Finger Lakes grape growers faced several challenges in 2003. Among the most important was having a large crop (possibly a record high crop, according to the New York Agricultural Statistics Service), and unfavorable weather for ripening it. The second challenge was marketing this large crop. Following 2002, major processors cut the amount of contracted tonnage significantly. The result was a significant amount of grapes—notably Concord and Catawba—left without a home. Other grapes will fail to ripen enough to meet processor standards. Prices for some major varieties (see following article) dropped significantly.

**Winter Injury.** For the first time in several years (possibly since '94), cold-sensitive varieties suffered severe winter injury. At the experiment station in Geneva, Chardonnay, one of the more hardy V. vinifera varieties, suffered bud mortality in the 70-90 percent range, and V. vinifera on the west side of Keuka Lake (Branchport to Hammondsport) saw equal levels of injury, associated with winter lows in the -9 to -13 degree F range. Injury elsewhere was

![Figure 1. Daily high and low temperatures at Geneva, October 2002 through May 2003.](image)

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**VINEYARD BRIEFS**

Timothy E. Martinson

This year marks one of the most challenging growing seasons in memory. While area growers and winemakers will be dealing with the processing, cultural practices, and financial issues for a while, it is important to step back and look at some positive developments that bode well for the future of the industry.

Two articles highlight some very positive news for the wine industry on the research and education front.

First, Cornell has committed to establishing an undergraduate viticulture and enology program to train students for work in the industry. Next spring Cornell will hire a new Enology researcher at Rhinebeck, and further additions to the teaching/research staff are anticipated. While this program won’t ease the short-term skilled labor problem, it should have an enormous impact three or four years from now. Several industry people from the Finger Lakes were instrumental in getting Cornell to commit to this new program at a time when budgets are shrinking.

Second, the USDA research unit at Geneva has added their third scientist in four years to work on grape research. Plans for the unit are to hire 3-5 additional scientists over the next few years. While this group will be focusing on grape genetics, their work will undoubtedly lead to practical advances for viticulture in the East over the next several years.

These developments are a sign that wine and grape production is receiving more support at the state and federal level. They are happening because local, state, and national leaders are recognizing the strong economic impact and success that grapes and wine production is having in the region.

While most growers won’t look back fondly on 2003, it is important to remember that the grape industry is receiving increasing recognition, and has a bright future in the Finger Lakes.
Rainfall and Growing Degree Days. The cool, rainy growing season, coupled with the large crop, delayed bloom, veraison, and ripening. Monthly accumulations of growing degree days (Figure 2) shows that degree-day accumulations were significantly higher than the average in May and June. Bloom was delayed by about a week, but sunny conditions during bloom resulted in normal to excellent fruit set. Rainfall accumulations during May and August were 2 inches above average (Figure 3), but the amount only tells part of the story. The frequency (number of rain events) of rainfall was also well above average (Figure 4). May, July, and August all had over 10 days with at least 0.1 inches of precipitation — one day in three was rainy in those months.

Disease Pressure. All this extra rainfall and cloudy weather added up to ideal conditions for disease development. With powdery mildew, we didn’t see some of the spectacular control failures we saw in 2002 associated with streptomycin fungicides during bloom. In part, we can attribute this to the use of sulfur tank mixes with the prebloom and postbloom sprays. The sulfur kept it down to a dull roar. What we did see, however, was an ideal season for development of downy mildew. Warm, humid conditions during late July and August provided ideal conditions for downy to spread on foliage. Some growers gained a new appreciation for the explosive growth potential of this disease, which normally is stopped in its tracks by dry weather in July and August.

Harvest. The 2003 harvest is still in progress as I write this (October 21). In general, harvest is running about two weeks late, and will probably run through the first week in November. Aurore harvest opened September 2 (10 days later than last year), but ‘high-acid’ grape harvest (Aurores, Elviras) was interrupted for a week or two, because the grapes simply weren’t ripe enough to press. Disease problems with Aurores resulted in some blocks not meeting processor standards. Early hybrid wine grapes (Cayuga White, red hybrids such as Baco Noir) were still being harvested up to a week ago, as

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2003 FINGER LAKES GRAPE PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Finger Lakes Grape Program Advisory Committee is a group of 13 grower and industry representatives that provides guidance and direction in planning meetings and activities of the program. Current members are:

Ontario County:
Rich Jerome, Naples
Vacant

Schuyler County:
Steve Bond, Hector
Dave Stamp, Watkins Glen

Yates County:
Jim Bedient, Branchport
Harry Humphreys, Dundee

Seneca County:
Cameron Hosmer, Ovid
Bill Dalrymple, Lodi

Steuben County:
Jim Pizura, Pulteney
Keith Egresi, Pulteney

Processor representative:
Tim Moore, Canandaigua Wine Co.

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NOVEMBER 15, 2003

FINGER LAKES VINEYARD NOTES

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FINGER LAKES VINEYARD NOTES
Warm, humid weather in August and early September provided ideal conditions for explosive outbreaks of downy mildew on foliage.

most blocks right on the edge of minimum sugar standards, thinning probably made the difference between having a marketable crop and load rejection. At this time, National Grape Cooperative estimates that about three quarters of their acreage will meet their sugar standards. For those who don’t, National chose to offer $600 per acre NOT to harvest their grapes.

Heavy Crop, Limited Market. With many of the large processors contracting for a set tonnage and fewer alternate ‘salvage’ markets for uncontracted grapes, growers of bulk Concord, Catawba, and some hybrid varieties are looking at significant quantities of unsold grapes. Our e-mail listing of grapes for sale listed over 450 T of Concord grapes. Barry Shaffer of the Lake Erie Regional Grape Program estimated that up to 1000 acres of Concord — perhaps 7,900 to 10,000 tons — would be without a market. Lower utilization by processors may bring wine and juice volume produced a little closer to that seen in an ‘average’ year.

