

Le Vigneron

A newsletter for the grape growers and wine makers of Oklahoma

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Far Flung Adventure

As some of you know from reading my glog (okgrapes.wordpress.com) that I went to Fresno to attend a conference. While there our group did several tours of the local grape and wine industry. We visited Gallo, SunMaid, and several table and juice grape vineyards. Very impressive to say the least. I was going to write up a travelogue for this newsletter, but one of my colleagues (Mark Chien, Penn State University) beat me to the punch. So, instead of spending a lot of time and effort recounting my version, I just used his for your reading pleasure. I only included one photo here but you can see more on my glog. Also, the Oklahoma State University Viticulture and Enology program and the Lincoln County Grape Growers Association are co-hosting a field day seminar on Saturday, October 9th at the Cimarron Valley Research Station in Perkins. We have titled the program, "So You Want To Grow Grapes?". The idea is to target beginners, but everyone is welcome (well, up to the cut-off number of 50). See page 3 for more details on how to register. Another year has gone by for the OSU Grape Management Short Course and it was again a rewarding experience for me. I look forward to every class period and to interacting with so many enthusiastic folks. Overall, this year, like every year so far has been a far flung adventure in the field of viticulture — and I wouldn't have it any other way.

2010 OSU Grape Management Short Course Update

Eric T. Stafne

The 2010 OSU grape management short course is over. It was a great class and a good group of enthusiastic students. In the final class we had a little bit of "sensory analysis", headed up by Dr. William McGlynn. That segment was a big hit with the students. I had a few students tell me that they want to take the course again. One student told me it was, "The biggest educational bargain of my life." Not to brag, but I agree wholeheartedly with his assessment. Where else can you get expert science-based viticulture knowledge for such a small price? I hope to see some of you readers next year.

Some Results from the 2010 OK Grape Fungicide Trial

Damon Smith

This season found us with high levels of black rot in many areas of the state. Early-season rains and warm temperatures and high humidity that seemed to stick with us all through the summer resulted in impressive epidemics in many locations. For many susceptible cultivars, controlling black rot was likely challenging in 2010. In our own research vineyards located at the Cimarron Valley Research Station (CVRS) in Perkins Oklahoma, spraying for black rot was a full-time job. If you have been following the fungicide trial updates over the last year or so, you will know that we have been looking at various “organic” or “reduced-risk” fungicide programs for efficacy here in Oklahoma. In 2009 we looked at 4 programs for control of black rot compared to a non-sprayed check. In those studies we looked at an “organic” program that relied on Cuprofix® and Serenade Max® for black rot control and Sonata ASO® to manage powdery mildew. In a second “organic” program we substituted Serenade ASO® (liquid formulation) for Serenade Max® (wetttable powder formulation). Everything else remained the same. We found that the program that used Serenade ASO® controlled leaf disease very well and kept fruit disease at moderate levels. Yield was comparable to one of the conventional programs, but was not as high as the best program (a conventional program using Pristine®, Nova®, and Abound®).

As you know, scientists like to “repeat and replicate” studies to be sure we have addressed the research question at hand. We “repeated” the 2009 treatments this season and made some minor adjustments and added treatments (Table 1). The data presented here are preliminary results for the 2010 trial. This particular vineyard is in its second year at the CVRS, so fruit were removed to encourage further vine establishment. Therefore, no fruit disease information and yield data are reported here, but you should be able to get an idea how these treatments might perform on fruit disease.

We used the cultivars ‘Petit Manseng’ and ‘Noiret®’ both grafted to ‘101-14’ rootstock. Plots were located on an “upland” area on fine sandy loam soil. Plots consisted of one vine. Details of the treatments can be found in Table 1. The Organic 1 and Organic 2 treatments were set up to study the differences in performance of the two Serenade® formulations in conjunction with Cuprofix®. Because Serenade ASO® performed well in studies last season, we also applied a treatment where only Serenade ASO® was used (Serenade ASO® treatment). This type of treatment would not be recommended for the “real world” as there is no rotation of active ingredients. However, we wanted to test the efficacy of Serenade ASO® without other confounding factors. The Cuprofix® Hybrid treatment involved rotation of two applications of Cuprofix® with conventional fungicides. Finally a conventional treatment and a non-treated check were also included.

