



# FINGER LAKES VINEYARD NOTES

Newsletter #1  
January 7, 1998

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

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### DIAGNOSTIC SERVICE FOR TOMATO RINGSPOOT AVAILABLE

*Tim Martinson*

Tomato ringspot virus is a disease affecting many hybrid vineyards in the Finger Lakes. It is transmitted by nematodes, which are microscopic worms that live in the soil and feed on roots. It causes irreversible decline of infected vines, and typically spreads out from initial 'hot spots' within the vineyard. Infected vines show stunted shoots, irregular clusters, and reduced winter-hardiness, with many buds killed after infection. Suckers on infected vines are also weak and stunted. While initially a few vines are typically infected in a vineyard, infection gradually spreads outward, slowly reducing productivity of the vineyard. Native American varieties are resistant, but many French-American hybrids are susceptible, among them

Baco noir, Cascade, Vidal blanc, Ventura, Dutchess, Vincent, and possibly Seyval and Foch.

In response to several requests during 1997, the Finger Lakes Grape Program, in cooperation with Dr. Dennis Gonsalves, virologist at the Geneva Experiment Station, is offering to area growers the opportunity to have vineyards tested for tomato ringspot for a nominal fee. The test involves collecting dormant cuttings, forcing them in the greenhouse, and exposing new shoots to an antibody in the laboratory. If the virus is present, it reacts with the antibody, producing a 'positive' response. The best time for detecting the virus is in dormant shoots, or shortly after bud break.

**Why test for ringspot virus?** Many conditions, such as trunk injury and previous

overcropping can produce stunting and ragged clusters. Testing can either confirm or rule out ringspot as the cause. In addition, it may be possible to 'rescue' vineyards by removing vines surrounding an infected 'hot spot', and replacing them with grafted vines. This may be possible because the infection typically spreads slowly within a vineyard, and rootstocks are resistant to the virus. Improving prices for hybrid grapes may make this a more attractive option, particularly where the size of the infection focus is small.

We would like to encourage participation of as many growers as possible. In addition to finding out about the status of your vineyards, you will be helping us to determine the overall extent of ringspot problems in the Finger Lakes. **We will only be offering diagnostic testing this year during the dormant season.** Guidelines for testing follow:

**1. What sites are suitable for testing?** Samples from French hybrid vineyards only will be accepted. Each vineyard should have vines showing typical symptoms (stunting, lack of crop, high bud mortality). Samples will be collected from areas showing symptoms only.

**2. Cost.** Cost will be \$15 *per infected area*. You may request testing of more than one infected area per vineyard, but processing each sample will cost \$15. You may request testing from as many vineyard blocks as you want.

**3. Sample collection.** Samples will be collected by extension and research personnel (that's me and Wayne Wilcox). Each sample will consist of 3 canes collected from each of 3 vines (9 canes, total). Three separate laboratory tests (one from each of the 3 vines) will be conducted, and are included in the \$15 fee. Samples will be collected in late March. Please do not collect the canes yourself and bring them to my office. We will do the collecting, to assure uniform handling. Samples can be collected from pruned vineyards - the number of

shoots collected is minimal, and only 2-4 buds per shoot are needed.

**4. Marking sample areas.** We are requesting that you mark (with colored flagging or other visible marking) specific vines and locations, so that it is easy for us to find them. We will contact you to arrange a time for collecting samples from your vineyards.

**5. Results.** Sample results will be mailed to you from my office, hopefully within 6-8 weeks after samples are collected. Processing in the laboratory involves time - remember that dormant canes need to be forced in the greenhouse until they have 1-3" shoot growth.

**6. Sign-up Sheet.** Fill out the attached signup sheet and return with payment to my office, or contact Katie Tomlinson at (315)-536-5134.

### **GIL SMITH PASSES AWAY**

Gilbert Smith passed away on December 30, 1997, at the age of 83. He served as Cooperative Extension Grape Specialist in Penn Yan from 1944 to his retirement in 1973. Among his other accomplishments, Smith was responsible for setting up the first annual Grape Growers Convention in 1948. After retiring, he served for several years as a Yates County legislator.

### **INTERVITIS TRADE SHOW IN GERMANY**

Every three years, Intervitis Interfructa, the world's largest trade exhibition for Viticulture and Enology, takes place in Stuttgart, Germany, also accompanied by the 56<sup>th</sup> German Viticulture Congress. This show takes place **May 10 - 15, 1998**. The organizers are offering 7 day package tours (May 10 - May 17) at a very reasonable price of about \$700 / person plus airfare (estimated at around \$650 round trip) for a seven day tour of German wine growing regions, including the Reheingau, Geisenheim research institute, Rheinhessen and Pfalz wine growing region, and upper region of the Rhine. The package includes 7 nights accommodation, breakfast and dinner, an English-speaking guide,

and admission to Intervitis Interfructa. I am told that the trade show alone, featuring 700 exhibitors of everything from vineyard to winery equipment is worth the trip across the Atlantic. If you are interested, please call our office at 315-536-5134 before February 6 for information.

## 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 Welsch, Cornell Cooperative Extension, 480 N. Main St., Canandaigua, NY 14424, (716)-394-4110 ext. 31 or 38.

**January 15, 1998.** Grape Program, 1998 *New York State Horticultural Society Annual Horticultural Show.* Rochester Thruway Marriott, Rochester, New York. Contact the NY State Horticultural Society, 315-787-2404.

**February 4-6, 1998.** *Ohio Grape-Wine Short Course,* Toledo, OH. Contact Hart Wineburg (330-666-9285) or Roland Riesen (330-263-3814) for details.

**February 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

**March 7, 1998.** *49<sup>th</sup> Annual Finger Lakes Grape Growers' Convention,* Program and Pre-registration form is included in this newsletter.

**March 15-18, 1998.** 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.

**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.



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# Tomato Ring Spot Virus Testing Sign-up Sheet

Name \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Best time to reach you AM \_\_\_\_ PM \_\_\_\_ Eve \_\_\_\_

1. Fill out one line for each block tested.
2. Specify variety and vineyard location (nearby road, intersection.)
3. Fill in the number of samples to be collected from each block.
4. Enclose \$15.00 for each sample requested.
5. Samples will be collected in late March, 1998.
6. We will contact you to arrange a time for collecting samples.

	Block Identification	Variety	Location (road name)	No. of samples		
1.					X \$15 =	
2.					X \$15 =	
3.					X \$15 =	
4.					X \$15 =	
5.					X \$15 =	
6.					X \$15 =	
7.					X \$15 =	

TOTAL           

Make check payable to Finger Lakes Grape Program

Return to:     Finger Lakes Grape Program  
                   110 Court Street  
                   Penn Yan, NY 14527