Wine Quality. Although ripening has been similarly delayed for premium wine grapes, smaller crops and extensive crop control, along with more ‘hang time’ have allowed growers to harvest premium varieties at around 20 brix. According to Dr. Thomas Henick-Kling, flavor development is good, although tannin maturity is lagging. White varieties — particularly aromatic ones like Riesling and Gewurztraminer — should have good flavor development, although acids may be higher than normal. Reds are expected to have good flavor development, but may be less tannic. This season provides another illustration that brix and flavor — while related — don’t always go hand in hand. Henick-Kling is advising winemakers to avoid over-chaptalization (adding sugar to raise alcohol levels) and to adjust acids. The result should be balanced wines with lower alcohol levels.

Outlook for 2004. Few will look back at 2003 as a banner year for the Finger Lakes grape industry, so 2004 is bound to be better! Heavy crops, late ripening and early frost generally translate into lower crop potential. Wood is less ripe, and pruning weights are lower, so buds that developed later in the season may be less developed than in a year with ample leaf function following harvest. This year, these factors are counterbalanced somewhat by favorable weather during bloom and the first few weeks after. This is when buds for the next season are formed (at nodes 2-4 from the base of the current year’s canes). Sunny, warm weather at this time favors fruitful buds for next year. The net result of these factors may be that we end up with canes having fruitful buds at the base, but less fruitful buds farther out on the retained canes.
MARKETING

2003 Grape Price Summary
Timothy E. Martinson

Prices for Concord showed the most significant change (11 percent decline overall) from 2002 in our annual compilation of prices from 24 area wineries and juice processors, while Riesling prices averaged 7 percent higher than 2002.

The table is compiled from price lists submitted to the NY Department of Agriculture and markets by area processors, and shared with us voluntarily by them. Individual prices were published in the September issue of Vineyard Notes.

To properly interpret these numbers, it is important to remember that the figures shown are not adjusted by tonnage purchased. They do not reflect true average prices received by grape growers in the Finger Lakes. Those processors who purchase few tons are likely to pay more than those who buy many tons of a given variety. The number of wineries supplying prices for a given variety is also listed and indicates how much information each of the price ranges is based upon, and how many wineries are buying that variety.

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**NEWSLETTER NO. 10**
Grape Production. The national grape crop is expected to be 7.1 million tons, down four percent from 2002, but still sizable at about five percent above the five-year average. California, which accounts for about 90 percent of US production, is down about six percent from last year. Eastern US production recovered from last year’s freeze-damaged crop; Michigan’s production increased about 87 percent, while Pennsylvania’s production increased 32 percent. New York’s crop was estimated at 205 thousand tons, rebounding from three years of relatively low production. If realized, the New York crop will tie the record crop of 1999. Record yields more than offset decreased bearing acreage in the state.

Last year, there was concern about the “glut” of grapes in California. This year’s smaller crop alleviated these concerns somewhat. There are, however, ample supplies in the western United States. A worldwide surplus of grapes and wines hangs over the marketplace. Most analysts expect the continued growth of low-priced quality wine imports from producers in Australia, New Zealand, and Spain. A recent survey of California industry leaders (done by the graduate school of management at UC Davis) indicated that 61 percent of them felt that the excess juice supply would last for another two to three years.

There is a lot of discussion this year about the popular low-priced Charles Shaw wines, known as “Two-Buck Chuck” because they retail for $1.99. They created a new market category as the term “extreme-value wines” entered the vocabulary of the wine trade. These new products capitalized on the oversupply of grapes and wine and made possible the introduction of low-priced premium wines that have changed the wine marketing scene, at least for the time being. What implications, if any, does the emergence of the extreme value category have for New York’s vintners? I will return to this question later in this article.

The Big Picture. The US and International Wine Markets. Performance in the US wine market is being driven by increased table wine consumption and the super value wines now available at the retail level (Figure 1). From 1995 to 2001, wine consumption grew about 2.5 percent a year. However, in 2002, wine shipments entering US distribution channels increased by a remarkable six percent to a record 395 million gallons, despite the weak economy. Excess supplies of grapes and bulk wine permitted California wineries (which account for two-thirds of the US wine shipments), to improve the quality of their product even at lower prices.

Imported wines grew by about six percent in 2001 and accounted for about 22 percent of the US market; in 2002, imports increased over 12 percent annually to 149 million gallons for a 25 percent share of the total US market. The increase in imports was fueled through 2002 by a strong dollar, which made imported wines a real buy for consumers. The value of imports is $2.7 billion, much more than exports, because of the higher volume of imports, but also the relatively high-valued imports from France, Italy, and Australia. Imports should continue to grow in ’04, although at a slower rate due to the recent decrease in the value of the dollar.

US wine exports grew one percent in value to $348 million in 2002, but declined seven percent in volume to 74 million gallons, compared to the previous year, according to the Wine Institute. The strong dollar had a negative effect on export volume throughout most of 2002. However a falling dollar against the Euro through the last quarter of 2002 and into 2003 had a positive effect. Exports account for about 11 percent of total California wine shipments. Washington state also has a growing presence in export markets, especially in the United Kingdom and Japan.

Retail wine sales in the US reached $21.1 billion in ’02 (Figure 2). With the growing importance of the high quality, value priced wines, retail sales (dollars) may not grow as quickly for the remainder of ’03 and in ’04, even though wine consumption will continue to grow at a fast pace.
To sum up the situation in the US wine market and the near-term outlook for the rest of 2003 and 2004, supplies of grapes are plentiful. There is a worldwide excess supply of both grapes and wine that is expected to last for at least a couple of years. Imports, even with the lower value dollar, are increasing. Plentiful supplies have led to the development of new "extreme-value" labels, some with innovative packaging of premium varietals. In this pricing environment, wineries and retailers are facing their lowest margins in years. In addition, chains and club stores are wielding increasing retail power. The near-term outlook is for the most intensely competitive holiday season in years, if not decades. Some analysts expect to see domestic varietal wines selling in the $4 to $5 range in competitive retail markets such as California.

