



May 27th, 2020

## Finger Lakes Vineyard Update

### In the Vineyard

Welcome to 2020 – the year when the world almost completely shut down, and the Finger Lakes went from freeze warnings to 95° in the span of 14 days. Sure, why not?

Thanks to the recent burst of heat, the vines have finally come out of their shells (or scales) and growth has really taken off over the past week. Growth stages range anywhere from post-budbreak to 4-5" long shoots, depending on location and variety. While May has been all over the place with temperatures so far, it's been relatively dry in many parts of the Finger Lakes. Geneva is currently at less than 50% of it's normal rainfall for the month, with just a few days to go. We'll see what rains we get over the next few days, but it's a relatively dry start to the season so far.

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*Shoot growth on Marquette (left), Riesling (center), and Cabernet franc (right)*

### Shoot Thinning

We're entering the window of the best time for shoot thinning in vineyards that typically develop dense canopies. Shoot thinning can be beneficial to grape production for several reasons, including:

- Improving bud fruitfulness by reducing shading in the interior of the canopy;
- Reducing disease pressure;
- Improving fruit exposure to sunlight, which can impact color and flavor development (possibly);
- It is a relatively fast and inexpensive way (whether by hand or machine) to make adjustments to the canopy structure to bring it closer to "balance"; and
- It can also be a first step in yield reduction, which may be an important consideration for growers given the uncertainty in the grape market this year.

It is generally recommended that shoot thinning be done when shoots are between 6-12" long. As shoots elongate past that point, the base of the shoot starts to lignify which makes it more difficult to remove the shoots cleanly. This can both slow down the operation and potentially do damage to the cambial layer of the cane or cordon where the shoot attached. In general, try to target about 4-5 shoots per foot of canopy in VSP-trained vinifera

## In the Vineyard (continued from page 1)

varieties. Hybrid varieties that are trained on high-wire systems can have somewhat higher numbers depending on variety, while native varieties like Concord can have as many as 15 shoots per foot of row in highly productive vineyards.

Shoot thinning removes both reproductive and vegetative growth from the vine, but usually results in an overall reduction of both yield and cropload (yield to pruning weight ratio) (Sun et al. 2012), and therefore is most beneficial in situations where vines are overcropped. If vines already have a low yield to pruning weight ratio (i.e., are undercropped), it's much less likely that thinning will have any significant impact on fruit quality. However, the other benefits mentioned here – reducing shading and crowding which can improve bud fruitfulness and reduce disease pressure – might be significant enough on their own to potentially justify the practice. The only way to know for sure is to try some thinning in a couple of rows and see if any resulting benefits can justify the cost of the practice.

You can learn some more about shoot thinning by watching our [video about shoot thinning in grapes](#) on our

## IPM

Early in the season, the primary diseases most growers should be concerned about are **phomopsis** and **powdery mildew**. Phomopsis spores are splashed by rains from their overwintering locations on previous years' wood and stems onto young, green tissues. Because the spores are mostly spread by water, phomopsis is a more prevalent issue for varieties that are trained on a high wire (with green shoots at the level of and below the wire) and with lots of old wood like cordons or that are mechanically hedged. These would include native varieties like Concord, Niagara and Catawba, as well as many of our hybrid varieties as well, although cane pruning in these helps to keep the availability of inoculum down in most cases.



Phomopsis infection on grapevine shoot.

Photo: Mizuho Nita, Virginia Tech University

**Phomopsis** can have a couple of different impacts on the vines. Because it infects the tissue near the base of the shoot, infections that are severe enough can end up weakening the shoot and cause it to break off in some cases. The other impact is near the end of the season, when the infection moves from the stem tissue into the berries themselves. This infection can cause early shelling of berries before harvest, or even during harvest just ahead of a mechanical harvester that is shaking the canopy. Research done by Wayne Wilcox showed that the cost of the first couple of phomopsis sprays early in the season can easily pay for themselves in fruit retained on the vine through harvest.

