

WINE GRAPE INFORMATION FOR PENNSYLVANIA AND THE REGION

From Penn State Cooperative Extension

Table of Contents

1. Observations in the Vineyard
2. Rootstocks and Nematodes
3. Michel Rolland
4. Lancaster Vineyard and Equipment Sale
5. 2006 Events Calendar
6. Enology Positions in Texas

Announcement: Dr. Robert Pool, the esteemed viticulturist at Cornell University, passed away quietly at his home on Saturday. For decades, Bob and his predecessor, Nelson Shaulis, have been the face of viticulture research in the Northeast. Some of his research areas include vinifera variety and clonal evaluation, vineyard mechanizations, crop level related to wine quality, vineyard floor management, cultural practices and rootstock effects on cold hardiness and sustainable viticulture. He active in both extension and research and always answered any questions I had for him. Bob was both crusty and charming at times but there is no denying the impact he has had on wine and grape growing in our region. He will be sorely missed. A memorial service will be held at 2 p.m. on Thursday, June 15 at the Presbyterian Church, 24 Park Place (off of Rt 14) in Geneva, NY. Memorial contributions can be made to the Mission Committee Fund for Youth Mentoring in care of the Presbyterian Church, Geneva, NY 14456. If you wish to share a message with Bob's family, please send it to Dr. Alan Taylor at agt1@cornell.edu. You can review Bob's work at <http://www.nysaes.cornell.edu/hort/faculty/pool/GrapePagesIndex.html>.

The Season....so far

I'd have to say that the vineyards are looking very well up until now but don't tell that to growers on Long Island where maritime weather has been cloudy and rainy for months. It demonstrates the amazing variability in the climate in the Eastern U.S. and reinforces the fact that we cannot be complacent about the weather. This is crunch time for wine growers all over the Northern Hemisphere as we approach and pass through bloom. There is just so much going on at once, you may feel that your head is about to explode from all the decisions, problem solving and work that needs to get done. I guess I would rate disease control as just about tops on the list. This is a critical period for just about everything, even those problems we expect to show up much later like botrytis and the other harvest rot diseases. Now is when you get jump on controlling them. The NY/PA Pest Management Recommendations ask us to look out for phomopsis (rachis and fruit infections), black rot, powdery mildew, downy mildew and botrytis (preventive spray measures). Dr. Wayne Wilcox, in his 2006 Grape Disease treatise suggests Pristine or Quintec with Mancozeb as good choices during the critical bloom period. Best materials, tight intervals and best coverage are essential right now. Please read these recommendations carefully. I hope everyone is planning their programs with pesticide

resistance in mind. Rotate between classes of fungicides and insecticides and save the most effective materials for the critical periods...like now! I'm not exactly sure what grape berry moth is doing right now, I haven't seen any yet in SE PA vineyards. Cool weather may delay the first flight. In Erie, my colleague Andy Muza has reported not seeing any webbing quite yet in clusters but cautions that vineyard blocks that are at severe or high risk for GBM should receive a first post-bloom insecticide application for this pest. Scouting for GBS is an important way to monitor its presence, especially around the borders of fields and near trees. You can find information about GBM assessment at the NY IPM at <http://www.nysipm.cornell.edu/publications/grapeman/default.asp>.

As long as we are talking bugs, just a word about carbaryl (Sevin)... this is a broad spectrum insecticide that has been used commonly in vineyards for insect pests such as Grape Berry Moth and Japanese Beetles. By broad spectrum this means that it is non-selective and kills many non-target insects, including the "good guys" who are helping to balance the populations of pest insects. For example, over use of Sevin can cause mite flare ups as predatory mites are knocked out. Insecticides, as a rule, are among the most toxic of pesticides, and can adversely affect many non-target organisms, including yourself so they deserve especially great care in use and handling. Sevin is particularly toxic to bees. Honey bees are the life's blood for many other crops, such as apples and tomatoes. If you have other crops near you, you need to be aware of bee pollinators and if they are present, restrict the use of Sevin. I'm particularly disturbed by the rather nonchalant way some growers add Sevin to the tank as a prophylactic spray without regard to timing or scouting. This is totally senseless. Please do not do this. Overuse of Sevin will result in resistance to the product and render it useless in the future. Signs of resistance are evident in vineyards in the Lake Erie region. Insecticides need to be sprayed when intense and informed vineyard scouting indicates that you have an insect problem at economic damage thresholds or if you have the information such as trap counts or climate data to indicate that a problem is expected. As with all chemical pesticides, or anything you put in a tank and spray on the vines, no matter how non-toxic you believe it to be, **READ THE LABEL CAREFULLY** and follow the manufacturer's instructions!