Finger Lakes Grape Prices and Implications for Growers. For growers selling to large wineries, prices for grapes on contract ranged from slightly higher to slightly lower than last year, depending upon the variety. Canandaigua Wine Company, the major buyer of wine grapes in New York, listed a $5 per ton increase for Aurore, Catawba (early or brix), and Elvina. A $10 increase was listed for other Catawba grapes. A $5 decrease was listed for Concord. Canandaigua did not list prices for hybrids. There was an announcement of a cutback in contracted tonnage of 15 percent, and the company did not purchase DeChaunac as they had in the past. The overall average price for native varieties and hybrids, when weighted by volume of purchases, will be slightly lower than last year. An increase in non contracted tonnage will impact certain varieties even further.

Prices offered by Finger Lakes wineries for vinifera grapes were slightly lower than last year for red varieties (for the second year in a row). Prices decreases for Cabernet Franc were down 4 percent, and Cabernet Sauvignon was down 3 percent. Additional plantings of red varieties in recent years are now bearing, so the tonnage produced has caught up with demand. For white varieties, Chardonnay and Riesling both showed increases in the average price offering. The average prices for all V. vinifera in New York will probably increase slightly. Price gains for white varieties will offset decreases for red varieties for the 2003 crop year.

For the fifth year in a row, more buyers offered premiums (i.e. buyers quoted two prices, regular and premium, with higher prices for the premium grapes). This reflects the efforts of some wineries to step up the quality ladder to higher price points.

Most growers' revenues (assuming a mix of American, hybrid, and vinifera varieties) will be well above last year, given the large crop size. In some cases there are more grapes available than there were markets, so some grapes were discounted. Growers should end up with substantially higher revenue due to the record crop in '03, even though average price will be lower. However, several factors suggest the situation will be somewhat unfavorable for at least the next couple of years for native varieties and for the less desirable French American varieties. The glut of grapes in the west, with still sizable non-bearing vinifera acreage in the Central Valley, cheap off-shore and California concentrate and bulk wine, and an excess of wine grapes worldwide are factors placing stress on growers selling to large processors.

Implications of the current situation for small wineries — a new marketing environment? Small wineries in the Finger Lakes with quality wines and good marketing skills experienced declining sales or, at best, no growth in retail sales for the first half of the current year. Winery visitation leveled off and in some areas decreased slightly. Beginning the second half of '03, both sales and visitation increased modestly. Many wineries expect slightly increased dollars spent per visitor for the entire '03 fiscal year. Nevertheless, this was a substantial change for wineries that had experienced five to ten percent growth in retail sales annually for the last several years.

Small premium wineries in the Finger Lakes have been in their "comfort zone" with heavy reliance on direct sales. Certainly, they have been insulated from the ups and downs that larger wineries with national distribution face, especially when the economy is soft as in the past year. Nevertheless, several factors suggest the marketing environment is different from that of three years ago. Three years ago, we were optimistic that Finger Lakes wineries could aim for higher price points assuming they were producing commensurately high-quality wines. This looks more difficult to achieve in the current environment. What has changed?

Perhaps, fundamentally, consumer demand has changed! One could point to a series of events — September 2001 terrorist attacks, recession with the economy stalled for over two years, a down stock market, corporate scandals, and the Afghanistan and Iraq wars — that have had a profound impact on how consumers approach buying decisions. Many have regained a brighter outlook after the September 2001 attacks, but more attention is directed at their home life. Consumers are more skeptical about claims that all types of businesses make, so advertising has to be believable and backed up by product satisfaction when the consumer brings the product home.

Furthermore, consumers have started demanding the highest possible quality at all price points. "Two-Buck Chuck" does not compete with a $20 bottle of wine that delivers good value for the price, but it does compete with a mediocre wine that sells for $5. At whatever price point a winery is aiming, there is a need to deliver more quality for the same amount of money.

Some California vintners have responded to these developments by selling superpremium or upscale wines packaged in a plastic bag inside a box, selling for $16 to $36 per three liter carton (i.e., $4 to $9 per 750 ml). Besides offering "extreme-value," the packaging has advantages for certain situations. For example, for use in the home, there is the convenience of serving one to a few glasses while keeping the wine fresh for a month after opening. The package also is convenient for a party or a picnic.

While "Two-Buck Chuck" and other extreme-value products signal intensified competition and lower margins for mainstream wineries, not all aspects are unfavorable. As noted by wine analyst Jon Fredrickson of Gomberg, Fredrickson, and Associates, the extreme-value category is broadening the base of wine consumption. Infrequent consumers are consuming more frequently. New wine drinkers are being created among young adults and other consumers who previously may have preferred Ag. Outlook, cont. on p. 9
EDUCATION

The Wine Industry Will Taste the Fruits of Cornell’s New Undergrad Program

Metta Winter

Courses in the new program cover all aspects of growing grapes and making wine.

The College of Agriculture & Life Sciences undergraduate program in enology and viticulture is taking root this semester and will bear fruit when skilled graduates make their mark in New York’s growing wine industry.

For 16 years, the same pleas have dogged Thomas Henick-Kling, associate professor of enology. “Find me a winemaker, find me a viticulturist!,” say winery owners and vineyard managers from Long Island Sound to Lake Erie. Henick-Kling replies, “I look, but qualified people are not available. I might be able to find one or two in a year, but the need is much bigger than that.”

