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Grapes News

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Phenology Updates

Hudson Valley: Harvest, Post-Harvest

Northern NY: Post-Harvest



Weather Update

Monthly Rainfall (inches)

Weather Station	May	June	July	August	Sept	through Oct 19	Cumulative
Chazy	2.7	7.4	3.7	3.0	3.9	0.9	21.6
Peru	1.7	8.3	3.9	1.4	3.7	0.6	19.6
Willsboro	3.4	9.2	5.5	1.0	4.6	0.6	24.3
Clifton Park	2.3	6.5	1.0	3.0	2.8	0.6	16.2
Hudson	1.8	6.9	1.6	2.8	11.9	0.4	25.4
Red Hook	1.9	6.6	2.8	2.5	7.2	0.5	21.5
Highland HVL	2.6	7.3	1.2	3.3	4.6	0.3	19.2

Cumulative Degree Days (Base 50) as of Oct 18th

Weather Station	2015	2014
Chazy	2515.9	2311.9
Peru	2537.2	2378.5
Willsboro	2496.3	2322.3
Clifton Park	3026.7	2532.9
Hudson	3123.6	2869.9
Red Hook	2979.7	2769.7
Highland HVL	3158	2881.5

Weather Update, continued from previous page

Monthly Temperatures (F)

	June		July		August		Sept	
Weather Station	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low
Chazy	81.6	38.4	89.1	49.8	88.3	51.7	89.9	35.2
Peru	80.7	38.2	88.1	48.5	89.0	53.1	89.7	38.9
Willsboro	82.1	39.8	89.1	48.8	87.4	52.3	91.3	37.9
Clifton Park	87.4	40.4	96.9	49.9	94.0	53.0	94.6	41.6
Hudson	87.9	41.3	94.9	50.9	94.9	52.4	95.9	42.1
Red Hook	87.1	38.3	93.2	48.8	93.4	49.7	94.8	39.9
Highland HVL	87.6	47.2	93.2	53.6	91.1	54.4	93.4	46.0

Post Harvest Checklist

This article written by Mark L. Chien, Viticulture Educator, Penn State Cooperative Extension, was originally published in 2012 as a fact sheet for Pennsylvania grape growers. Much of the information is still relevant for this past growing season in NY. However, the use of 2,4-D in grapes is not recommend for Eastern NY growers, and has been substituted in this article with other weed management information. The original article in its entirety, can be found here: <http://www.pawinegrape.com/uploads/PDF%20files/Documents/Articles/Post%20harvest%20check%20list%202011.pdf>

Post-harvest Check List: A Dozen (or so) Things to Do
 Wouldn't it be nice if after you picked the last grape you could just walk away from the vineyard and forget about it until pruning started in January or February? There is a lot to do in the vineyard before winter arrives and as tired as you are from harvest, these things are important. Here's a laundry list for Eastern grape growers:



1. Pick up all grape bins that may be distributed at wineries far and wide. Clean and store them properly; if wood, under cover.
2. Remove bird nets from the vines, it's so much easier to get them off when leaves are still on the vines. Collect bird control devices. Everything else that is in the vineyard should find a place in the barn.
3. Collect your weight tickets or whatever you use to calculate your charges to your customers. Check your contracts and make sure you have all the numbers right. Send itemized invoices out to the wineries with payment terms. If there are issues related to the contract, settle them now while the vintage is still fresh.
4. In a vintage like this growers may feel a little sheepish or uncertain about the grapes they delivered to the wineries. I remember vintages in Oregon when I just wanted to drop the bins and get away as fast as possible. Now is the time to face the jury/wine maker. Contact the wineries and talk about what happened and what to do about grape and wine quality, payments, etc. Do it while the vintage is still fresh in everyone's mind.
5. If you have new vineyards that are clean tilled, it is very late to be getting in a winter cover, but if we get some decent weather and the soil dries out, get some grass on the soil to prevent erosion. Prep the ground

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properly with a disc and harrow (no rototillers, please), then rent a seed drill or use an expensive seed spreader and roll the seed into the ground. The standard types of grasses used are annual rye, barley or oats for a winter cover. They grow thick and fast. Understand that these are not permanent covers and, when taken down, will enhance the fertility of your soils. You can plant a permanent cover of a durable slow and low grower like creeping red fescue. Use a high seed rate even though it will be expensive.