For both cultivars, first applications of fungicide were applied on April 20 (3- to 5-inch shoot growth). All subsequent sprays were applied using a 14-day interval on May 4, May 18, June 1, June 15, and June 28. Because only leaf ratings were recorded and weather was not conducive for disease (e.g. hot and dry), no further spraying was necessary. Disease evaluation for each plot consisted of rating leaf incidence (average percentage of leaves on a vine with at least one black rot lesion) and severity (average percentage of leaves on a vine covered by black rot lesions).

There were no differences in cultivar disease responses. Therefore, treatment results are presented as averages across cultivars. Levels of leaf incidence were moderate for the non-treated check plots (Figure 1). Leaf incidence for plots treated according to the Organic 2 and Serenade ASO® programs was comparable to that of the non-treated check plots. While the Organic 1 treatment was not significantly different from the Serenade ASO® treated plots, leaf incidence was comparable to the Cuprofix® Hybrid treatment. Lowest levels of leaf incidence were recorded in plots treated according to the Conventional program.

Levels of leaf severity were somewhat lower than leaf incidence for all treatments (Figure 2). Highest levels of leaf severity were recorded in the non-treated check, Organic 2, and Serenade ASO® plots. Leaf severity was significantly lower in plots treated according to the Organic 1 and Cuprofix® Hybrid programs compared to the non-treated checks. The lowest levels of leaf severity were recorded in plots treated according to the conventional program.

In 2009, “organic” treatments which utilized Serenade ASO® performed better on leaf black rot than plots treated with Serenade Max®. In the 2010 season, the opposite was true with the Serenade Max® formulation performing better on leaf disease. Further research on these two products will be necessary in Oklahoma grape production due to this inconsistency. Conventional programs or programs that use several conventional fungicides (see the Cuprofix® Hybrid program) offer the best control of leaf black rot in our studies. This is not to say that there is no room for “organic” products in a black rot program, however, applications likely need to be applied in a timely fashion and they should be rotated with conventional fungicides in “reduced-risk” fungicide programs.

Seminar to Provide Insight on Growing Grapes in Oklahoma

Trisha Gedon

Anyone who wants to gain a greater understanding of what it takes to grow grapes in Oklahoma should make plans to attend the “So You Want to Grow Grapes?” seminar Oct. 9. Hosted by Oklahoma State University’s Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture and the Lincoln County Grape Growers Association, this informative session will take place from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Cimarron Valley Research Station near Perkins.

Eric Stafne, OSU Cooperative Extension viticulture specialist, said the program will include a general overview of what it takes to grow grapes in Oklahoma. “We have a number of industry specialists who will be on hand to share their expertise in all aspects of grape growing,” Stafne said.

Topics on the seminar agenda include site and variety selection, vineyard management, fruit quality and harvest timing, Oklahoma grape insects and Oklahoma grape diseases. In addition to classroom instruction, the seminar will also include a tour of the vineyard at the Cimarron Valley Research Station.

Registration is \$25 per person and due by Oct. 4. All attendees will receive the OSU publication “Handbook to Oklahoma Vineyard Establishment and Management,” as well as “A Pocket Guide to Oklahoma Grape Diseases, Insects, and Other Disorders.” In addition, everyone will receive copies of all seminar presentations. The seminar is limited to 50 participants. Online registration is preferred. Go to https://secure.touchnet.com/C20271_ustores/web/index.jsp and click on Horticulture/Landscape. Payment also may be made by check. Please contact Stephanie Larimer at 405-744-5404 for more information regarding registration.

“We’re very excited to be offering this seminar to Oklahomans who are interested in growing grapes,” Stafne said. “Viticulture is continuing to gain popularity in the state and the information we will offer in this seminar will help ensure greater success for those who are interested in getting into or learning more about the grape industry.”