The first spray for phomopsis should be applied around 3-5" of shoot growth, when clusters are first exposed. Vineyards with a history of heavy phomopsis might consider starting even earlier (~1-2"). The good news so far this season is that there has relatively little rain since the shoots have started to emerge. The next couple of days, however, have the potential for some rain, which would trigger these early infection periods.

Vineyards with a history of **powdery mildew** problems, or those where there was a higher than normal presence of scarring on canes (see photo) due to high pressure towards the end of last season, should be starting their PM management programs about now as well. In most cases, that means including some sulfur in the first few sprays of the season, except for cultivars like Concord, Foch, Rougeon and DeChaunac, which are sensitive to sulfur. In these cases, horticultural oils (e.g., Stylet Oil) or potassium salts (e.g., Nutrol) or bicarbonate products (e.g., Armicarb, Kaligreen) can be used instead. Highly susceptible varieties, including most *vinifera* varieties and some hybrids as well, should get started with PM management around this stage as well.

## FLGP Virtual Tailgate Meeting Schedule for 2020

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Until we have clearance to begin holding in-person meetings again, we are going to be holding this year's Tailgate Meetings online, similar to how we held the Spring Grape IPM meeting. There will still be pesticide credits available for these meetings, and the format for them will remain the same (as much as possible, at least) – informal discussions about what's happening in the field, quick updates on applied research trials, and whatever else is on growers' minds at the time.

You will need to register for the Tailgate Meetings (link is below), but when you do you will be registered for the entire series (you're not required to attend all of them). You will receive an email with a link to use for all of the meetings. Be sure to keep this email somewhere easy to find, and do not share your link with somebody else. Each registrant should be using their own link to login to the meeting.

Tailgate Meetings will be held from 4:30 – 6:00 PM on the following dates this year:

- Tuesday, June 9
- Tuesday, June 23
- Tuesday, July 7
- Tuesday, July 21
- Tuesday, August 4
- Tuesday, August 18

If we are able to hold any of these meetings in person this year, we will certainly do our best to do that. But under the current conditions, this is how we will try to stay in touch.

Registration link: [https://cornell.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwvc-6qpjoiHtS5I2AQssfPXzXe\\_iKnx4f7](https://cornell.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwvc-6qpjoiHtS5I2AQssfPXzXe_iKnx4f7)

## Brief Survey on Use of Sheep for Vineyards

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The Vanden Heuvel viticulture research program at Cornell University is conducting a survey to determine grower perceptions of using sheep to mow/sucker in vineyards. The goal of the survey is to guide future research and extension efforts in this area. The survey is completely anonymous. You can complete the survey by clicking on this link:

[https://cornell.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_80QJfMVgdqIqOOH](https://cornell.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_80QJfMVgdqIqOOH)

Please only complete the survey once for each vineyard operation. If you have any questions, please get in touch with Prof. Justine Vanden Heuvel directly ([Justine@Cornell.edu](mailto:Justine@Cornell.edu)).



## COVID-19 Safety Plans Required for All Business in “New York Forward”

*Richard Stup, Cornell Agricultural Workforce Development Program*

*The FLGP is working with Richard and other CCE specialists to develop resources for growers on the development of these safety plans. More information about these should be coming out soon. - Hans*

[New York Forward](#) is the state’s plan to begin re-opening in phases as regions of the state achieve certain COVID-19 management metrics. An important part of New York Forward is for all businesses to have a customized, written safety plan that details specifically how each business will prevent and manage COVID-19. Details for particular industries, including agriculture can be found here: <https://forward.ny.gov/industries-reopening-phase>.