6. Now is the time to look into weed management. Here are some links with more information:

- Vinebalance ground cover management factsheet <http://www.vinebalance.com/pdf/newsletters/SustainableViticulture3.pdf>
- NGP groundcover management video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pSNy08aEs4E&feature=youtu.be>
- Ohio State University weed management powerpoint: http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/weedworkshop/images/Illinois_-_Vineyard_Weed_Management.pdf

7. Fall also is a good time to clean up vine row weed problems. More growers in southeastern Pennsylvania are using late season, fall glyphosate applications to control weeds. This appears to be very effective especially if used with a spring application. Again, a lot depends on the weather – which needs to be dry and not too cold. Band or spot spray on weeds under the vines. Be sure to get your calibration exactly right and remember that glyphosate works best at low pressure and volumes. If you have canes hanging to the ground, you'll have to wait until complete dormancy to spray.

8. You all know that we need leaves for every last bit of carbohydrates that insulate the vines. The period between the removal of the last cluster and the first hard frost that drops leaves is critical. This is Part II of the ripening story – getting the wood ripe going into winter. In some years, it may make sense to continue to protect leaves from disease – this is a judgment call for growers. If you have lots of infected rachis/cluster mummies on the vine or ground, at some point these need to be removed from the vineyard. Keeping clean now will help you immensely in the spring.

9. Back to winterizing your vines. If you have grafted plants, either hybrid or vinifera, and especially younger vines (<5 years old), you need to cover the graft unions. Most growers do this in the traditional way by use a grape hoe device to “hill up” over the graft union. You need 5-6” of dirt over the union. Other options include straw and mulch. The lighter the material, the more volume you need to protect the vine. Hilling up is an art and it takes practice. If you don't know how to do it, get the right equipment and find someone who does to show you how. If you don't do it right, you may lose as many vines to tractor blight as you would from a freeze event. Again, the soil conditions need to be just right and you can't have too much of a weed problem in the vine rows. Flat is always easier than slope.

10. Your equipment is the bread and butter on the farm so take good care of it. Any piece with moving parts needs to be winterized. Clean everything up as much as possible. Run anti-freeze through the hoses and pumps of the sprayer. Take the nozzles off and give them a good cleaning. Items like mowers, hedgers, cultivators, leaf removal machines, etc. should all be cleaned, oiled and greased and put up on blocks or hung for the winter. Tractors can be serviced during the winter months. Equipment with wheel bearings that will not be used until spring should be placed on blocks. Harvesters need special attention, follow the dealer's specific recommendations. The better you take care of your equipment now, the faster it will get back into service in the spring.

11. The vineyard has gotten pretty beat up over the long growing season, especially trellis, turf and vines. Take a leisurely tour around the rows and perimeter and see what needs attention and repair over the winter.

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12. You have probably noticed vines with red leaves or white varieties with leaf curl or any other funky symptoms. Before leaf drop these vines should be tagged and tested. In particular, know the visual symptoms for leafroll virus and grapevine yellows. They should be pulled if they test positive for virus or other chronic vine ailments.
13. Count missing vines and order replants. If new plantings are planned, order vine materials soon.
14. When you have the time, sit down and review the season carefully. This was as challenging a season as we are ever likely to have in the southeast Pennsylvania and around the region. Try to figure out the good and bad and why what worked and didn't work. Pay especially close to attention to your disease and pest control program. If you came through clean this year you were definitely doing something right, but you want to make absolutely sure that you are rotating materials to avoid resistance build up. How was your canopy management and overall vine balance? What was the water status of your vines, especially in the latter dry part of the season? Were there any obvious vine nutrition issues? How was your vineyard floor management this season? Also look at the business side of the farm and figure out the economics of growing grapes. Bottom line... did you make any money? If not, why? What needs to be done to improve profitability? Labor issues? The cost of all your inputs are increasing. How are you going to keep up with these expenses? Try to anticipate viticulture and economic issues coming up in 2012.
15. You'll be pruning soon. Get the equipment ready. Do you know who is going to do the work and their skill level? Pruning sets the tone for quality in 2012.
16. Finally, when you have the time, get out to the wineries and taste your wines, especially the lots that are not yet blended. Taste with the winemaker and discuss together what was good and bad about the vintage and figure out ways to improve the quality of the grapes and the relationship. What went right or wrong during the season and why. How can quality be improved? It isn't too early to start thinking about the next growing season and the 2012 vintage.
17. Breathe a sigh of relief, thank everyone who needs to be thanked and enjoy the holidays.