2010 Fungicide Trial, cont.

Damon Smith

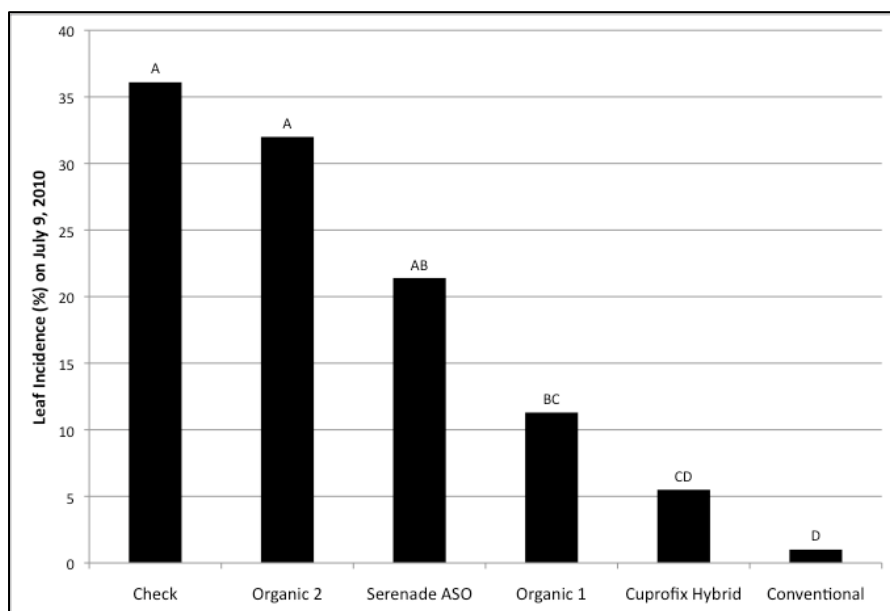


Figure 1. Black rot leaf incidence on July 9, 2010 on ‘Petit Manseng’ and ‘Noiret’ grapevines treated with various fungicide programs. Leaf incidence is the average percentage of leaves on a single vine with at least one black rot lesion. Bars with like letters, are not statistically different from each other (e.g. treatments had comparable levels of leaf incidence).

2010 Fungicide Trial, cont.

Damon Smith

Table 1. Fungicide treatments evaluated for control of grape black rot in Oklahoma, 2010.

Treatment	Application Timing ^z	Rate per Acre
<i>Organic 1</i>		
Cuprofix [®]	1	3.0 oz.
Cuprofix [®] + Serenade Max [®]	2	3.0 oz. + 3.0 oz.
Cuprofix [®] + Sonata ASO [®]	3	3.0 oz. + 4.0 fl. oz.
Cuprofix [®] + Serenade Max [®]	4	3.0 oz. + 3.0 oz.
Cuprofix [®] + Sonata ASO [®]	5	3.0 oz. + 4.0 fl. oz.
Cuprofix [®] + Serenade Max [®]	6	3.0 oz. + 3.0 oz.
<i>Organic 2</i>		
Cuprofix [®]	1	3.0 oz.
Cuprofix [®] + Serenade ASO [®]	2	3.0 oz. + 6.0 fl. oz.
Cuprofix [®] + Sonata ASO [®]	3	3.0 oz. + 4.0 fl. oz.
Cuprofix [®] + Serenade ASO [®]	4	3.0 oz. + 6.0 fl. oz.
Cuprofix [®] + Sonata ASO [®]	5	3.0 oz. + 4.0 fl. oz.
Cuprofix [®] + Serenade ASO [®]	6	3.0 oz. + 6.0 fl. oz.
<i>Serenade ASO[®]</i>		
Serenade ASO [®]	1	6.0 fl. oz.
Serenade ASO [®]	2	6.0 fl. oz.
Serenade ASO [®]	3	6.0 fl. oz.
Serenade ASO [®]	4	6.0 fl. oz.
Serenade ASO [®]	5	6.0 fl. oz.
Serenade ASO [®]	6	6.0 fl. oz.
<i>Cuprofix Hybrid</i>		
Dithane Rainshield [®] + Quintec [®]	1	4.0 oz. + 4.0 fl. oz.
Cuprofix [®]	2	3.0 oz.
Nova [®]	3	5.0 oz.
Abound [®]	4	15.4 fl. oz.
Cuprofix [®]	5	3.0 oz.
Nova [®]	6	5.0 oz.
<i>Conventional</i>		
Dithane Rainshield [®] + Quintec [®]	1	4.0 oz. + 4.0 fl. oz.
Elite [®]	2	4.0 oz.
Flint [®]	3	2.0 oz.
Nova [®]	4	5.0 oz.
Elite [®]	5	4.0 oz.
Flint [®]	6	2.0 oz.
<i>Non-treated Check</i>	--	--

^zApplication number for each fungicide product, in a set of six fungicides per program, applied to control grape black rot.

