

# FINGER LAKES VINEYARD NOTES

Newsletter 2

February 7, 2004

## Cornell Cooperative Extension

Finger Lakes Grape Program

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## CURRENT SITUATION

*Tim Martinson*

January was one of the coldest in the past 50 years in the Finger Lakes. On January 9-10, low temperatures reached -10 to -18 degrees F in most of the Finger Lakes, with perhaps an average of -11 to -12. Unlike most cold events, it appears favored locations (slopes near lakes) didn't have much effect on the low temperatures – vineyards in the Hector/Valois area, and across the lake at Dresden had -10F. This was followed by another sub-zero cold event on January 15-16, in which we saw more traditional variation, with -4F to about 3-4 degrees above zero.

With temperatures this low, we can expect winter injury to be extensive, particularly on the most sensitive *V. vinifera* cultivars. Growers have been reporting 50-95% primary bud injury on Chardonnay and somewhat less on Riesling. A few growers reported split trunks. I would also expect some injury on hybrids, and perhaps more modest injury on labrusca varieties.

**Natives.** Also an issue with the late harvest and heavy crop is bud fruitfulness. Concord, Niagara, and Elvira had heavy crops that came off late, and very little time with active leaves following harvest. We would expect buds to be much less fruitful this year (think back to the low '93 crop following cool '92). Throw into the mix some level of bud injury, and chances are that crop level per retained bud will be lower this year. Does this mean that growers should leave more buds? Probably, but especially if your vines are cane pruned as opposed to hedged. Cane-pruned vines have fewer retained nodes (but generally higher

quality buds), so when fruitfulness is reduced, their crop may be affected proportionally more. For those who mechanically prune (hedge), it's more important to leave the **right** buds. With low fruitfulness, it's even more important to pay close attention to leaving as many buds on top as possible. That could mean only using vertical cutters on the sides, and not trimming the top at all. In '93, when a lot more vineyards were hedged, some growers trimmed close on top, removing most of their crop in the process.

**Injury Evaluation.** This is a good year to do some serious evaluations of bud mortality. We have published detailed instructions about cutting buds in previous years, and Bob Pool has an excellent guide to doing so posted on the internet. To find it, start at [www.fruit.cornell.edu](http://www.fruit.cornell.edu) and follow the links down to Bob Pool's **grape pages**. Briefly: Cut canes to be examined and bring them inside for at least 24 h before examining. Place them in a bucket of water. Use a razor blade to make a cut about 1/2 to 2/3 of the way down the bud. You should be able to see the primary and secondary buds (See Figure). Healthy buds will be bright green; the center of injured buds will be asparagus colored green to black (depending on how recent the injury). Examine at least 100 buds, selected from representative sections of the vineyard. Examine several buds on each cane – a practical way to do so is to examine the first 10 buds from each cane. Sometimes this will reveal patterns of bud injury by node position.



**Cut bud showing dead primary bud.**

*Photo by Bob Pool*

Finally, if you have extensive bud injury (e.g. in the 50% or greater range) it may be a good year to consider pruning lightly during the dormant season, seeing what pushes and adjusting shoot number after bud burst. You can always remove more shoots, but you can't put them back on the vine.

We will have more extensive information about winter injury in future newsletters, at the Convention, and in future electronic crop updates.

# Grape Growers Convention Reminder

## 55TH ANNUAL FINGER LAKES GRAPE GROWERS' CONVENTION

Saturday February 28, 2004

*Timothy E. Martinson*

Our annual Finger Lakes Grape Growers' Convention is just around the corner, and will take place on February 28. We sent out a program and registration form in January, and have had a good response so far. The trade show is filled up, with 42 commercial exhibitors, and we expect to close the program out with a wonderful wine and cheese reception. We anticipate about 1.5 to 2 pesticide recertification credits for this program. The deadline for early registration is **February 20th, 2004**, after which a \$10 late fee will be added.