### *All Farms Need a Plan*

All farms are required to have a written plan, this includes essential, food-producing farms (e.g., dairy, fruit, vegetable) that have been open all along, and non-food-producing farms (e.g., ornamental horticulture, equine). The state provides a [Business Safety Plan Template](#) that farmers can use to meet the requirement. Completed safety plans do “not need to be submitted to a state agency for approval but must be retained on the premises of the business and must (be) made available to the New York State Department of Health (DOH) or local health or safety authorities in the event of an inspection.” If a business already has a prior written plan that addresses some or all of the issues in the safety plan, then that plan can be updated to current guidelines and used as the safety plan. A Cornell Extension team is working to develop further educational resources to help farms with safety plan compliance.

### **New Guidelines for Non-Food Farms**

[Detailed Guidelines for Non-Food Agriculture](#) (e.g., ornamental horticulture, equine) is part of the New York Forward plan. These businesses may re-open as of May 15 if they are in a [region that meets the state’s metrics](#), they have a safety plan developed, and they are actively carrying out all aspects of that plan. Note that the state instructs farms at the end of the guidance document to “affirm that you have read and understand your obligation to operate in accordance with this guidance: <https://forms.ny.gov/s3/ny-forward-affirmation>.”

### **Enforcement**

It is not entirely clear at this time how the state will enforce the New York Forward guidance but most likely enforcement will be complaint driven as incidents arise. The New York Forward plan includes an online form and phone number for anyone to file a complaint, the NY State Department of Labor has a separate [online form](#) for employees to file COVID-19-related complaints against their employers. Certainly, businesses will need to provide their safety plans in the event of an actual COVID-19 case or outbreak in the business. Enforcement, however, should not be the primary motivating factor. Farm businesses should develop safety plans and continue safety practices to protect employees, customers, services providers, neighbors, and communities because it is the right thing to do.

### **Risk Management**

A likely outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic is an increase in lawsuits: customers might sue businesses they interacted with and employees might sue their employers for real or perceived injuries. These are highly uncertain times but farm businesses can take steps to help control the risk of being sued and improve their ability to defend themselves in court. This topic deserves a more complete discussion, but for now, consider taking every action you can to:

1. understand government requirements,
2. develop plans and procedures to meet requirements,
3. enforce discipline and compliance with established procedures in your workplace, and
4. document your plans, actions, and important decisions that affect employees and customers.



### Upcoming Events

Don't forget to check out the calendar on our website (<http://flgp.cce.cornell.edu/events.php>) for more information about these and other events relevant to the Finger Lakes grape industry.



### Swirl, Sip, don't Spit: Tasting Behind the Mask

June 2, 2020 1:00 – 2:30 PM

*Presenters: Chris Gerling, Extension Enologist, Cornell Craft Brewing Institute  
Anna Katharine Mansfield, Associate Professor, Cornell AgriTech*

Tastings are still the best way to introduce customers to your products - but during the time of COVID-19, extra precautions are necessary to protect customers and hospitality staff in tasting situations. This hour-long webinar will focus on sanitation, staff safety, traffic flow and best tasting practices to mitigate the risk of transmitting the corona virus. A 30 minute moderated Q&A will follow the presentation.

Register for this webinar at [https://cornell.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_7Ug38oGJQdSSWO75zbcYSw](https://cornell.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_7Ug38oGJQdSSWO75zbcYSw)

### Tuesday Timely Topic: Grape Berry Moth and Mealybug management tips

June 2, 2020 4:30 – 5:30 PM

*Speakers: Greg Loeb, Cornell AgriTech  
Rufus Isaacs, Entomology, Michigan State University*

Biology and management of Grape Berry Moth and Grape Mealybug (vector of leafroll virus) will be discussed.

Register at: <https://cornell.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJAuf--tpjgiGdQdY3QLFP1q2FHWDFxCbkkp>

### FLGP Virtual Tailgate Meeting

June 9, 2020 4:30 – 6:00 PM

Join FLGP viticulturist Hans Walter-Peterson (and the occasional guest speaker) for any or all of this year's Tailgate Meetings, held every other Tuesday afternoon during the 2020 growing season. These meetings feature a free-flow discussion of what's been happening in vineyards, timely reminders about important practices, and updates on some of the applied research being done in grapes this year. Tailgate Meetings have been approved for 0.75 NY pesticide recertification credits.