Grapes, Wines, and Extension in Fresno, CA

Mark Chien, Penn State University

It's a good morning when you can visit the world's biggest winery and raisin producer before noon. Recently I got a handful of perspective in SJV. In the East a big vineyard is 200 acres in Erie and the average size of a wine vineyard is probably five acres. In the San Joaquin Valley, vineyard blocks are measured in 200 acre parcels and the scale of agriculture is unimaginable. The first clue of this came when I flew from over the Sierra Nevada Mountains and witnessed the land transition from the most utter brown and gray desolation on Earth (Death Valley) to a lush, vast expanse of green fields with every imaginable kind of crop for as far as the eyes could see. It's impressive and it's what feeds us.

I was in Fresno, California for a meeting of the National Viticulture and Enology Extension Leadership Conference. Our hosts were Stephen Vasquez, farm advisor in Fresno and Madera counties and Matthew Fidelibus, viticulture specialist in the UC extension system. On the human and work scale, their numbers add stark relief to my job. I was humbled to learn that Stephen is responsible for almost 270,000 acres of raisin, table and wine grapes and 3,500 growers in two counties, 10x what I am charged with. But somehow, we both seem to keep pretty busy. Matthew is one of two statewide viticulture extension specialists who serve the 600,000+ acres of grapes in California.

Grapes are a versatile fruit. We focus on wine but they do so much more. I'll admit that I get just as much pleasure from a tasty oatmeal-raisin cookie as a good Pinot with salmon. There are surprising similarities between the various grape products, raisin, table, juice and wine. The disease, bugs, etc. and all fear rain at the wrong time but table and raisin are particular at risk.

I knew I was no longer in Kansas when talk of 20 ton per acre yields was discussed in the van as we drove to a table grape vineyard. This is a bountiful land but not without its problems. Water, which we have in abundance, always seems scarce here. You can feel the dryness in the air. Yet all of agriculture depends on its availability and affordability. This leads to one of agriculture's great ironies because the essential reason why there are hundreds of thousands of acres of grapes here is because it doesn't rain in the summer. A complex network of irrigation canals supplies water to farms from snowmelt in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. As we know, rain is the enemy of wine grapes after veraison but it is even less welcomed by raisin and table grape growers, who depend on shriveling and blemish-free grapes, respectively, as their end product. If rain causes rot or splitting in table grapes they are non-salable. If it rains on picked grapes spread on paper in the row middles then the drying process is interrupted if not ended.

Carl Pimental is a table grape consultant for Gerawan (<http://www.prima.com/about/>), a family-owned business that also happens to be the largest fruit producer in the U.S. We visited a table grape vineyard that just started harvesting Flame Seedless in a late season. It was a beautiful cool morning with blue skies and the fields were buzzing with activity. From our perspective it looked like chaos with dozens of people performing a variety of tasks but it was clearly very well orchestrated. We started in the vineyard, under high-trained vines that provided ample shade for fruit and visitors alike.

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Fresno, cont.

Mark Chien

I'll guess that there were a couple of hundred people working in the vineyard, scattered all around. During harvest they have as many as 3000 workers. In some cases, it was the third pass through this block of Flames. If that sounds familiar it's because Chateau d'Yquem typically makes three *tries* to get just the right fruit to make its sweet nectar. I surprised to realize that there is hardly less care that goes into the growing and selection of a high grade, marketable Flame seedless cluster. Disease is a primary concern and the appearance and soundness of the fruit is paramount and not just any kind of blemish but the exact shade of color and sweetness of the fruit. These grapes are grown to incredibly strict standards. Spring was cooler and wetter than normal which resulted in increased disease pressure, especially powdery mildew and botrytis. We saw a lot of crack berries, reminiscent of Cayuga white after a late season rain. The difference is a cracked Cayuga berry still has a chance to make good wine whereas a damaged table grape is not salable. It takes a lot of time and effort for the pickers to harvest around these berries, trimming them out of cluster one by one. I would say that each cluster was handled like a basket of eggs, gently and delicately, there are no quick motions or rough treatment among the workers.