The urgency behind the wine industry’s request for help has increased markedly in the past decade. Wine grapes and wineries are the strongest growth segment of New York State’s billion-dollar agriculture industry. In 1975, there were 19 registered farm wineries in the state. Today, there are 180. More than half of New York’s counties now have one or more wineries, clustered in five principal grape-growing regions: Lake Erie and Niagara, the Finger Lakes, the Hudson River Valley, and Long Island.

By 2013 the number of New York wineries is expected to rise above 220. The reasons for continued expansion are clear, says Ian Merwin, associate professor of pomology, who along with Henick-Kling, co-chairs a faculty committee charged by Dean Susan Henry with developing an undergraduate program and curriculum to prepare young people for careers in the wine industry.

“National and international awards have shown that New York State wines are definitely on the map,” Merwin says. “We now produce not only consistently high-quality white wines but reds that are much better than we ever thought possible.”

Location is another reason. New York’s preb-
ut related activities. Students primarily interested in learning how to turn grapes into wine enroll in the food science major, with a concentration in enology and a minor in plant science. Students who enroll in the plant science major with a concentration in viticulture, study the cultivation of grapes, while taking several enology courses. (Down the line as the program grows, courses in the economics of vineyard management and wine marketing will be added.) “To make good wine, students must be familiar with food analysis, food chemistry, food microbiology, and other basics of food science,” says Joseph Hotchkiss, chair of the Department of Food Science.

For the past nine years, the college has offered a basic enology course called “Understanding Wine.” Initially designed by Harry Lawless, professor of food science, Terry Acree, professor of biochemistry, and Henrick-Kling, whose research and extension in Geneva supports the state’s wine industry, the course is now taught by the latter two. With the advent of a full undergraduate program, the course is now divided into two modules, a freshman-level introductory section to attract undecided students, and the 400-level version for majors. The committee developed other specialized courses in winemaking technology and the flavor development of grapes and wine, which will be offered for juniors and seniors in the program.

Hotchkiss and Chang Lee, chair of the Department of Food Science and Technology in Geneva, are currently recruiting a new faculty member to teach those courses and supervise the summer internship each graduate must complete in a New York State winery.

“We see the internship as critical because viticulture and enology rely greatly on technique, and the best way to learn that is by doing it,” Merwin says.

On the viticulture side, the college has a knowledge base developed through more than a century of research in grape growing conducted in Geneva. The station’s breeders have released more than 53 varieties of grapes. Six are hybrid wine grapes, including Horizon, Melody, Traminette, Chardonel, Cayuga White, and the newest release, GR7. Viticulturist Robert Pool is teaching the general viticulture courses. Other courses in grapevine structure and physiology, genetics, and pest management are taught by other scientists at Geneva.

Last year, in collaboration with faculty in Geneva, the Department of Horticulture began establishing teaching and research plantings. Just 10 miles north of Ithaca, the Lansing Research Farm is well suited for growing all the premier vinifera grapes. Plantings there will include Pinot Noir, Riesling, Cabernet Franc, and Chardonnay. “Last winter it was one of the few vineyards in the region that had zero winter injury,” Merwin says. Undergraduate interest in the program runs high.

“For the last three years, the ‘Understanding Wine’ course has been so popular that we’ve had more than 100 students sign up for a course that can only accommodate 80,” Lee says. And without any formal recruiting, the number of students in the viticulture course tripled this fall. Because the dearth of qualified personnel is a longstanding national problem, Merwin anticipates significant numbers of transfers and out-of-state students as well.

The future looks bright. “Cornell has historically had a very close relationship with the agricultural sector in New York State,” Merwin says. “In establishing what will become the premier enology/viticulture program for undergraduates in the eastern part of the United States, we’re continuing this tradition.”

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Cooperative Research and Demonstration Projects in the Finger Lakes and Lake Erie Regions

Timothy E. Martinson

Each year, several research and demonstration projects take place in growers' vineyards. Over the past several years, we have summarized those that take place in the Finger Lakes. This year we have included projects that took place on the Lake Erie region farms. All projects benefit growers in both regions, and many would not be possible without grower cooperation. To all of the growers and wineries that provided their time, vineyards, and wineries for these projects, New York grape growers are fortunate to have a sizeable research group with strong ties to industry. Cooperative, on-farm projects such as these help maintain the link between research and the industry.

Effect of foliar nitrogen applications and irrigation on atypical aging (ATA) of wines. Lailiang Cheng, Horticulture, Thomas Henick-Kling, Food Science, Alan Lakso, Bob Pool, Horticultural Sciences, and Tim Martinson. For the third year, we are testing whether foliar nitrogen applied around veraison or irrigation (or both) will reduce the appearance of atypical aging in white wine varieties. Six treatments have all possible combinations of irrigation (not) and N fertilization (none, foliar, soil). Wines will be made and evaluated by the Cornell Enology program. Cooperators: Tom Prejean and Jim Zimar, Prejean Winery.

Improving yeast available nitrogen levels in must by foliar nitrogen applications. Lailiang Cheng and Tim Martinson. The objective is to determine the relationship between the number of foliar N applications and yeast available nitrogen levels in must. A Riesling block with low soil N levels was used. Starting from late July, vines received 0, 1, 3, 5, 7 times of foliar N applications at a rate of 6 lb urea/100 gal. At harvest, berries samples will be taken to measure ammonium and amino nitrogen concentrations. This trial will provide growers with information that may help optimize the number of foliar N applications. Cooperative: Mark Wagner, Lamoreaux Landing Wine Cellars.

