



FINGER LAKES VINEYARD NOTES

Newsletter #12
December 17, 1997

Written by Tim Martinson, Area Grape Extension Educator, Finger Lakes Grape Program (315) 536-5134 and Tim Weigle, Area Extension Grape Pest Management Specialist for the Finger Lakes and Lake Erie Grape Programs (716) 672-6830. Edited by Tim Martinson

IN THIS ISSUE

1996 Vineyard Acreage Survey: Trends in New York and the Finger Lakes Upcoming Meetings

- Pesticide Training and Recertification Series
- 1998 New York State Horticultural Society Annual Horticultural Show
- Unified Wine and Grape Symposium
- Ohio Grape-Wine Short Course
- 1998 Lake Erie Grape Growers' Conference
- 49th Annual Finger Lakes Grape Growers' Conference
- Wineries Unlimited
- 1998 Annual Conference of the Northeast Organic Farming Association-NY

1996 VINEYARD ACREAGE SURVEY: TRENDS IN NEW YORK AND THE FINGER LAKES

Tim Martinson and Bob Pool

Editor's note: Part of this article is a summary of a more complete analysis of the 1996 New York Vineyard Acreage Survey written by Bob Pool. It will be appearing in the upcoming issue of **Grape Research News**, published by the New York Wine and Grape Foundation, which many of you receive. Copies can also be obtained through my office, or through the NY Wine and Grape Foundation.

Every five years, the New York Agricultural Statistics Survey (NASS) compiles and publishes a vineyard and orchard acreage survey. Results are based on responses of individual grape

growers to a survey, and are used to identify trends in numbers of farms, acreage, and types of grapes grown. The 1996 survey has just been released, and provide a valuable 'snapshot' of the industry and emerging trends. The purpose of this article is to highlight some of the trends both in New York, as a whole, and also in the Finger Lakes. Here are some of the trends:

- **Grape Acreage is Slightly Lower.** In New York, 1996 vineyard acreage was 31,226, or 1,600 less than reported in 1990. In the Finger Lakes, reported acreage was 560 lower than in 1990. In both New York and the Finger Lakes, this represents a 5% reduction in acreage from 1990 to 1996. The rate of loss in vineyard acreage, however, has slowed considerably - between 1985 and 1990, acreage shrunk by 14% in

Helping You Put Knowledge to Work

New York overall, and a whopping 25% in the Finger Lakes.

Table 1. Grape Acreage in New York and the Finger Lakes - 1985-1996.

Year	New York	Finger Lakes
1985	38,226	14,187
1990	32,846	10,647
1996	31,226	10,087

- **There are fewer grape farms.** The number of farms in New York and the Finger Lakes has declined faster than total acreage. Grape acreage in New York (Figure 1) peaked in 1975, and has declined since. The number of farms declined rapidly through 1990. 1996 results appear to show this trend slowing. In the Finger Lakes, the total number of farms reported in the survey have gone from 445 in 1985 to 313 in 1990, to 231 in 1996.

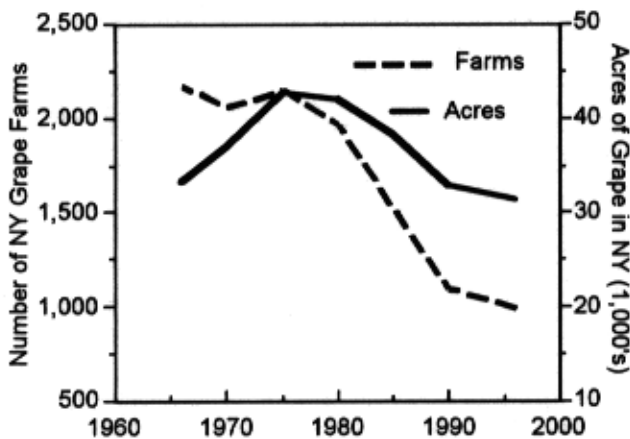


Fig. 1. Total Acreage and number of farms in New York.