### Program – 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Grape Growers Convention and Trade Show

7:45 *Registration*

8:00 *Trade Show Opens*

- 42 Commercial Exhibitors

Morning Session - **Alan Lakso, Moderator**

8:55 *Welcome **Tim Martinson***

9:00 *Coping with Winter Injury in 2003*

- Winter injury at Experiment Station Vineyards: What were the patterns and how did our modified pruning strategy work?  
**Bob Pool**
- Anatomy of winter injury and recovery  
**Martin Goffinet**

10:00 *Heavy crop, Ripening Challenges in 2003.*

- How well did mechanical thinning work?  
**Terry Bates**

10:30 *Break and Visit Trade Show*

11:00 *Heavy Rains, Pest Management Challenges.*

- Disease Management Successes and Failures in 2003 **Wayne Wilcox**
- New Information on Cane Borer, 2003 Insecticide trials for Grape Berry Moth  
**Greg English-Loeb**

11:45 *Cornell Expands Programs for the Grape Industry*

- How Cornell's new Viticulture and Enology degree programs will help the NY Grape Industry. **Thomas Henick-Kling**

12:00 *Lunch and visit Trade Show*

Afternoon Session – **Tim Martinson, Moderator**

1:30 *Question Box. **Martin Goffinet***

2:15 *Better Spray Deposition, Cleaner Grapes.*

- How the airstream and spray liquid interact to affect spray deposition. **Andrew Landers**

2:45 *Heavy Crop, Soft Markets.*

- How big was the 2003 crop, including unharvested grapes? **Stephen Ropel, NASS-NY.**
- How the heavy, late-ripening crop affected bulk wine and juice grape producers. **Barry Shaffer.**

3:25 *Carryover effects of the 2002 drought.*

- Lack of irrigation in 2002 reduced Riesling crop by 50% in 2003. **Tim Martinson**
- Foliar N applied in the fall increases fruitfulness in potted Concord vines.  
**Lailiang Cheng**

4:05 *Wine and Cheese Reception*

- Cheese Plate sponsored by **Cayuga Wine Trail**
- Wine Donations courtesy of **Finger Lakes Wineries**
- Wine poured by **New York State Women for Wine**



*Mist Rising from Seneca Lake in October*

## COMPUTER TRAINING FOR GRAPE GROWERS

*Mary Woodsen*

*Staff Writer – NY IPM Program*

ITHACA, NY: In the summer of '99, grape grower Ron Guzzetta of Perrysburg, NY, was on his computer, taking a routine look at some online crop updates. A posting from the Finger Lakes Grape Program caught his eye. Some growers, it turned out, had found Japanese beetle infestations inside their plastic grow tubes that shelter young, newly planted stock—infestations that, if left unchecked, could severely damage the vines. Guzzetta had planted 12 acres in Elvira grapes just that spring, all inside grow tubes. "I went to scout my new vineyards and discovered I had an infestation brewing," Guzzetta says. "It's something I would likely have not realized until it was too late." He credits that tip with saving him at least \$15,000.

Guzzetta is a computer-savvy guy, conversing with extension educators, processors, and bankers alike online. "When it's time to pay back notes, I can click and transfer and save days of interest fees," Guzzetta says. So why would he sign up for a computer confidence training course that—even though it was free—was designed to help more inexperienced growers get up to speed? Never too old to learn—that's why. "I picked up a few tips that made the price of admission well worth it," Guzzetta says. "The time went by quickly and was packed with a lot of information. I heard a lot of 'ooohs' and 'ahhhs' and I think a lot of lightbulbs clicked on for some folks,"

Jane Sprague of 93-acre Sprague Farms in Perrysburg was there with her husband, Dan. Though Sprague was familiar with computers from her job in the local school, and they had internet access on their computer at home, neither she nor Dan had used it much. "The instructors were patient and we learned a lot," Sprague says. "They taught us how to use the internet without it taking forever." Because of the shortcuts they learned, Sprague says, they'll now have much more ready access to Cooperative Extension newsletters and "integrated pest management" crop updates, and will juggle scheduling and such with the four processors they sell to online.