Compost application for improving soil quality in vineyards. Tim Martinson, & Jean Bonhotal and Ellen Harrison, Cornell Waste Management Institute. Small scale plots with a low and high rate of compost applied under the trellis, were compared to plots with normal nitrogen fertilization and no nitrogen. Crop weight, juice quality, and pruning weights are being compared, along with soil attributes. Funded in part by the NYS Energy Research and Development Authority. Cooperative: Bill Dalrymple

Crown gall disease and development of a biological control. Tim Burr, Plant Pathology. When Agrobacterium vitis was applied to grafting cuts, the bacterium negatively affected graft take, reducing callus formation developing at the graft. Additional experiments were also applied this year to determine the effectiveness of a non-gall forming strain of A. vitis for controlling crown gall. Following extensive cold injury from the winter of 2002-03, severe crown gall has developed in our field experiment at Geneva that will allow an assessment of the effectiveness of the biological control in a vineyard setting. Cooperators: Mike Jordan (Portland, second experiment), Rick Dunst (Fredonia).

Determining whether European red mites are serious pests of grape in the Northeast. Jan Nyrop, Entomology; Alan Lakso and Martin Gattinet, Horticultural Sciences, Geneva. There is little data showing what levels of European red mites are required to reduce yield or quality in grapevines, and growers may be applying miticides too often, or not often enough. We are measuring the impact of European red mite on V. vinifera grapes. During the first year we found that cumulative mite-days of 800 (ca 30 mites/leaf) resulted in a 30 percent reduction in photosynthesis, but had no effect on fruit yield, quality or on vine winter hardiness. This year, mite levels were much higher (up to 1600 mite-days) and photosynthesis was reduced by 35 percent. At harvest we will assess fruit quality and yield. Over the winter, we will assess cold hardiness. Next spring we will measure return bloom. Cooperative: Marti Macinski, Standing Stone vineyard, Valois.

Addressing Late Season Grape Berry Moth Damage. Tim Weigle, NYS IPM Program, Michael Hoffmann, NYS IPM Program and Greg English-Loeb, Entomology, Geneva. We are looking at the feasibility of using the egg parasite Trichogramma ostrianae to control grape berry moth damage in New York State vineyards. T. ostrianae is cheaply produced, disperses rapidly, reproduces in the field, and provides season-long reduction of pest populations in corn. Preliminary studies in 2002 showed that releases of this biocontrol agent increased parasitism from 2.5 percent to 35-53 percent. Releases in 2002 showed up to a 67 percent decrease in berry damage compared to plots managed using conventional insecticides. Weekly releases were used in the first year of this three-year project to determine if T. ostrianae could provide commercial control of grape berry moth. Cooperators: Ed Jasper, Joel Rammelt, and Howard Ross (Westfield), and Rick Kubik (North East, PA).
Comparative Anatomy of Grapevine Yellows in New York State, Virginia, and Australia
Martin C. Godfroid, Horticultural Sciences, Geneva. Grapevine yellows has become a sporadic problem in some NY vineyards. The disease is caused by a phytomast (bacterium-like organism) that disrupts the vascular system of shoots. The disease organism is transmitted by one or more species of leafhopper. Yellows has become a serious concern in Virginia's Riesling and Chardonnay vineyards, and in Australia. Yellows is a worldwide problem. Of special importance is whether the outward (morphological) and inner (anatomical) features are the same in our three locations. Our anatomy lab is analyzing Chardonnay leaf and stem tissues with yellows symptoms in the Finger Lakes, Virginia, and South Australia to help determine if yellows symptoms are “universal” in vitis vinifera vines. Cooperators: Standing Stone Vineyards (Marty Machinik, Valais) and Savimill Creek Vineyards (Eric & Jim Hazlitt, Hector).

Evaluation of potential new wine grape varieties. B. Reisch, S. Luce, and T. Henick-Kling. Cornell grape breeding program selections have been planted for trial purposes at numerous vineyards in upstate New York. Experience with these new selections and feedback from grower-cooperators will help determine the relative merits of a group of elite selections across a range of area sites. Cooperators: Lakewood Vineyards, Swedish Hill Vineyards, Hunt Country Vineyards, Crafted Grapevine Nursery in the Finger Lakes; Double A Vineyards, Cambria Wine Cellars, John Moorehead and the Lake Erie Regional Grape Research and Extension Center in the Lake Erie Region. Some area growers obtain test selections from two New York nurseries and provide additional feedback as well.

Cooperative Winemaking Trials in the Finger Lakes. Thomas Henick-Kling Laboratory, Geneva. The Enology group will conduct wine yeast and bacteria culture trials with several wineries. Dr. Frank's Vinifera Wine Cellars and Fox Run Vineyards will donate juice and grapes. We will also conduct some fermentation trials including heat treatments of must and wine to find out how the flavor profile of Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon can be successfully modified in a very cool year.

Brettanomycetes in Area Wineries. Thomas Henick-Kling Laboratory, Geneva. Brettanomycetes is a common organism that can impart off aromas to wines (although in small doses the 'bretty' aromas are considered pleasant by some wine enthusiasts). We have collected samples from several wineries for monitoring Brettanomycetes yeast in NY wines. New stains of Brettanomycetes isolated from these samples are genetically characterized and compared to our strain database. We are also testing a new DNA-based method for detecting Brettanomycetes and other spoilage organisms. Cooperators: Several Finger Lakes Wineries.

Determining the optimum volume of air and liquid to aid deposition as the canopy develops, Andrew Landers, Engineer in the Entomology Dep., Geneva. The current practice of using an air-assisted sprayer to deliver the same volume of air, irrespective of early, mid or late season growth, results in excessive drift and poor deposition. Trials have been conducted, with different varieties, throughout the growing season to determine canopy development with regard to the amount of leaf density. The "Cornell Doughnuts" have been tested as a method of liming airflow. First-year trials look most promising. Cooperators: Dave Wiemann, Sheldrake Point, Ron Guzzetta, Perrysburg, Howard Ross, Westfield.