Equipment and supplies are laying about and moving everywhere. There are dozens of old tractors running around with two large propane tanks mounted to either side. The tractors have been converted to propane power. Carl explained that the old tractors have fewer moving parts and much simpler electrical systems so they break down less often. These old machines are highly prized at this business. They are pulling flat trailers with shade cloth canopies to shade the lugs. Grapes must stay cool and are allowed four hours from the time they are cut from the vine until they reach the safety of the cold storage facility. They are shaded on the vine, shaded in the lugs, in the packing area and finally when they are tucked neatly into their shipping boxes.

I was surprised how much canopy and crop management goes into table grape production, as much or more than wine grapes. Standard practices include cordon/spur pruning, shoot thinning to two shoots per spur and suckering and shoot positioning, crop regulation to one cluster per shoot prior to bloom and then careful leaf and lateral removal just after shatter to allow just enough filtered light to reach the clusters, another pass may be made at veraison according to conditions. The overall goal is 32 clusters per vine on 12x6 spacing and, if I heard correctly, between 100 and 105 berries per cluster. This is a precision operation! They "hang fruit" which means positioning it for optimal exposure, management and, eventually, harvesting. Vines are girdled and wounds are taped (using duct tape) and the tape is removed a few weeks later. Canopies are hedged high before harvest to give the crews easier access to the fruit. If you haven't noticed by now, this is a LOT of passes through the vineyard by hand, not much of this can be mechanized. It's all in an effort to get a perfect cluster in the produce section. The stated goal is a berry that "eats well" and has high brix and a good acid balance.

Packing is done in the field under shade cloth. It is an enormous facility with every process planned and executed with precision. It was most impressive to see how the packers carefully selected each cluster for quality with the best going into their highest quality gold label, middle quality into the silver and "value" grapes under a variety of brand names. The uniformity of their selection process showed up in each box with all berries equal in color and condition. The clusters are packed into 2 lb perforated plastic bags, 9 to a box and gently placed on a padded bottom, then sealed with a slow release metabisulfite pad. They keep track of everything here using bar codes, scanners, GPS and all sorts of technology. A damaged cluster can be traced to its picker and adjustments made on the go in the field.

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Fresno, Cont.

Mark Chien

The cold storage facility is no less amazing. It is huge and cold. Workers zoomed around on forklifts in heavy down coveralls with gloves. The temperature was 31-33F in most of the rooms we visited. Raisins are amazing in their contrast to the fussy production needs of table grapes. Raisins virtually make themselves in the vineyard.

Raisin growing hasn't changed very much in the past 50 years and that was openly emphasized by our hosts at Sun Maid. Vaughn Collegian is the head sustainability and Rick Stark is in charge of grower relations. They currently have 3500 growers farming 220,000 acres of grapes but both are declining. Sun Maid grows 40-50% of the world's raisins with Turkey and Greece being the other big producers. I have to give credit to the growers for establishing a serious marketing order that charges \$20/ton towards raisin research, education and marketing. Remember the claymation California Raisins commercials? While Vaughn said it didn't generate a lot of sales it sure left a lasting impression of dancing and singing raisins. The first Sun Maid was Lorraine Collett Petersen, a Fresno woman who was introduced in 1915 and there have been many successors and redesigns of the Sun Maid since then but the red bonnet has endured.

One thing that impressed me about these large food processors is their dedication to sustainability. Of course, reducing inputs and waste makes bottom-line sense but they really want to help the environment. I recently read about an organization called the *Stewardship Index for Specialty Crops* – <http://www.stewardshipindex.org/>. They seek to create metrics for agriculture, mostly large farming operations, and help them to streamline the business to the bare minimum of inputs and outputs, the rational is that if one large farm reduces its use of fertilizer and herbicides it can have a greater impact than creating many more organic farms. It may be a shorter and more pragmatic path towards agricultural sustainability.