Indeed, processors in the Northeast—notably Canandaigua Wine Company, National Grape Cooperative (owner of Welch's) and the Cliffstar Corporation—have a common goal that their growers do their recordkeeping online by 2005. That's why they cosponsored the workshops for grape growers from New York and Pennsylvania. Professional computer trainers from Finger Lakes Community College and Jamestown Community College are leading the sessions.

But why go electronic, when growers and processors surely must have been doing fine all this time? These days, global competition has turned that old adage, if it ain't broke, don't

fix it, on its head. Indeed, you can figure that without frequent fixes the system is bound to break down. A lot of that fixing has to do with simple timeliness. Take scheduling delivery dates, for example. By all accounts, harvest is the most frenetic time of year for growers and processors alike. If the weather behaves and the grapes achieve the ripeness you expect when you expect it, sure, you won't have to jump through too many hoops. But the weather has its own agenda. And most years, cooperating with the grape industry isn't high on its list. "We spend 8 to 10 hours making phone calls to growers every day of harvest," says Tim Moore, manager of grower relations at Canandaigua Wine Company. "Some years, like this past year, the schedule changes weekly. It's our biggest headache. But if all the growers are online, we can cover everyone immediately with one keystroke." Moore looks forward to having the ability to make quick changes that will alleviate the complications everyone experiences.

As for the growers, timely payments will be among their most tangible benefits. "My processor uses direct deposit to my account so my money is available the day it's issued," says Guzzetta. "It frees me up to be outside working in my vineyards rather than in the office hunting down people and writing checks." Time is money in more ways than one, and TracGrape—which the NYS IPM Program plans to release in 2004—will be another savings for the computer-savvy. TracGrape provides "drop down" lists for pesticides and diseases that growers can choose from, to save time while preventing typing errors. Select a pesticide from the list, and the program automatically fills in the EPA registration number, the restricted-entry interval, and the preharvest interval on the form. Best of all, TracGrape simplifies how growers report sprays to processors. Gone will be the hours spent re-entering the same information on each processor's forms. Just enter the spray date and the chemical used, and the computer automatically does the rest. TracGrape even generates drop-down data lists specific to growers' operations.

The NYS Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program's insect and disease fact sheets and pest management guidelines have been online for several years. But in the future, online is the only place growers will be able to get them. "We'll be able to update them more frequently," explains the NYS IPM Program's grape specialist, Tim Weigle. "We won't have to worry about recouping the cost of printing all the hard copies that go out of date so quickly." Growers taking the workshops, offered in January and February, are learning how to manage their files, navigate in Windows and on the internet, use email, create calendars and to-do lists, and understand spreadsheets, word processing, and bookkeeping.

Although this training is focused on getting new users up to speed, experienced growers should keep checking back, as this training will continue through July for more in-depth work on spreadsheets, word processing, record keeping, and bookkeeping. And for those who already know their stuff, how about encouraging family members to enroll? "When everyone is computer literate, we'll all be able to focus more

on higher quality,” says Moore. He notes that this will keep growers competitive in the global marketplace. After all, if we don’t keep it fixed....

Got questions, or want to register? You’ll be joining several hundred growers who already have. In the Lake Erie region, contact Stephanie Bellian of Jamestown Community College at 716-665-5220 ext. 2227. In the Finger Lakes region, call Carol Ann Joki of Finger Lakes Community College at 585-394-3500 ext.7662. Or call Tim Weigle for either region at 716-672-6830.

These workshops were made possible by the Viticulture ’00 and ’03 committees, Tim Moore (Canandaigua Wine Company) Rich Erdle and Charlene Ryder, National Grape Cooperative, Stephanie Bellian and Jean McGowan, Jamestown Community College, Carol Ann Joki, Finger Lakes Community College, Tim Weigle, NYS IPM Program, Tim Martinson, Finger Lakes Regional Grape Program, and Barry Shaffer, Lake Erie Regional Grape Program.

