charlottesville Omni Hotel

We will update the website with regional workshops as they become available to us. www.virginiavineyardsassociation.com under "Events".