Raisins are grown on low density, big and old vines (some over 100 years) on a gable trellis that yield 4-6 t/a. It takes 4.5 lbs of grapes to make a pound of raisins. Thompson seedless is the main raisin variety but there are others such as Black Corinth, muscats, and sultana that have specialty uses. The hand harvest grapes are laid on paper "trays" in the row middles. Dried on the vine (DOV) raisins are made by selectively cutting canes which causes the berries to dessicate. DOV vines look like they have been sprayed with herbicide. Machine harvest grapes are laid on a continuous tray behind the harvester. It takes 2-3 weeks of dry (no rain, low humidity) conditions to properly dry the raisins. In 1978 most of the crop was lost to late rain. After proper drying the trays are rolled up and taken to the processor. The Sun Maid plant is gigantic and it's here where technological improvements have had the most impact on raisin production. Raisins are much less fussy than table grapes. They are sorted, rinsed, stems removed and they are ready to eat. It almost seems like more effort goes into the marketing of raisins than making them. Sun Maid produces half of all the raisins in the U.S. The market goes up and down but right now it's up and the growers are doing well.

I would encourage a visit to the Sun Maid web site, if for no other reason than to get their oatmeal raisin recipe. It's DEE-licious! <http://www.sunmaid.com/>

The whole agricultural infrastructure in the valley rests on two increasingly shaky foundations – labor and water. We didn't talk about either very much but it's easy to see that the food from our tables would disappear rather quickly if either or both essential input to agriculture disappeared. While great efforts are being made by these companies to secure labor and water, the unpredictable nature of politics and nature make it hard for any farmer in the U.S. to feel very comfortable.

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Fresno, Cont.

Mark Chien

For the uninitiated from the Lilliputian world of wine a visit to the Gallo winery in Fresno is like a trip into the Twilight Zone. The Gallo story (<http://www.gallo.com/>) is first and foremost an American success story about two brothers coming to California and building the biggest wine business in the world. There isn't much boutique wine romance here but they are just as serious about their wine making as anyone I have met in the industry. They make wines that a lot of people drink such as Barefoot Cellars, the biggest wine brand in volume and dollars in the U.S. I can say with certainty that our hosts, facilities manager Phil Castro and his foreman John Matourek are among the most competent and talented persons I have ever met in the wine industry. When you are making 40 million gallons of wine and crushing up to 12,000 tons per day (the stated goal is 1000 tons/hr) it pays to know what you are doing and how to do it. Besides wine, this facility processes a lot of juice concentrate for industrial use. Everything here is supersized, from the receiving facilities to the 650,000 gallon wine tanks. The winery has a 105M gallon capacity. What impressed me most was the emphasis on quality and teamwork. Everywhere we went there are blackboards devoted to production and safety issues and everyone is encouraged to participate. I was reminded of an article a recent *Practical Winery and Vineyard* that highlighted the exact same approach to wine making at Opus One in Napa Valley, a very different style of winery but sharing many of the same ideas and objectives.

As you can imagine, there is a lot of byproduct from this facility and they take great product in their effort to achieve a zero waste award. Sustainability is a core philosophy at Gallo. The winery is an ISO 9001 certified facility. Composting is a major program.

We saw grapes arriving on double tractor-trailers where they are graded on a large pad. State officials work alongside company employees to pull samples from the gondolas to make sure the grapes meet Gallo standards. For example, Chenin Blanc may be required to be 19-22 brix, with a threshold for rot and MOG.

We were walking too fast through the winery for me to describe all of the wine making details, suffice to say that everything is done on a large scale here. Their DE filter is the size of a railroad car and there are 12 centrifuges in a room that must use enough power to light up L.A.

They don't give tours to the public. We were lucky that Stephen got us in. There isn't much information on the web about the Fresno winery. The best way to experience it is in a bottle of Barefoot Cellars, Livingston Cellars, Carlo Rossi or any of the other Gallo California brands.



Our group entering into the Gallo Crush and Winery Facility in Fresno.