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Willsboro Harvest Team 2015: (Left to Right) Anna Wallis (Fruit Specialist), Annie Mills (Field Technician), Jessie Strozok (Production Economist), and Lindsey Pashow (Field Technician)

The Sun Sets on another Season



Hudson Valley

It was a challenging season for many grape growers in the Hudson Valley this past year. The season started with heavy vine injury from another cold winter. Spring came in a more normal fashion and brought with it some rain to jumpstart vine growth. The rain continued though into bloom, dropping blossoms on sensitive native varieties and bringing concerns of a

bad botrytis year for others. The summer months were hot and there were long periods without rain. There was definitely a need for drip irrigation during those dry months. In some instances, sites without drip irrigation saw vine stress and early harvests. The lack of rain did help with disease pressure. Downy mildew was not as severe as in previous years and early botrytis infections also appeared to be fewer.

As fall approached and veraison was under way, temperatures were more favorable for both grapes and growers alike. The harvest still continues, but growers reported yields on hybrids like Marquette and Seyval blanc to be some of the best they have seen. Vinifera vines that made it through the winter were also good, with more concentrated sugars due to the lack of rain. Several late varieties (e.g. Riesling, Cabernet franc, and Cabernet sauvignon) are still hanging in the vineyard. The fruit quality looks good, growers are just waiting for the chemistries (Brix, acidity, etc.) to align before harvesting.

After harvest, the next big hurdle is winter. Two hard winters back to back was not expected or appreciated. Let's hope for a better winter and better vine survival this coming winter.-JMO

Northeastern NY

Likewise, growers in Northeastern NY had their fair share of challenges this year. Temperatures at the Willsboro Research Farm reached -20F at the end of February. Other surrounding sites experienced even colder temperatures (Chazy was -23F), causing significant cold damage to some vines. This was especially true at sites with poor air drainage or in extra cool microclimates. Indeed, the past two winters have been excellent 'test winters' for these cold climate varieties and for vineyard sites.

In the spring it was slow to warm up. A late frost on May 23-24th caught some vineyards by surprise and caused significant crop losses. Fortunately, most of the vineyards near Lake Champlain, which experience a milder water-moderated climate than vineyards farther inland, were spared any damage.

The month of May was fairly dry, followed by an extremely wet June. Nearly 10 inches were recorded by many of the weather stations in the region. The rain corresponded with the most critical time for disease control—pre and post bloom—so it was especially important to be on top of fungicide programs. Luckily, a fairly dry July helped to minimize spread of disease during the summer.

By harvest, the region had accumulated plenty of degree days for fruit ripening. August was especially warm this year, with highs remaining in the 80s for much of the month. A significant part of harvest was started by mid-September. Fruit appeared to be excellent quality, and winemaking is now underway.

Information about the harvest at the Willsboro Research Farm can be found in the Veraison to Harvest newsletter here: <http://grapesandwine.cals.cornell.edu/sites/grapesandwine.cals.cornell.edu/files/shared/Veraison-To-Harvest-2015-Issue-4.pdf>.

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Quick Links

Cornell Grapes Website <http://www.fruit.cornell.edu/grape/>

ENYCHP <http://enych.cce.cornell.edu/>

Jim's Blog <http://blogs.cornell.edu/hudsonvalleygrapes/>

Northern Grapes Project <http://northerngrapesproject.org/>

NEWA Weather and Pest Forecasting <http://newa.cornell.edu/>

Viticulture and Enology Cornell <https://grapesandwine.cals.cornell.edu/>

Veraison to Harvest <http://grapesandwine.cals.cornell.edu/newsletters/veraison-harvest>

Appellation Cornell <http://grapesandwine.cals.cornell.edu/newsletters/appellation-cornell>

Thank You, See You in the Spring

Thank you for following us this season. This is the last Eastern NY Grape Newsletter for the season. Through the fall and winter, we contribute to Produce Pages, a combined program/commodities newsletter. The grape newsletter will return in the spring. Although the newsletter has finished for the season, we are still available to answer questions, don't hesitate to contact us. We look forward to seeing you at our 2016 winter meetings. Dates and times for the meetings will be posted on the Eastern NY web site <http://enych.cce.cornell.edu/>. We look forward to seeing you all there and to another season of newsletters.

Jim and Anna.



Anna Wallis

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Every effort has been made to provide correct, complete and up-to-date pesticide recommendations. Nevertheless, changes in pesticide regulations occur constantly, and human errors are possible. These recommendations are not a substitute for pesticide labelling. Please read the label before applying any pesticide. This material is based upon work supported by Smith Lever funds from the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension.

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