Funds for the training are provided by proceeds from Viticulture ’00 and ’03 and a State University of New York workforce development training grant to Jamestown Community College and Finger Lakes Community College.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**February, Pesticide training Courses.** Various times and locations. Sign up for pesticide applicator training, either through our office in Penn Yan for Yates Co. classes (Judson Reid, 315-536-5123) or the Canandaigua office (Russ Welser 585-394-3977) for classes in Romulus, Rochester, Canandaigua, and Newark. Most classes start the first week in February. Call for scheduling details, and availability.

**February 7-9. 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Midwest Regional Grape and Wine Conference.** Tan-Tar-A Resort in Osage Beach Beach, Missouri. <http://mtngrv.smsu.edu/calendar.htm>.

**February 11. Pennsylvania Association of Winegrowers Annual Meeting.** Lancaster, PA. Topic is grape varieties, clones and rootstocks. Tentative Program - speakers include Dr. Peter Cousins, USDA-ARS grape rootstock specialist; Dr. Bruce Reisch, grape breeder at Cornell University, and Ms. Lucie Morton, international viticulture consultant. PAW business meeting is also part of the program. Lancaster Farm and Home Center.

**February 18-19. Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Convention. Grape Session.** Brock University, Ste. Catherines, Ontario. Building on Success. A variety of grape topics. Alice Wise, Cornell Cooperative Extension is the featured speaker. Registration is \$55 for both days. Call 800.387.3276 for information.

**February 19-21. Virginia Vineyards Association Annual Winter Meeting.** Omni Hotel, Charlottesville. The program includes viticultural, enological and wine marketing topics. More details at the VVA web site <http://www.virginavineyardsassociation.com>

**February 25. Pennsylvania Association of Winegrowers Annual Meeting** Lancaster PA. The program will focus on issues arising from the challenging 2003 vintage. Pesticide credits will be available. <http://winegrape.cas.psu.edu> Listing courtesy Mark Chien

**February 28. 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Finger Lakes Grape Growers Convention and Trade Show.** 8:00 to 4:30 PM, Waterloo Holiday Inn, Waterloo, NY. Contact Finger Lakes Grape Program 315-536-5134 or [tem2@cornell.edu](mailto:tem2@cornell.edu). Registration forms will be posted at [www.cce.cornell.edu/programs/finger-lakes-grape](http://www.cce.cornell.edu/programs/finger-lakes-grape)

**March 15-18. Wineries Unlimited.** Host Resort. Lancaster, PA. Sponsored by Vineyard and Winery Management. Program features a wide variety of topics on viticulture, enology and wine marketing. Dr. Curtis Ellison is expected to be the keynote speaker on matters of wine and health. A large trade show accompanies the meeting. For more information, visit [www.vwm-online.com/](http://www.vwm-online.com/).

**March 18. New Grape Grower Workshop** in association with Wineries Unlimited. Host Resort. Lancaster, PA. This intensive, full-day overview is directed at people who have just started a vineyard or plan to start a commercial vineyard in the Mid-Atlantic regions. It is team taught by Dr. Tony Wolf (VA Tech), Dr. Joe Fiola (U Md) and Mark Chien (Penn State). It covers all topics associated with developing and operating a commercial vineyard.

**March 25. Lake Erie Regional Grape Program Annual Conference.** SUNY, Fredonia, NY. <http://lenewa.netsync.net/public/lergphom.htm>.

**April 1-2. 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Wine Industry Workshop.** Ramada Inn, Geneva, NY. Information at <http://www.nysaes.cornell.edu/fst/faculty/henick/wiw/>

**April 14-16, Managing Soil Fertility.** Riverhead, NY. The program will feature nationally known agronomist and lecturer Neal Kinsey. Kinsey, author of Hands On Agronomy, will present a condensed version of his five day course based on the Albrecht method of soil balancing. Lectures will be held at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County, 423 Griffing Ave., Riverhead, NY. For more information on Kinsey Agricultural Services, go to [www.kinseyag.com](http://www.kinseyag.com). For registration information, please contact Alice Wise or Libby Tarleton at 631.727.3595 or via e-mail at [lt68@cornell.edu](mailto:lt68@cornell.edu). Listing courtesy Alice Wise