- **Farms Are Larger.** Average grape farm size has increased (Table 2). In the Finger Lakes, the largest declines in farm number have been in operations with <10 acres, which have declined from 99 in 1990 to 38 in 1996. The number of 10-50 acre farms has also declined, but has remained steady as a percentage of the total farm number. About 50% of Finger Lakes grape farms are 10-50 acres. The number of larger farms (50-100 acres and >100 acres) has remained steady, and increased as a percentage of the total farm number. Almost half (45%) of the

Finger Lakes grape acreage is in farms of 100 acres or more. Average farm size in the Finger Lakes is 43 acres - larger than the statewide average of 34 acres.

Table 2. Number of grape farms in the Finger Lakes, 1985-1996

Farm Size (Acres)	Farm Number			% of total farms		
	1985	1990	1996	1985	1990	1996
<10	156	99	38	35	32	16
10 to 50	222	161	130	50	51	56
50-100	41	30	37	9	10	16
>100	26	23	26	6	7	11
total	445	313	231	100	100	100

- **Production remains steady.** In spite of the decline in acreage since 1975, overall production has remained steady, averaging 160,000 tons since the late 1970's (Fig. 2)

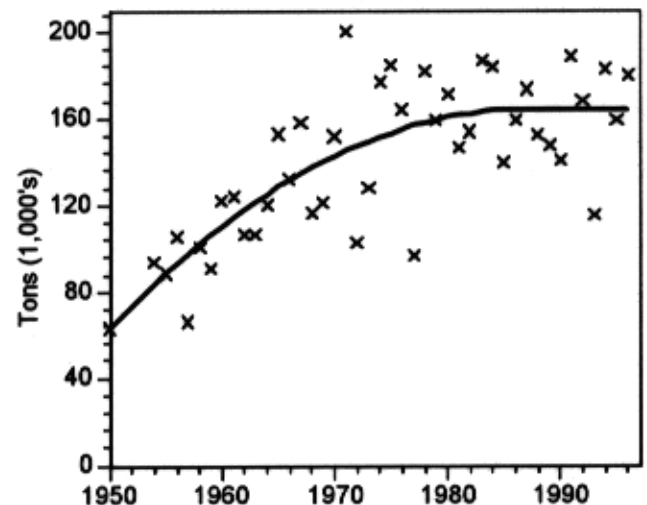


Fig. 2. Annual New York State grape production from 1950 to present.

- **Statewide Acreage and varieties.** As of 1996, about 90% of the total grape acreage in NY was located in the Lake Erie (57%) and Finger Lakes (32%) regions. Overall, Native American varieties comprised 83% of the acreage, with 7% of acreage planted to hybrids and 7% to *vinifera* varieties (Fig. 3). Regions differ in their mix of varieties (Table 4). Natives comprise 99% of the Lake Erie acreage, with 90% being Concord. Native varieties also comprise 66% of Finger Lakes acreage, however more native varieties (9) are grown, and Concord comprises about 1/3

of the Native acreage. Hybrids account for 22% of the region's acreage, with 7% planted to *vinifera*. *Vinifera* varieties dominate the Eastern counties (particularly Suffolk), which have about twice the acreage of *vinifera* as the Finger Lakes.

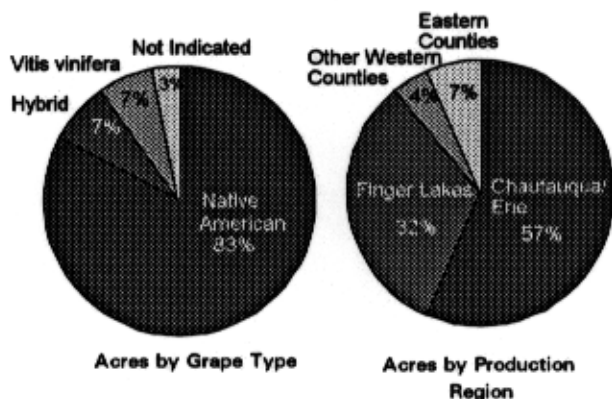


Figure 3. 1996 vineyard acreage in NY state.

