

WINE GRAPE INFORMATION FOR PENNSYLVANIA AND THE REGION

From Penn State Cooperative Extension

Table of Contents

1. Impressions from the PA Farm Show Wine Competition
2. Wines and Vines in SE PA
3. 2009 Regional Viticulture and Enology Events Calendar (early edition)
4. Distance Learning Class in Vine Physiology and Viticulture from Oregon State University and Charles Sturt University
5. New Wine Grape Production Guide - order it now!
6. Musings on Terroir and the Importance of Viticulture
7. Rootstocks and Clones

PA Farm Show: This is a major event for Pennsylvania wines and a good opportunity for me to taste a whole bunch of our wines in one sitting. It helps me to gauge the overall quality of our wines and our relative progress. While I have no idea of whose wines I tasted I'm able to offer some general impressions. Take them with a grain of salt, though, they are one person's opinion.

See attachment: 2008 PA Farm Show Wine Competition

Southeast Pennsylvania is probably the fastest growing wine region in Pennsylvania. It extends from Bucks and Northampton counties west to Adams and Lancaster counties. It's hard for me to keep track of all the activities in vineyards and wineries, especially with so many new ones springing up like mushrooms. Every now and then I hit the wine trail and visit vineyards to see what's going on out there. I encountered some pleasant surprises out there during a recent visit, not the least some very fine wines and outstanding viticulture. <http://www.bvwinetrail.com/>

See attachment: SE PA Vineyards

2009 Events Calendar (first edition): The busy meeting months from January to April are coming up fast. It's a time for growers to take a break from pruning and attend meetings to learn, visit trade shows, network and try some good wines. February is already packed full of great meetings around the region. I encourage growers to be selective but to try to attend as many as possible. The biggies are Unified in Sacramento in January and Wineries Unlimited in King of Prussia in March. Review the schedule and mark your calendars now! It will be updated as more events and information become available. Events, dates, times and information are subject to change. Check other sources before you go. See attachment: Vit-Enol Calendar 09

Note: Please mark your calendars for two important upcoming PA meetings: On January 15th at Clover Hill Winery and Vineyards, the PAW Annual Meeting will focus on soil and vine nutrition issues featuring Dr. Terry Bates and James Fisher. On February 3 the

grape section of the Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention in Hershey will emphasize disease control, the PSU wine variety trial, insect control and more.

Viticulture Classes from Oregon: Dr. Patty Skinkis, the extension viticulturist specialist at Oregon State University is offering a semester class in viticulture. *Horticulture 453 Viticulture is taught as part of the viticulture and enology B.S. and graduate degree programs at OSU and will be open to the wine industry and public. The course covers the physiology of the grapevine and relates it to practices in the vineyard. For beginners, this will introduce you to the importance of understanding vine physiology for making informed management decisions in the future. For advance growers this course is an excellent way to obtain professional development in viticulture.* I strongly recommend this class to anyone in the wine industry who has not had formal training in viticulture. It is offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:00 to 12:30 EST from January 6 - March 12. Online access to the course is available via the internet to your home or office computer. The registration fee for non-credit extension participants is \$200. For information about OSU Viticulture and Enology go to: <http://wine.oregonstate.edu/>

See attachment: OSU Viticulture Lecture Series 09

If you are interested in a full-scale certificate or degree program in viticulture and/or enology, the Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga, Australia has a full-service, international distance on-line curriculum that accepts students from the U.S. It can be tailored to your needs and will provide all the essentials needed to understand vine physiology and work in the wine industry. You can find information and communicate with CSU faculty at their web site: <http://www.csu.edu.au/faculty/science/saws/>

Wine Grape Production Guide for Eastern North America (NRAES-145): *This comprehensive reference will be used by novice and experienced growers, crop advisors, service providers, educators, and students. It provides information on all aspects of wine grape culture including site selection and preparation, trellising and pruning, disease and pest identification, nutrient management, irrigation, pesticide application, harvesting, vineyard economics and grape sales and contracts. 16 authors, edited by Dr. Tony Wolf, viticulturist at Virginia Tech, over 300 pages with color photos. Order now for release date later this month.* This is the successor to the Mid-Atlantic Winegrape Growers Guide and it is a worthy book that every commercial wine grower in the non-western states should have and use. It is essential reading. Pre-release cost is \$44 and good until December 23. After that the book will cost \$75 so order one now! It is highly unlikely that the book will be available on-line so you will need to get a hard copy if you want one for your viticulture library. For a book description and ordering information go to http://www.nraes.org/nra_winegrapecontent.html

Viticulture and Terroir: We know that great vineyards can produce great wines but what about the average site that exceeds expectations? How important are site qualities

versus the strength of viticulture applied to it? We aren't very advanced in site selection for fine wines in the Eastern U.S. so we rely heavily on viticulture to overcome site deficiencies. It is a subject that has been brought into focus in the past decade with the success of certain *garagiste* wine makers in Bordeaux. Can this same strategy be applied to the Mid-Atlantic region? See attachment: The Balance of Terroir

Rootstocks and Clones: It is time to order grafted vine materials for 2010. We spend a lot of time and effort assigning the correct variety to a vineyard but sometimes overlook the contribution of rootstock and clone, which can make or break wine quality (or we assign too much importance to either or both). It is a subject that deserves the undivided attention of every new wine grower and experienced ones, too, because it is important to get the right balance of rootstocks and clones to wine quality. Chances are, if you have a lot of experience, you know the benefits and hazards of choosing rootstocks and clones. See attachment: Rootstocks and Clones

Note: I would encourage all wine growers to read Dr. Tony Wolf's recent Viticulture Notes newsletter, Vol 23. No.3 Nov/Dec 2008 (not yet posted on his web site but you can subscribe to it). In it he comments on the current situation of leafroll virus in Virginia, a problem that everyone in the Eastern U.S. needs to be thinking about and the relative merits of cane vs. spur pruning. <http://faculty.vaes.vt.edu/vitis>.

Attachments

- [2008 PA Farm Show Wine Competition.doc](#)
- [OSU Viticulture Lecture Series 09 UPDATE.pdf](#)
- [Rootstocks and Clones.doc](#)
- [SE PA Vineyards Dec08.doc](#)
- [The Balance of-Terroir.doc](#)
- [vit_enol_calendar_09.doc](#)

Mark L. Chien
State-wide Wine Grape Educator
College of Agricultural Sciences
Penn State Cooperative Extension
1383 Arcadia Road
Lancaster, PA 17601
Tel: 717-394-6851
Fax: 717-394-3962
E: mlc12@psu.edu