

WINE GRAPE INFORMATION FOR PENNSYLVANIA AND THE REGION

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Hershey: Bugs, Birds and Chocolate (attachment)

Grape growers face a severe challenge each season from a variety of insect pests. The problem with bugs may not be the immediate damage they cause but the opportunities that damage creates for fungal pathogens, especially late in the season when grapes are almost ripe. It is thought that damage to *V. vinifera* by Phylloxera is as much a result of soil-borne pathogens entering wounded roots as the galling effect of the insect. Many of the harshest pesticides we employ in vineyards are insecticides which can be harmful to the environment, human health and beneficial insects and other non-target organisms. So growers need to be very thoughtful and considerate in their use of these products. Integrated Pest Management methods may be more important with insects than any other vineyard pest - knowledge, scouting, anticipation, timing and economic thresholds are paramount in the control of insects. Our wine grape section program at the Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention in Hershey will focus on insect control strategies and methods and features Dr. Doug Pfeiffer, entomologist from Virginia Tech. A complete program is attached to this message.

You may have also noticed in the past few years that birds are becoming more of a problem. Ask a grower on Long Island and they may tell you that birds are the worst problem. It's frustrating to work hard for 0-10 months only to lose grapes at the last moment before harvest. Alice Wise and Libby Tarleton from Cornell Cooperative Extension have been testing new and old netting technologies and will share their results. Not all net materials are created equal.

2 core and additional category pesticide credits will be available at this meeting. To check on your current pesticide applicator's license credit status go to <http://www.pested.psu.edu/>

Date: Tuesday, January 30

Time: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Place: The Hershey Lodge and Convention Center

http://www.hersheypa.com/accommodations/hershey_lodge/

Registration fee: \$75 for one day entry.

Pruning Workshop at Manatawny Creek Winery (attachment)

Crop regulation and vine balance may be two of the most important viticulture goals in the Eastern US. Both of these begin each year with the correct pruning of the vine. There is a right and wrong way to prune a vine, just like a rose or apple, and how you do it will set the stage for quality for the rest of the year. Remember, once you cut it off it's gone so you really have to get it right. Part of correct pruning is understanding vine training and trellis system and the anatomy of the vine. We'll cover all of these essential topics along with field demonstrations of cordon/spur and head/cane pruning in a commercial vineyard. It is almost impossible to learn proper pruning from a book. The best way is to challenge a vine and have a good instructor to tell you what to do until you are comfortable with making cuts.

Date: Thursday, January 11

Time: 9 a.m. to noon

Place: Manatawny Creek Winery <http://www.manatawnycreekwinery.com/>

Fee: \$20

Please call Marilyn at 717.394.6851 to pre-register.

Cover Crop Information from Washington (the state)

We tend to take cover crops for granted in the East because everyone has them. There are good reasons to have cover crops and growers should understand these and how they apply to your vineyard. I see lots of vineyards with very haphazard "natural" covers and while they may not look so nice there is no particular reason why they should be objectionable. As with most things in viticulture there is a trade off... for example, a diverse population of broad leaf plants may be host to beneficial insects but they also might be a source of Tomato Ringspot Virus. A perfectly manicured grass-only cover looks great but only adds to the mono-culture nature of a vineyard. Mercy Olmstead is the extension viticulturist at Washington State University and has just written an excellent and brief booklet on cover crops. Yes, it is for Eastern WA vineyards but much of the information will be useful to growers in Pennsylvania. You can find the publication on Mercy's web site under her publications section as a .pdf file at <http://fruit.wsu.edu/Grapeweb/about.html>.

Wine Grape Variety Trial for Pennsylvania

Is it important for all wine regions to have a signature grape variety? When I arrived in Pennsylvania this was considered a pressing question. We are fortunate to be able to grow a wide range of grape varieties in our climate and soils but so far nothing has proven to be viticulturally outstanding or wildly popular with wine consumers. These are the viticulture and marketing imperatives that you have heard me talk about. My personal preference is to grow what is best suited for our terroir and then convince the consumer that this is the best wine, for us and them. I'm still stumped about what the variety and whether we even yet know of its existence. Variety trials are designed to answer some of these questions and appear anywhere new grape industries evolve. They test tried-and-true varieties under controlled conditions and new varieties that might be

particularly suited to the regional climate and also the palate. USDA NE-1020 is a new program designed to consolidate the many wine grape variety trials across the nation. With common experimental design the information gathered by these trials can be shared among researchers and between wine regions. Two trials are planned for Pennsylvania, one at FREC in Adams County and the other at the North East station in Erie County. As an industry we are very fortunate that Dr. Robert Crassweller, the tree fruit specialist in horticulture, has agreed to be the lead scientist in this trial with support from Dr. Jim Travis and the team at FREC as well as Bryan Hed and John Griggs at the North East Station. The trial is being funded by the Pennsylvania Wine Marketing and Research Program and also receives funds from the USDA Viticulture Consortium. You'll be hearing much more about these trials as they develop. If all goes well, Dr. Stephen Menke will have wine samples for industry evaluation.

A Taste of Pennsylvania Wines

The Pennsylvania Wine Society will present their Fifth Annual Pennsylvania Wine Excellence Tasting on Thursday, January 18th at 7 p.m. at the Harrisburg Hilton Hotel. The competition features vinifera and Chambroucin wines from Pennsylvania. The selection process was conducted by Dr. Gary Pavlis at Rutgers University who has for many years assisted wine growers in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. This is a good chance to taste a bunch of really good Pennsylvania wines in a single sitting. Mark Chien will host the tasting and many of the wine makers will be present. Registration fee for non-members is \$35. Go to the PWS web site for a listing of all the wines to be tasted and for registration information or call Lisa Woodburn at 717-979-2576.

<http://www.winesocietypa.org/default.aspx>

Attachments:

[Grapevine Pruning Workshop 011107.pdf](#)
[prog wine grape section Hershey07.doc](#)

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