National Viticulture and Enology Extension Leadership Conference/GCoP

Mark Chien

There is an outstanding community of about 40 or so viticulture and enology extension educators based at land grant universities around the country. With the wineries in all 50 states there is greater demand for their services. Some states, like California and New York have viticulture educators in different regions but most others have more limited resources. In Pennsylvania, I handle the approximately 2800 acres of commercial wine grapes and Andy Muza in Erie takes care of 11,000+ acres of process grapes. Many of the new wine states, like Minnesota, Kentucky, Vermont to name a few, rely on horticulture educators who do not have formal training or experience in viticulture but have been assigned or taken an interest in emerging wine industries in their area.

In 2005 the first meeting of viticulture extension educators was organized by Ed Hellman, Jim Wolpert, Keith Striegler and Mark Chien and held in Austin, TX. NVEELC is a chance for viticulture educators to meet and discuss their programs and issues. We trade ideas, methods, information, news, and try to figure out how to best serve a very diverse audience – from the giant vineyards in the SJV to the one-acre grower in central Pennsylvania. It's not a gripe session but actually a very positive forum for serving the wine and grape products industries. The group was hosted in Fresno by University of California viticulture farm advisors and specialists. Stephen Vasquez and Matthew Fidelibus were our local hosts and organized a fantastic educational tour of the various grape products in the valley. The group continues to be a loosely-formed coalition of extension educators that readily and openly share ideas and information and collaborate whenever possible.

e-Xtension was created by the USDA National Institute for Food and Agriculture (formerly CSREES) which is the federal agency that oversees cooperative extension. Its mission is to create a “national internet-based educational network that is integral to and complements the community based cooperative extension system with 24/7/365 availability.” E-extension will consist of communities of practice within the particular disciplines served by cooperative extension and will deliver the most current, objective, research-based information from the land-grant university system. The focus will be on useful and practical tools, information, resources and recommendations. Extension administrators have been pushing educators towards the web for many years. This is a formal, national system funded by experiment station dollars that takes the enormous scope of extension information and plops it down in one place. It's an enormous undertaking and one that NVEELC initially avoided but has recently become engaged.

Dr. Eric Stafne, assistant professor of fruit crops at Oklahoma State University applied for and was awarded a USDA Specialty Crops Research Initiative grant for \$450,000 to develop a grape community of practice (GCoP) in e-Xtension. Many viticulture educators from around the country have signed on as collaborators to this project and will be providing Eric, and his project assistant, Lane Greer, with the viticulture materials that will form the core of the yet-to-be-named web site. It is meant as a one stop viticultural resource for growers of all skill levels. The web site will initially consist of a FAQ section, Ask the Expert, and a “viticulture encyclopedia.” In the future, other services such as a “grape doctor” for disease management information will be added. This will not just be a web resource for novice growers. A significant effort will be made to provide useful information for advanced grape growers.

The NVEELC meeting in Fresno allowed vit extension educators from around the country to meet the skilled vit farm advisors and specialists in the UC system and to learn about their programs and work. There is SO much excellent research and extension work happening all over the country and if a lot of it can be placed under one umbrella in the GCoP, it will actually become organized and accessible, not only for grape growers and wine makers but also for us.

The launch date for the grape web site will be in January at the Unified Symposium in Sacramento. I'll let you know when a name is created and how you can access the site. I think it will be a great resource for all grape growers.

For more information about e-Xtension, go to <http://about.extension.org/>

Cultivar Spotlight: Cabernet Franc

Eric T. Stafne

‘Cabernet Franc’ is a parent of ‘Cabernet Sauvignon’, so one would expect it to share some of the same characteristics. It was first cultivated in the southwest part of France in the 17th Century and thrives in the Loire Valley region. Some differences between ‘Cabernet Sauvignon’ (CS) and ‘Cabernet Franc’ (CF) are that CF has earlier budbreak in the spring and earlier harvest in the late summer. CF also tends to be more winter cold hardy than CS. Wine produced from CF is generally lighter in color with more “green” flavors, but often smoother and less tannic. CF tends to be one of the more cold hardy vinifera grapes in Oklahoma — which is good — however, the fruit quality has generally been poor. Clusters tend to not ripen evenly, indicating a lack of heat tolerance and a proclivity to overbear. A couple of years ago I did an experiment where I varied pruning levels and cluster thinning treatments. I saw no benefit of either in terms of the uneven ripening. I came to the conclusion at that point that although CF tolerates the winter temperatures fairly well, the summer is its downfall. Similar to ‘Concord’, CF simply doesn’t handle summer heat well and thus the fruit quality is poor.