Vineyards are passing through bloom in SE PA and it is time to take petiole samples. I encourage growers to do this every year to get a fix on vine nutrient status and to chart those results to get a big picture of the general nutritional health of the vineyard. Tissue samples should be supplemented with your own careful observations of the vines and any deficiency symptoms they might be showing. Since the spring has been generally cool the leaves may not have the depth of green you are accustomed to seeing but I caution growers not to apply a lot of nitrogen and simply wait for warmer weather to arrive. You can get tissue analysis kits from a variety of places (see list below). Focus on main blocks of grapes and problem areas that need diagnosis. For nutrient standards I would suggest using Dr. Terry Bates chart at his web site. Yes, it is for Concord, but it is the best we have right now and the numbers correlate well with standards from other regions.

Canopy management should have started two feet ago. The longer you wait to get it right, the harder and more expensive it becomes. Right now many shoots are passing through the 3rd set of wires and should be positioned inside those wires and wires or shoots should be fixed into position. I cannot stress the importance of the timing and proper positioning of the shoots. This sets the quality of the canopy for the season and if it isn't done well now it is too hard and expensive to correct later on. Parallel positioning with even spacing, to the extent possible, is highly desirable in VSP. In high wire systems, a first combing pass is needed when the shoots begin to fall, depending on the variety. Leaf pulling and hedging are coming up soon after fruit set depending on the relative density of your canopy. I'll say that most VSP in Pennsylvania could stand at least one side (north or west) being pulled first. If canopy density and weather conditions call for it, both sides should be removed. I'm not a fan of totally stripping the fruit zone. 50-60% cluster exposure is what Richard Smart call for and I like that. You may have to make a second pass later as laterals fill back in. Shoot thinning can still be done but it becomes harder to do with your fingers as the base of canes lignify. Pay close attention to the head area of vines and the zone where canes or cordons meet between vines. Bull canes can be left to grow and sop up excess energy until after set then whack them before they shade their neighbor. Smart likes 4-5 shoots per foot of trellis. Don't forget to sucker and make sure to leave some renewal spurs below the shoulder area - absolutely necessary for cane pruning and very advisable for cordon trained vines.

Cluster thinning can begin on shoots that are not growing to adequate length, <12" no clusters, <24" one cluster. Thinning early will remove an important sink for carbohydrates and may encourage vine vigor and result in larger berry size. I still like lag phase, about 50 days after 50% bloom, as a good time to start thinning after a crop estimate.

This is also a good time to do cluster counts while the canopy is not too dense and clusters are readily visible. At Temperance Hill I would do 10 randomly selected vines per acre and get a full count of clusters but disregarding any secondary clusters which will be removed later on. Save these figures for your lag phase crop estimate. Have the same person do all of the cluster counting, preferably you.

I sure like the way this season is developing so far. With modest rainfall and cooler conditions we are off to a good start. Of course there is a long, loooong way to go but it's fun to be optimistic at this point. But not complacent. Be ready to adjust if conditions change. Managing crop and canopy just can't hurt no matter which direction the vintage takes. Growers, please talk with your wineries now and begin to get a feel for yield adjustment and harvest expectations.

Plant and soil analysis labs (there are others, these are just a few local choices):
Penn State Analytical Analysis Lab: http://www.aasl.psu.edu/plant_tissue_prog.html.
Tissue tests cost \$24. Bloom sampling.
A&L Eastern Labs: <http://www.al-labs-eastern.com/>. Bloom sampling.
Brookside Labs: <http://www.blinc.com/intro.htm>. Brookside has field consultants that work with clients.

Rootstocks and Nematodes, continued....