Table 3. Percentage of grapes in each category by region of production.

Category	Chautauqua /Erie	Finger Lakes	Other Western Counties	Eastern Counties	New York State
Native	98.8	66.6	90.5	21	82.8
Hybrid	0.4	21.8	0.0	3.1	7.5
<i>V. vinifera</i>	0.0	7.4	1.9	62.4	6.6
Unspec.	0.8	4.2	7.6	13.5	3.1
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Acres	17,660	10,097	1,367	2,102	31,226

- **Finger Lakes Acreage Trends.** As mentioned previously, reported grape acreage in the Finger Lakes declined by about 5% from 1990 to 1996. Broken down by category (Table 4), it appears that most of the acreage reduced was in hybrid varieties (-12%) and 'unspecified' (-13%) - hybrid, native, and *vinifera* varieties with small acreage.

Table 4. Change in Finger Lakes acreage by category of grape varieties.

	Acreage		% Change
	1990	1996	
Natives	6,574	6,430	-2%
Hybrids	2,816	2,487	-12%
<i>V. vinifera</i>	769	745	-3%
Unspecified	488	425	-13%
Total	10,647	10,087	-5%

Broken down further by variety (Table 5), most of the losses in the hybrid category were in Aurora (-18%), Dechaunac (-20%), and Vidal blanc (-30%), while acreage reported of Baco Noir, Cayuga white, and Rougeon increased slightly. Among the natives, Catawba (-8%) and Delaware (-18%) acreage declined, while Concord and Niagara remained steady and Elvira acreage reported increased. Reported Chardonnay and Riesling acreage was lower, which is hard to interpret, as it may reflect a lower response rate among some *vinifera* growers.

Table 5. Change in reported acreage of most common Finger Lakes varieties from 1990-1996

Variety	Acreage	
	1990	1996
<i>Hybrids</i>		
Aurora	1222	1010
Baco Noir	332	357
Dechaunac	325	258
Seyval Blanc	235	212
Cayuga White	176	189
Rougeon	86	100
Ventura	92	99
Vidal blanc	119	80
<i>Native American</i>		
Concord	3250	3269
Catawba	1501	1381
Niagara	774	763
Elvira	404	466
Delaware	556	454
<i>Vinifera</i>		
Chardonnay	375	314
White Riesling	256	231
Pinot Noir	81	86
Cabernet Sauvignon	15	46
Cabernet Franc	20	42
Gewurtztraminer	22	26

- **Grape Prices.** Acreage trends over the last 20 years have reflected stagnant prices for most varieties since the early 80's (Figure 4). When adjusted for inflation, *value* of grapes has declined - most dramatically for Concord and hybrid varieties, but also for *vinifera*. Only in 1996 and 1997 (1997 figures from Finger Lakes price survey) have prices generally started to move upward. Bulk wine and juice markets are more stable than previously, and higher prices for hybrids and *vinifera* grapes is being driven by expanding markets- both within the Finger Lakes and elsewhere in the Northeast.

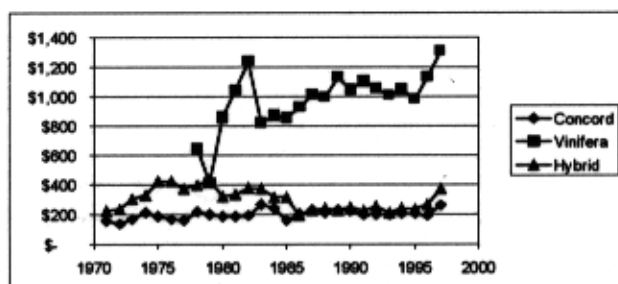


Figure 4. Average price paid for different grape types from 1970-1997. Prices not adjusted for inflation, and 1997 figures are preliminary.

Table 6. Value of 1997 grown processing grapes and potential gross income at stated production levels. (Values are calculated from average price offered by Finger Lakes buyers and should not be considered official.)