Fig. 1 Significant uneven ripening of ‘Cabernet Franc’ does not bode well for winemaking.

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We welcome feedback and suggestions. Any responses can be mailed or emailed to the addresses on the left. We will strive to provide useful, pertinent, and timely information.

Initially this newsletter will be published 4 times per year in January, April, July, and October. If warranted the timing can be amended to better serve the grape growers and wine makers of Oklahoma.



'Vigneron' is the French word for someone who grows grapes for use in wine making.

2010 Fungicide Trial, cont.

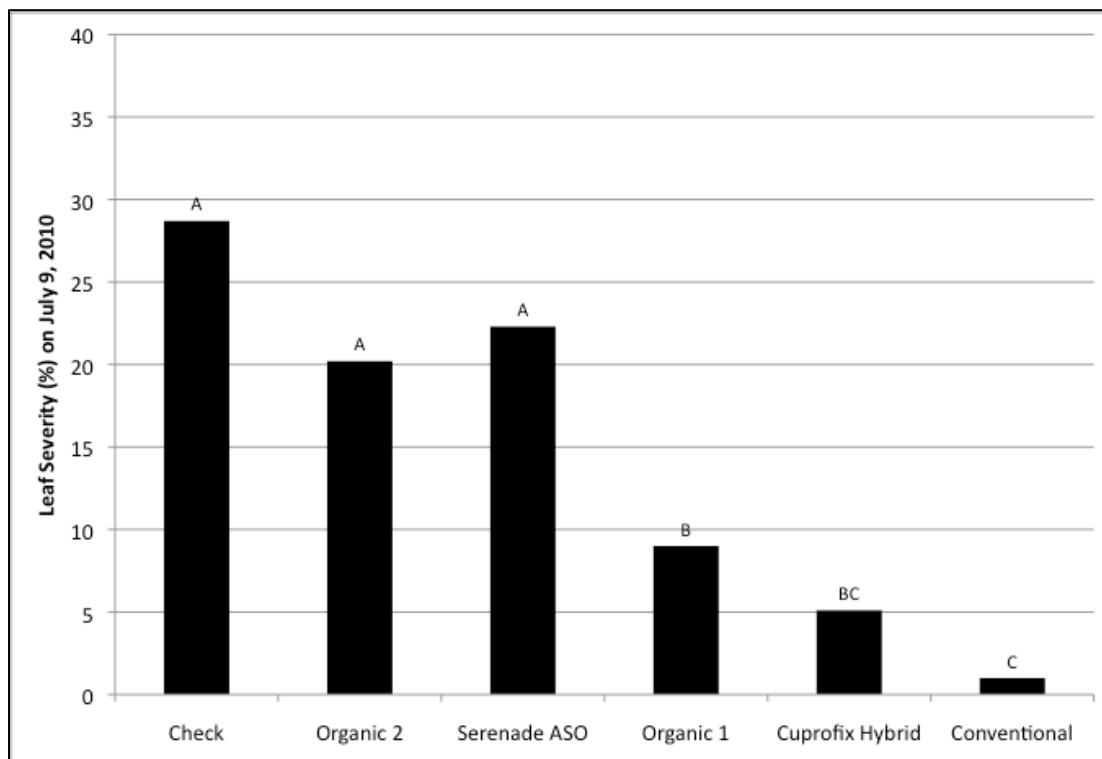


Figure 2. Black rot leaf severity on July 9, 2010 on 'Petit Manseng' and 'Noiret' grapevines treated with various fungicide programs. Leaf severity is the average percentage of leaves covered by black rot lesions on a single vine. Bars with like letters, are not statistically different from each other (e.g. treatments had comparable levels of leaf incidence).