Evaluation of Chateau® herbicide in NY and PA Vineyards. Rick Dunst, Terry Bates, Mike Vercaut and Andy Musa. Flumioxazin (Chateau®) herbicide is being evaluated for potential use during vineyard establishment at the Fredonia Vineyard Lab. In order to develop specific use recommendations for weed control in bearing vineyards, several studies are being conducted at sites with pressure from common weed species including pigweed, foxtail, and velvetleaf. Cooperators include Bob and Dawn Betts (Westfield), Bill Richter (HARBOR Creek, PA), Dave Vercaut (Fredonia) and John Griggs (North East, PA Viticulture Lab).

Managing powdery mildew in a streblurin-resistant vineyard. Wayne Wilcox, Plant Pathology, Geneva. In 2002, poor control of powdery mildew in various vinifera plantings treated with streblurin fungicides was associated with the development of resistance to these materials. In 2003, we examined different programs for managing the disease in one such Chardonnay vineyard, including both traditional and nontraditional products. Sample populations of the powdery mildew fungus were collected late in the season. These will be assayed to determine their sensitivity (or lack thereof) to the streblurin fungicides, and to determine any positive or negative changes relative to sensitivities present at the end of the 2002 season. Results will be discussed during the winter meeting season. Cooperator: Matt Doyle, Canandaigua Wine Co.

Seasonal availability of inoculum, and spray timing to control Phomopsis on Niagara grapes. Wayne Wilcox, Plant Pathology, Geneva; Rick Dunst and Tim Weige, Vineyard Lab and Lake Erie Regional Grape Program, Fredonia. Many grape varieties are susceptible to infection by the Phomopsis fungus, but economic losses are most frequent on certain native grapes. Losses can be particularly severe on 'Niagara'. For the third consecutive season, we collected spores beneath infected Niagara vines during rain events throughout the season, and studied the control provided by different spray-timing programs. In 2001 and 2002, spray recovery was virtually complete by early July; 2003 data are still being tabulated. In all three years, most control of rachis (cluster stem) infections was provided by sprays applied during the first month after budbreak. These also provided significant control of fruit infections, which may have originated through the individual berry stems. The immediate prebloom and first postbloom sprays were more important for control of fruit rot than they were for control of rachis infections. Cooperator: Howard Ross, Fortland, NY.

Environmental variables associated with differential powdery mildew development in a vineyard along the Lake Erie shoreline. Wayne Wilcox, Plant Pathology, Geneva; Juliet Carroll, NYS IPM Program, Geneva; David Gardoury and Bob Seem, Plant Pathology, Geneva; and Tim Weige, Lake Erie Regional Grape Program, Fredonia. In two intensively-studied Concord vineyards adjacent to Lake Erie, powdery mildew severity decreased significantly every year as vines became increasingly distant from the water. For the final year of the study, we once again documented this phenomenon and measured various climatic variables that may be associated with it. We hope to use the analysis of this multi-year data set to improve our understanding of the environmental factors that govern powdery mildew control.

Cooperative Research, cont. on p.14
May 28: Spring Pest Management Update and Barbecue. Our annual Pest Management meeting was hosted by Canandaigua Vineyards, Dresden Farm. It featured updates on DEC regulations, disease, insect, and weed management. The meeting closed with the traditional barbecue, sponsored by industry and prepared by Canandaigua Wine staff. Participants: Ed Handback, (NYS DEC), Greg English-Loeb (Entomology), Wayne Wilcox (Plant Pathology). Rick Durst (Vineyard laboratory, Fredonia), Tim Weigle (Lake Erie Regional Grape Program), Andrew Landers (Sprayer Technology, Geneva), Juliet Carroll (NY IPM Program). Regina Reichenberg (Valent), John Bulkley (Syngenta), Charlie Smith (UAP Northeast), Dave Pieczarka (Cowan), and Canandaigua Vineyard Crew, led by Tim Moore and Laura Hyder.

June 24: Managing Vineyards with extensive cold injury. NYS Agricultural Experiment Station vineyards. This meeting included an informal look at trials, and a discussion of how to manage blocks with significant winter injury. Winter injury in the Chardonnay training trials and rootstock trials at the station was as severe as any seen in the Finger Lakes. Winter injury in these trials has provided an opportunity for researchers to collect detailed data collection on vine performance, and different management approaches to recovering from the injury. Participants: Bob Pool, Steve Lerch, Bruce Reisch, Tim Martinson.

July 15: Spray Technology Field Day, hosted by Canandaigua Vineyard Crew and Caywood Vineyards. Andrew Landers gathered several invited manufacturers to demonstrate 12 sprayers compare their spray technology. Discussions and wine tasting followed. Participants: Andrew Landers (Cornell), Matt Doyle, Tim Moore, (Canandaigua Vineyards), Mike Doyle (Caywood Vineyards.) A special thanks to all of the sprayer manufacturers who brought equipment.

July 24: National Coop. Grape Grower's Crop Thinning meeting. Jim and Vince Bedient Farm, Branchport. Demonstrations were conducted on how to estimate crop tonnage for thinning of bulk native grapes such as Concord and Niagara. Representatives of National Grape Cooperative described how to use mechanical harvesters to estimate crop and remove an appropriate amount of tonnage to avoid delayed maturity of the grapes. Participants: Thomas Davenport, Jim Joy, and Jim Bedient.

July 29-30: 4th Annual Eastern Pinot Noir Conference, Amnot Forest, Newfield, NY. The purpose of the conference was to critically taste Pinot Noir wines from across the region and beyond. Wine makers and growers brought their wines to share and to be evaluated by their peers in an informal and casual setting. The goal was to improve wines through the unrestrained sharing of knowledge and experience, both in the cell.
Spanish-speaking Farmworkers: Who They are, Why They come, What their goals are.