Fortunately, and perhaps surprisingly, some people actually do read my lengthy e-newsletters. In this case, my extension colleague and bug expert, Dr. Tim Martinson at Cornell Cooperative Extension had some questions about nematodes and rootstocks. Tim pointed out that 3309C is a recommended rootstock for *Xiphimema americanum* (dagger) nematode in NY. Work done in the past by Denis Gonsalves indicates plant resistance to the virus but not the nematode itself. Tim did some checking around, including asking resident ARS rootstock expert Dr. Peter Cousins his opinion about nematode resistance in rootstocks. Peter is currently working hard to breed resistance into rootstocks for use in California. He states that there is strong anecdotal evidence that GR-7 is "resistant or tolerant" of ToRSV. IPM recommendations by UC-Riverside nematologist Michael McKenry explains that tolerance has been lost from traditionally nematode resistant rootstocks like Harmony. This implies at least some level of resistance to the nematode itself. He lists Ramsey, Freedom and 5C as the commercially available rootstocks with the "broadest nematode resistance". He offers a considerable chart rating relative susceptibility or resistance of rootstocks to specific nematodes including *Meloidogyne* spp and *Xiphinema* spp. Both Pongracz and Galet*, acknowledge nematode resistance in their books and, in fact, offer lists of resistant, somewhat resistant and susceptible (or sensitive) rootstock varieties. 101-14 and Riparia Gloire fall into the "somewhat resistant" category. 3309C is considered sensitive. Remember that in any rootstock choice, phylloxera resistance is your primary goal. I still believe that controlling ToRSV at the source, such as broadleaves, is a wise strategy if it is balanced with plant diversity in the context of a managed, sustainable system. Other opinions are welcome!

* Rootstocks for Grape-vines. D.P. Pongracz
A Practical Ampelography. Pierre Galet

Michel Rolland

If you read Parker and the Wine Spectator you know they are enamored of Michel Rolland, a wine maker consultant with 100 clients in 13 countries. No matter what you think about the style of his wines, there appears to be little dispute that he makes great wines wherever he happens to show up. Well, now he is Virginia as a consultant to Kluge Estate in Charlottesville. A dinner in his honor and a moderated discussion did not reveal a tremendous amount of detail about his exact methods but just enough to give a sense of where our own wine growing is relative to the advice he gives to his clients. I think one sign of the maturation of an emerging wine region is when outside interests, such as high profile consultants, begin to show up. When I was in Oregon, we aggressively sought the advice of vigneron from Burgundy and when Robert Drouhin from the respected negotiant Domaine Joseph Drouhin built a winery in Dundee, this was a watershed event for the industry, like a stamp of approval from a reliable source. From the Pennsylvania perspective I like that Mr. Rolland has shown up in Virginia because I will immodestly say that I think we have vineyard sites as good or even better than our gracious neighbors but, like them, we just have to figure out exactly where they are and how to use them properly. Mr. Rolland can help us do that and get some good exposure

and respect while we are figuring all of this out. See attachment.

Lancaster County Vineyard and Equipment For Sale

Many of you know Howard Miller and his Wilderness Vineyard in Strasburg (Lancaster County) which is one of the venerable wine vineyards in the region. After decades of farming and service to the wine community, Howard is hanging up his pruning shears and selling the farm and equipment. He wanted me to post this notice in case anyone was interested in the purchase of the farm with its beautiful historic home. An auction is planned for July 8 and his vineyard equipment will be for sale. Howard is just about the most sincere and gracious person I have ever met. He farmed a challenging site with great skill and patience and was one of Chaddsford's most reliable and enduring suppliers. Howard was supportive of me and the wine grape program from the moment I arrived. He has a generous and kind nature that endears him to everyone he meets. He is also very hard working, creative and patient, all virtues that served him well as a grape farmer. Howard was involved with SEGA for many years and provided leadership for the wine community. I'll miss him a lot as a grower but hope he now will have the time to rest and relax and not worry about disease, bugs, birds and all the things grape growers worry about. If you knew Howard, please send him a message or call him. See attachment for listing.

2006 Viticulture and Enology Regional Events Calendar

There are summer offerings around the region of interest to grape growers. Please check the latest listings. If you have something to add, please contact me.

Two New Enology Positions in Texas

See what happens when a wine industry gets a bunch of money - in this case, a legislative assignment of \$2M to the TX wine industry? All of a sudden there is the need for 2 enologists (an announcement for 4 viticulture associates is not far behind). Funding is a serious issue and can have amazing benefits for an emerging industry like Texas which, coincidentally, is just about the size of Pennsylvania's wine industry. My colleague and friend asked me to list these enology job announcements at TAMU and TX Tech.

Attachments:

[TAMU Enology Faculty Position Description.pdf](#)

[TTU Enology Faculty Position Description.doc](#)

[Michel Rolland and Kluge Estate0606_rev.doc](#)

[Wilderness Farm Wine Grape Growing Equipment.doc](#)

[Events Calendar June06.doc](#)

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