	1997 Value (\$/ton)	Target production (tons/acre)	Gross value/acre (at target production)
<i>Native American</i>			
White	\$ 286	7	\$ 2,002
Red	\$ 331	7	\$ 2,317
<i>Hybrid</i>			
White	\$ 419	7	\$ 2,933
Red	\$ 433	6	\$ 2,598
<i>V. vinifera</i>			
White	\$ 1,160	4	\$ 4,640
Red	\$ 1,436	3.5	\$ 5,026

UPCOMING MEETINGS

January - April. *Pesticide Training and Recertification Series.* A comprehensive series of 4 sessions for anyone seeking to obtain a

pesticide certification license, private or commercial. Certified applicators seeking additional pesticide training and review may also attend any or all classes, and obtain **Recertification Credits.** Classes offered in Romulus, Penn Yan, Rochester, and Canandaigua. For more information, contact Russ Welser, Cornell Cooperative Extension, 480 N Main St., Canandaigua, NY 14424, (716)-394-4110 ext. 31 or 38.

Jan. 15, 1998. Grape Program, 1998 New York State Horticultural Society Annual Horticultural Show. Rochester Thruway Marriott, Rochester, New York. See registration form included in this newsletter for program and registration information, or contact the NY State Horticultural Society, 315-787-2404.

January 21-22, 1998. *Unified Wine & Grape Symposium,* Convention Center, Sacramento, CA. Sponsored by American Society for Enology and Viticulture and the California Association of Winegrape Growers. Theme of the meeting will be 'Vineyard & Vintners - a Global Perspective'. If you are curious about projections of the California and world grape supply through 2000, and how the industry will cope with the increased supply, this is the meeting for you. This meeting includes a large trade show, focused on both winery and vineyard equipment. Registration information is available through our office (315)-536-5134, or call 530-753-3142 (fax 530-753-3318) for more information. Deadline for pre-registration is January 5, 1998.

February 4-6. *Ohio Grape-Wine Short Course,* Toledo, OH. Contact Hart Wineburg (330-666-9285) or Roland Riesen (330-263-3814) for details.

Feb. 16, 1998. *1998 Lake Erie Grape Growers' Conference,* Westfield Central Academy, Westfield, New York. Contact The Lake Erie Regional Grape Extension Program at (716)-672-6464 for more information

Mar. 7, 1998. *49th Annual Finger Lakes Grape Growers' Conference*, The program will again be held at the Waterloo Holiday Inn, and will feature topics on insect and disease management, tomato ringspot virus, new sprayer technology (speaker from Michigan), grapevine nutrition, climate effects of 'El Nino', new plantings in California and their effect on markets for FL grapes, an update on clonal *vinifera* trials, and updates from major processors, with emphasis on the outlook for native and hybrid varieties. As always, the program will include a trade show, and will close with a wine and cheese reception. Pesticide recertification credits will be offered. **A complete program will be mailed out to all subscribers to this newsletter in early January.**

March 15-18. Lancaster PA. *Wineries Unlimited*. Sessions will focus on Pinot Noir, Ice wines and Late Harvest wines, as well as Technical and Marketing sessions. Trade Show. Call 800-535-5670 for admission and registration information.

Cornell Cooperative Extension
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Roberts Hall, Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853-5901
Official Business
Penalty for Private Use \$300

March 14 & 15, 1998 Annual Conference of the Northeast Organic Farming Association-NY, "Biological Balance: Growing Healthy Farms, Folks, and Foods" at Tompkins-Cortland Community College in Dryden, NY. Discount for registration by 2/13/98. NOFA-NY, PO Box 21, South Butler, NY 13154-0021; phone: 315-365-2299; fax 315-365-3299.



Timothy E. Martinson
Area Extension Educator
Finger Lakes Grape Program

Cornell Cooperative Extension and its employees assume no liability for the effectiveness or results of any product. No endorsement of products is made or implied. When using any recommendation, check the product label which is the final word with respect to product usage, or check with the manufacturer or supplier for updated information."