Eduardo González, Jr.
Diversity Specialist
Cornell Migrant Program

Many farmworkers arrive with solid agricultural skills firmly grounded in practical experience. This expertise is complemented by a strong work ethic, deeply rooted in their commitment to provide for their families or make it on their own. This is reflected in their willingness to make considerable sacrifices in order to guarantee a more prosperous future for their extended families, their children and/or their siblings. These sacrifices range from separation from their countries of origin, families, and what is familiar to learning to navigate a foreign land where little is known about them and whose customs, language, foods, and ways of life are different from what they know.

In many instances this new place brings about feelings of alienation and isolation. No longer is La Plaza – a central gathering place in town for community interaction and fellowship in their countries of origin – available to them. Instead loneliness creeps in for many as they are limited to the boundaries of the farm due in part to limited access to transportation and also to their lack of legal status which reduces their access to neighborhood businesses, services and community activities in general. Fear of being picked up by Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) due to their undocumented status causes many farmworkers to go into hiding in the communities that they work and live in and further contributes to the isolation that farmworkers routinely experience.

In spite of these challenges, many of the hopes and dreams of making more money in the U.S. than in their countries of origin is enough to drive them to make this enormous sacrifice. Many experience great pride in the contribution that they make to society through their labor for they realize their work feeds the world. For these farmworkers there is also a sense of accomplishment in their ability to support their families in purchasing homes or going to school in their home country. For others, their hopes and dreams do not always materialize to the degree envisioned and promised. Sixty-one percent of U.S. farmworkers’ incomes fall below the poverty level. A median income of less than $7,500 a year leaves many feeling trapped with no other viable options outside of farmwork, and with the shame and indignity of returning to their homelands with less than what they came.

Why Do They Come? A host of push-pull factors contribute to the overwhelmingly migrant farmworker labor pool. Some push factors in farmworkers’ countries of origin are economic instability, political unrest, population growth, land reform shortcomings in rural areas, and scarce employment opportunities. Push factors that impact immigration patterns vary from country to country and from individual to individual. The circumstances that cause an individual to emigrate from Colombia, South America, may be different from those that cause an indigenous person from the states of Michoacán, Oaxaca, or Guanajuato in Mexico to come to the United States. A Colombian immigrant fleeing political persecution and civil unrest seeks asylum as a political refugee, while the indigenous Mexican trek across the desert into the U.S. in search of work and income to support their family back home or just to be able to eat.

Pull factors within the United States include the ongoing desire for low-cost food which requires a low-cost labor force to fill jobs no longer attractive to U.S. citizens due to low pay, limited or no benefits, and/or substandard work conditions.

The Changing Face of Immigrants. As we continue to grow as a nation of immigrants, we need to make an extraordinary effort to understand farmworkers in their full context. The legacy and lingering effects of living in a divided society have left us with incomplete, inaccurate and distorted information as to the history, triumphs and con...
MARKETING

2003 Juice Grape Wrap-up and 2004 Prospects

Barry Shaffer
Lake Erie Regional Grape Program

In 2003, the Lake Erie Grape Belt rebounded from the frost damage experienced in 2002. Good to excellent set at bloom caused many vineyards to have huge potential yields. The weather didn’t cooperate to support an above-average crop much less the huge (15-25 t/ha potential). Bloom and veraison were later than average.

Mechanical crop thinning was widespread this past summer including custom thinning for growers without a mechanical harvester. One-third of the growers was estimated to have thinned at least a portion of their vineyards. Results are likely to vary and some thinned vineyards may still find ripening to be difficult depending on final crop load.

Harvest is late for all varieties and Concord harvest promises to drag into November. Income and profitability for individual growers will be determined by the percentage of the crop that makes acceptable sugar standards and some vineyards will not make it. Processors do not want substandard juice grape and all major processors are holding the line on their sugar standards. We will likely have significant tonnage left hanging due to production in excess of tonnage contracts and other grapes not making quality standards.

Large processor 2003 cash market prices for Concord ranged from $159-$220 a ton down from $205-$290 a ton in 2002. Effective prices will be down even further. Many loads in 2002 had high sugar (higher than stated prices) and many loads in 2003 will be close to minimum acceptable sugar and thus lower than stated prices.

What does 2004 hold in store for juice grape growers? Processor inventories are likely to swell from the large 2003 U.S. Concord crop limiting any upside in prices. Crop size will be down especially in over-cropped vineyards and sugar levels ought to be better. Prices will likely stay steady and we may lose another grape processor adding more uncontracted acreage into the mix.

Cooperative Research, cont. from p. 11
dew development and thereby improve disease-control recommendations. Cooperators: Joel Rammelt, Westfield.

Evaluating mechanical pruning systems with Concord. Terry Bates, Horticultural Sciences, Fredonia; Justin Morris, Arkansas. Three mechanical pruning techniques (minimal pruning, mechanical pruning with out hand pruning follow-up, and mechanical pruning with hand follow-up) are being viticulturally and economically compared to traditional hand pruning. Cooperators: Bob and Dawn Bates (Westfield), Rick Dunst (Fredonia Vineyard Lab), Gary Main (Arkansas).

Rootstocks for Concord and Niagara. Terry Bates, Horticultural Sciences, Fredonia; Peter Cousins, USDA, Geneva. Eight different rootstocks are being evaluated for their effect on the growth and production of Concord and Niagara grapes on two sites, one with heavy clay soil and one with light gravely soil. Cooperators: Dennis Rak and Dave Vercant (Fredonia), Rick Dunst (Fredonia Vineyard Lab).

Evaluation of Sugar Express. Hans Walter-Peterson, extension viticulturist; Terry Bates, Horticultural Sciences, Fredonia. The foliar nutrient spray, Sugar Express, is being evaluated for its effect on juice soluble solids, berry weight, and leaf photosynthesis. Cooperators: Steve Baran (Westfield), Rick Dunst (Fredonia Vineyard Lab).

