

Lake Erie Regional Grape Program

PENNSTATE



*Photo-Kim Knappenberger
CLEREL*

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Business Management

Kevin Martin, Penn State University, LERGP, Business Management Educator

Brix Testing for Harvest Management

At this point crop load is fixed. The great weather does mean there will be few problems with brix accumulation. Maximizing revenue still may require an understanding of crop load by block to schedule and coordinate the most efficient harvest possible. Understanding crop load and stratifying brix samples to match will maximize 2018 crop payments and 2019 bud quality.

While crop load decisions are basically finalized, how and when that crop gets ripe should be predicted, monitored, and re-predicted. There is not much worse than unexpectedly low brix after setting up a harvest crew for a block and having to cancel loads or move to another location. Perhaps a little worse is having a customer for custom harvest incorrectly predict brix and delay or cancel a load.

Labor and machinery costs during harvest are the highest per hour that growers deal with. While growers charge by the ton, their costs are incurred by the hour. Coming across unexpectedly low brix usually results in a small number of wasted tractor hours and a larger number of wasted labor hours.

Significant amounts of brix testing can reduce nearly all waste related to unexpected fruit maturity. Nearly all of the costs incurred from brix samples will be unpaid labor at a time of year when most growers are not anywhere near their busiest. For the largest growers, robust brix testing might take a couple of days. Some even use paid labor to assist in obtaining enough samples to ensure adequate results.

Most Welch growers should be targeting a minimum of 16 brix this season for Concords. One concern for growers might end up being fruit loss due to secondary rots and higher than normal brix. Niagara brix last week varied between 9 and 14. When Niagara reaches 16 brix it is very difficult to completely eliminate secondary rots. When possible these should be harvested as early as a grower is able. Fortunately, a demand for early season Niagara has already made the management and containment a bit easier than it has been in years past. Investing a mere \$1 per acre in sampling offers the potential to save \$30 or more per acre at harvest. This year I would expect the bulk of the benefit to come in the form of minimizing early deliveries below non-premium standards. Many growers should be able to have zero Concord loads below 15.5 and some may have zero below 16.0. This benefit will probably be valued around \$10 per acre. Significantly less than normal, but still well worth the time.

We will again be testing a brix sensor on the harvester at CLEREL. A few growers have also designed and installed sensors on their harvesters. At a cost of \$8 or more per acre, it does cost more than typical brix testing. Research will hopefully lower the cost and provide useful ways to use the data that add value and increase revenue beyond what is possible from sampling alone. Follow the project at efficientvineyard.com if you are interested in learning more.



Preharvest Pest Management Concerns

As we move toward harvest I have been getting a number of calls about powdery mildew and grape berry moth. The short answer for powdery mildew is that for Labrusca, it is really too late to do anything about it. For Vinifera, keep an eye on controlling populations of both powdery mildew and downy mildew to reduce the risk of premature defoliation and its effect on cold hardiness. For hybrids, it depends on the hybrid and its susceptibility.

For grape berry moth, we no longer suggest using the GBM model on NEWA (<http://newa.cornell.edu>) due to generational overlap. Due to this overlap, there are females present in the vineyard laying eggs on a continuous basis. If you have a grape berry moth problem the recommendation is to keep a tight spray program for grape berry moth up to harvest. With Concords, this is typically not an economically sustainable practice. For wine grape varieties that are prone to Botrytis or any of the other rots, keeping grape berry moth feeding to a minimum will decrease the number of sites where the rots can get established.

A couple of things to consider are days to harvest interval and seasonal restriction on the active ingredient. Check the label to see how many days after the application need to pass before the crop can be harvested (days to harvest interval or DHI). We primarily have a problem with season restrictions on active ingredients when we look at insecticide use. You must check the label to determine the active ingredient, not the common name of the pesticide. For instance, carbaryl is the active ingredient for Sevin. Switching from one insecticide to another with a different name is not a guarantee that you are using a different active ingredient. You will also find any seasonal use restrictions on the label. Not knowing is not an excuse. The label is the law. Read the label and make an informed decision.

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INSURING GRAPES

NY, 2018

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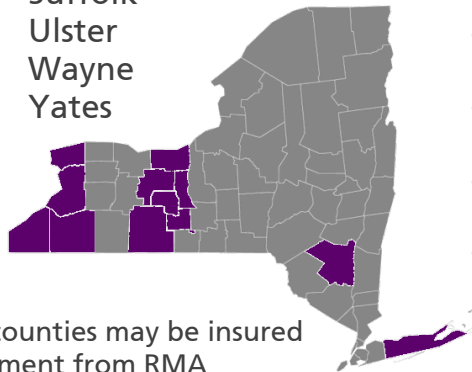
Important Insurance Deadlines

- **Nov. 20, 2017:** Sales Closing, Policy Change, Cancellation, Termination Date
- **Jan. 15, 2018:** Acreage / Production Report Date
- **Aug. 15, 2018:** Premium Billing Date
- **Nov. 20, 2018:** End of Insurance Period



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NYS Grape Crop Insurance Performance



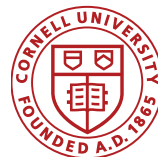
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To sign up, contact a crop insurance agent. Find an agent using the Agent Locator tool at rma.usda.gov/tools/agent.html

Find crop insurance information at ag-analytics.org/cropinsurance/

Cornell University delivers crop insurance education in New York State in partnership with the USDA Risk Management Agency.

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LERGP Links of Interest:

Go to <http://lergp.cce.cornell.edu/> for a detailed calendar of events, registration, membership, and to view past and current Crop Updates and Newsletters.

LERGP Web-site:

<http://lergp.com/>

Cornell Lake Erie Research & Extension Laboratory Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/Cornell-Lake-Erie-Research-and-Extension-Laboratory-678754995584587/?fref=ts>

Efficient Vineyard Web-site:

<https://www.efficientvineyard.com/>

Table for: Insecticides for use in NY and PA:

<http://lergp.cce.cornell.edu/submission.php?id=69&crumb=ipm|ipm>

Crop Estimation and Thinning Table:

http://nygpadmin.cce.cornell.edu/pdf/submission/pdf65_pdf.pdf

Appellation Cornell Newsletter Index:

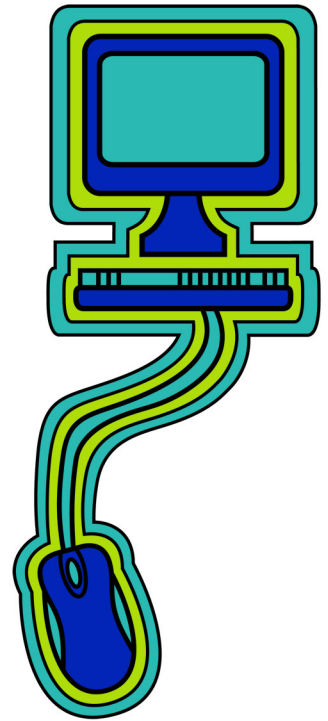
<http://grapesandwine.cals.cornell.edu/cals/grapesandwine/appellation-cornell/>

Veraison to Harvest newsletters:

<http://grapesandwine.cals.cornell.edu/cals/grapesandwine/veraison-to-harvest/index.cfm>

NEWA:

<http://newa.cornell.edu/>





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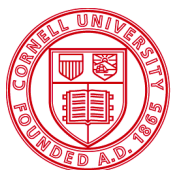
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