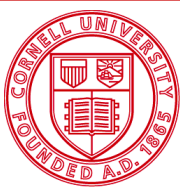




Crop Update October 31, 2019



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The Lake Erie Regional Grape Program is a Cornell Cooperative Extension partnership between Cornell University and the Cornell Cooperative Extensions in Chautauqua, Erie and Niagara county NY and in Erie County PA.

IPM

Tim Weigle, NYSIPM, Cornell University, LERGP Team Leader



Passing the Torch

Well, this is my last Crop Update. My last day in the office is November 1, 2019. While I am looking forward to retirement and having more time with grandkids, dogs, and home projects that have been neglected over the years, I am really going to miss the friendships and comradery that have been a constant over the past 30 years with the NYS IPM Program and Lake Erie Regional Grape Program. My time with the grape industries of New York and Pennsylvania has been both interesting and entertaining and the years seem to have flown by. Hopefully you have gotten as much out of our interactions as I have. Andy Muza will continue as the primary contact for pest management issues for the LERGP extension team and Jennifer Russo will be adding the extension team leader duties to her responsibilities as extension viticulturist. Thank you again for wonderful 30 years, and here's wishing you the best in your future growing seasons.

Viticulture

Jennifer Russo, Viticulture Extension Specialist, LERGP



Weed Management

Grape growers benefit from implementing Integrated Pest Management in many ways. Grape IPM educates to protect crops from insects, plant diseases, weeds, and vertebrate pests in environmentally and economically sensible ways. Grape IPM is a very important component of the Lake Erie Regional Grape Program and a valuable asset to our industry.

Weed management is an integral part of an overall vineyard management system. Weeds reduce vine growth and yield by competing for water, nutrients, and sunlight. Effect from weed competition is most severe in the first three years of grapevine establishment, where it can reduce cane growth and delay fruit production. In mature vineyards, weed growth can interfere with harvest and cultural practices. Broadleaf weeds, such as field bindweed, climbing poison ivy and climbing milkweed give many growers fits during harvest.



*Protect Our Environment
Year. by Clipground Images*

If you are finished with harvest and have some of the persistent weeds in your vineyards, then now would be a great time to implement some IPM strategies. It was suggested to dose the problem weeds with high rate of glyphosate really hitting it in the fall when leaves are about to yellow so that it gets into the root storage. Repeated, frequent applications of glyphosate for a few years will be required. When properly used, herbicides will usually control the weed species listed on their label. In most situations, tank-mixes or sequential applications of herbicides will be required to provide effective, economical control. If growers run up against the maximum labelled use per year, they could substitute hoeing for some of the applications.

I was asked to make a note of the growers who have problematic weeds that grow up into the canopy and how their efforts have worked (or not) to guide IPM research efforts. Cornell University has an oncoming weed science professor, Lynn Sosnoskie, who is also interested to learn of our industry needs in this area. If you would like to voice your weed issues, then please email them to me at jjr268@cornell.edu and I will compile a list for IPM and our new weed scientist.

PA Update

Bryan Hed, Research Technologist, Lake Erie Grape Research and Extension Center



Weather:

I don't have a lot to say at this point in the season, except that it's finishing up better than many of us anticipated with the cooler than average start back in May and June. By July, many growers were looking at trying to ripen a larger to much larger than average crop in a cooler than average year. But every month since the end of June boasted larger than average heat accumulations, all the way to the very end of October, and with adequate rainfall. You can't ask for more than that. We will finish up the month of October, warmer than average, and - unless we get an ugly amount of rain today - somewhat below average in rainfall. Cheers!

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INSURING GRAPES

NY, 2019

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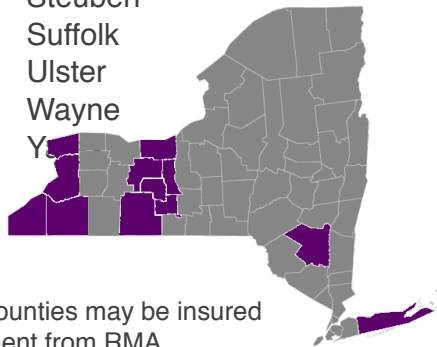
Important Insurance Deadlines

- **Aug. 15, 2018:** Premium Billing Date
- **Nov. 20, 2018:** Sales Closing, Policy Change, Cancellation, Termination Date
- **Nov. 20, 2019:** End of Insurance Period
- **Jan. 15, 2019:** Acreage / Production Report Date



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Grapes in other counties may be insured by written agreement from RMA

NYS Grape Crop Insurance



for every \$1 grape producers spent on crop insurance premiums from 2012 to 2016, **they received \$2.07** in losses

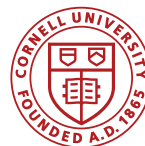
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Business Management

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



Grape Harvest and Market

As harvest progresses, it has been more of the same. The weather has been cooperative, yields have been above average, and demand for product remains strong. The forecast indicates some challenges this weekend. While not a lot of fun, to be expected when harvest extends past Halloween.

Soluble solids at major processors continue to climb. It is challenging to isolate causes for the increase in quality at the plants. As always, brix is influenced by ripening, dehydration, selective harvest and yields. Regardless of causes, increases in brix will likely lead to higher payments. We know this to be the case in the cash market. It's likely, given healthy demand, that the same will be true for cooperatives. Higher brix, after all, translates to more finished product.

With yields above average, overall the year is better than planned. It would have been unfair to expect the season to have been any better with the late start to the growing season and challenges with demand in prior years. Looking forward to 2020 is always a precarious thing to do but thus far there are some reasons for optimism in most markets. Trends in the wine industry were a little less positive starting in 2018. These challenging market trends will continue in some sectors for 2020. Fortunately, most of our growers remain diversified.

The Concord wine market, in particular, may be more complex in 2020. Many growers have taken the opportunity to expand marketing agreements on the juice grape side to avoid these issues. Gross payments on the wine side will be highly variable depending on the market. Some markets continue to pay a significant premium, while others reduced tonnage. This is what I mean by market complexity. Fickle consumers are creating challenges to stability and the market appears to be evolving toward different brands and distribution patterns. While 2019 saw some contract reductions, significant drops in price, it is still possible this is a very short term market trend.

Strategic decisions in December hinge on this successful harvest. In this early phase of a price recovery it remains important to reinvest in vineyards when necessary. Most investments should focus on practices than increase vine size and potential yield. Particularly when debt levels are low, recapitalizing (delayed equipment replacement) is appropriate but should focus on investments that decrease costs. As always, labor cost continues to rise and should be a target of savings when investing in capital equipment. Vineyards are more capital intensive than most crops. This results in a temptation to use or over use debt. Fixed interest rate debt is appropriate for many vineyard investments but risk management decisions need to be made to ensure that repayment is not contingent on unrealistic assumptions of price and yield.



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[Cornell Cooperative Extension website:](#)

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