Evaluation of mechanical crop adjustment on single and double curtain Concord. Terry Bates, Rick Dunst, and Hans Walter-Peterson, Fredonia Vineyard Lab. High fruit set in Concord in 2003 initiated the establishment of several on farm mechanical crop adjustment trials. Crop adjustment was done in both single and double curtain trained vineyards and a different machine was used at each location. Cooperators: Bob and Jamie Millietto (Forestville), Mike Jordan (Portland), and Fred Luke (North East, PA).

Meetings & Tours, cont. from p. 12
lar and the vineyard. Co-hosted by the NY Pinot Noir Alliance. Participants: Peter Bell, Robert Madill, Dave Demarco (Pinot Noir Alliance), Mark Chien, Penn State, and Bill Wilsey.

August 11: AgriLogic, Inc. Risk Management Meeting. Glenora Wine Cellars, Dundee, NY. AgriLogic, Inc. has been contracted through the USDA’s Risk Management Agency to determine if a grapevine replacement insurance program should be developed to cover lost vines and possibly lost revenue. Their objective was to obtain producer feedback on AgriLogic’s proposed recommendations for a grapevine replacement insurance program for the New York Wine Grape Industry. Participants: Chad Burke (AgriLogic) and others.

October 7, 2003: “Goat & Vineyard Field Day - Using goats to reclaim abandoned vineyards,” Dugue Rd, Hector, NY. A demonstration trial using goats to reclaim abandoned vineyards, was the theme of a meeting organized and sponsored by Schuyler Co. Cooperative Extension Association. A herd of 20 meat goats were fenced in an abandoned vineyard to show how effective they could be at clearing brush and pruning vines. Participants: Tatiana Stanton (Cornell), Jim Ochterski, Schuyler CCE, Jeff & Anne Gardner, and the goats.
RESEARCH

Geneva USDA Grape Research Unit Expands

Timothy Martinson

For the third time in four years, the USDA Agricultural Research Service unit housed at Geneva has hired a new scientist to work on grapes. Lance Cadle-Davidson, a recent Cornell graduate, recently joined the unit as a plant pathologist. His research will focus on the molecular and genetic mechanisms associated with grape diseases important in the Northeast. He joins a growing grape research team that includes Peter Cousins (grape rootstock breeding and Chris Owen (grape scion breeder).

Cadle-Davidson cited the opportunity to do basic research with an eye toward practical application, the ability to interact with other scientists from many fields at Geneva, and the beauty of the Finger Lakes as reasons for accepting the position at Geneva.

According to USDA Research Leader Charles Simon, the grape research unit at Geneva is slated to grow to 6-8 scientists over the next several years, with a strong focus on genetics. “We’re currently advertising a new grape genetics position, and an additional position is included in next year’s budget. The grape research group now accounts for one-third of our annual budget. We expect this group to provide many short and long-term benefits to the industry, including nematode-resistant rootstocks and a better understanding of cold hardiness and factors influencing disease development.” The USDA grape research unit will eventually be housed in the Ag & Food Tech Park currently under development at the Station.

EXTENSION

Ripe for Picking: Computer Confidence for Grape Growers

Tim Weigle
IPM Program

As a result of a grower-led initiative, beginning computer training will be available at no charge to growers in the Finger Lakes and Lake Erie grape growing regions starting in December. The planning committee of Viticulture 2000 earmarked some of the proceeds to be used to provide all grape growers the opportunity to become proficient in the use of e-mail and the World Wide Web. As you may have already heard, many of the processors have stated that they expect growers to be able to conduct communications such as reporting of spray records, setting up a harvest schedule and monitoring load and payment information via computer in the very near future (some of the larger processors are looking to implement computer communication within the next two years).

A working group consisting of representatives from Canandaigua Wine Company, National Grape Cooperative, the NYS IPM Program, and both regional Grape Programs, has assisted Stephanie Bellian and Carol Ann Joki of the Jamestown and Finger Lakes Community Colleges, respectively, to secure additional funding through a SUNY grant to ensure that all grape growers can receive training.

Please keep in mind that no experience with computers is required, as this training has been designed for the beginner. The desired outcomes of the computer training include:

- Grape growers will obtain the basic skills necessary to use a computer as a vineyard management tool in communication and record keeping.
- Grape growers will obtain the basic skills necessary to communicate with processors via e-mail and the Internet.
- Grape growers will become proficient in Microsoft Excel in order to take advantage of the GrapeTrak, a new pesticide record-keeping software being developed via a grant from the NY Wine and Grape Foundation.

Classroom computer training will be provided in two- or four-hour increments in a variety of computer classrooms throughout the regions. Look for more information for specific dates, but we are planning on the first classes to be held in early December at a computer classroom near you. If you are interested in participating please contact either Tim Martinson at the Finger Lakes Regional Grape Program Office at (315) 536-5134 or Tim Weigle of the NYS IPM Program at (716) 672-6830.
UPCOMING EVENTS

January 27-29, 2004
Unified Wine and Grape Symposium. Sacramento Convention Center, Sacramento, California. Contact ASEV. 530-733-3142, or www.unifiedsymposium.org

February 28, 2004
54th Annual Finger Lakes Grape Growers Convention. Waterloo Holiday Inn, Waterloo, NY. Details in upcoming Vineyard Notes. www.fruit.cornell.edu

March 15-18, 2004

March 25, 2004

April 1-2, 2004

Farmworkers, cont. from p. 13
tributions of different groups within our society. As a nation built on the sacrifices of many different immigrant groups, we must bear in mind that while the faces of immigrants have changed, their pioneering spirit, courage, determination, ability to thrive, and dreams of securing a better future for their children remain the same.

Finger Lakes Grape Program
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