This year's Tailgate Meetings will be held online until we are able to hold them in-person again, which will hopefully be sooner rather than later.

Register for this year's online Tailgate Meetings at

[https://cornell.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwvc-6qpjoiHtS5I2AQssfPXzXe\\_iKnX4f7](https://cornell.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwvc-6qpjoiHtS5I2AQssfPXzXe_iKnX4f7)

## 2020 GDD & Precipitation

FLX Teaching & Demonstration Vineyard – Dresden, NY					
Date	Hi Temp (F)	Lo Temp (F)	Rain (inches)	Daily GDDs	Total GDDs
5/20/2020	74.2	48.9	0.02	11.6	101.1
5/21/2020	77.2	43.5	0.00	10.4	111.4
5/22/2020	77.2	53.3	0.02	15.3	126.7
5/23/2020	76.8	62.5	0.30	19.7	146.3
5/24/2020	80.1	59.0	0.00	19.6	165.9
5/25/2020	85.3	62.5	0.20	23.9	189.8
5/26/2020	94.2	64.2	0.00	29.2	219.0
Weekly Total			<b>0.54"</b>	<b>129.5</b>	
Season Total			<b>4.75"</b>	<b>219.0</b>	

GDDs as of May 26, 2019: 229.8

Rainfall as of May 26, 2019: 6.15"



### Seasonal Comparisons (at Geneva)

## Growing Degree Days

	2020 GDD <sup>1</sup>	Long-term Avg GDD <sup>2</sup>	Cumulative days ahead (+)/behind (-) <sup>3</sup>
April	12	63.8	-23
May	183.6	254.4	-5
June		480.2	
July		643.6	
August		592.2	
September		358.3	
October		110.0	
TOTAL	195.6	2502.6	

<sup>1</sup> Accumulated GDDs for each month.

<sup>2</sup> The long-term average (1973-2019) GDD accumulation for that month.

<sup>3</sup> Numbers at the end of each month represent where this year's GDD accumulation stands relative to the long-term average. The most recent number represents the current status

## Precipitation

	2020 Rain <sup>4</sup>	Long-term Avg Rain <sub>5</sub>	Monthly deviation from avg <sup>6</sup>
April	2.54"	2.83	-0.29"
May	1.23"	3.16	
June		3.60	
July		3.42	
August		3.23	
September		3.53	
October		3.42	
TOTAL	3.77"	23.19	

<sup>4</sup> Monthly rainfall totals up to current date

<sup>5</sup> Long-term average rainfall for the month (total)

<sup>6</sup> Monthly deviation from average (calculated at the end of the month)

## COVID-19 Resources

**Need information? View the following Cornell CALS and CCE Resource Pages Updated Regularly**

**General Questions & Links:**

<https://eden.cce.cornell.edu/>

**Food Production, Processing & Safety Questions:**

<https://instituteoffoodsafety.cornell.edu/coronavirus-covid-19/>

**Employment & Agricultural Workforce Questions:**

<http://agworkforce.cals.cornell.edu/>

**Cornell Small Farms Resiliency Resources:**

<https://smallfarms.cornell.edu/resources/farm-resilience/>

**Financial & Mental Health Resources for Farmers:**

<https://www.nyfarmnet.org/>

**Cornell Farmworker Program**

[www.farmworkers.cornell.edu](http://www.farmworkers.cornell.edu)

[www.trabajadores.cornell.edu](http://www.trabajadores.cornell.edu) (en espanol)

# Finger Lakes Vineyard Update

Finger Lakes Grape Program

May 27th, 2020

## Additional Information

Become a fan of the [Finger Lakes Grape Program on Facebook](#), or follow us on [Twitter \(@cceflgp\)](#) as well as YouTube. Also check out our website at <http://flgp.cce.cornell.edu>.

Got some grapes to sell? Looking to buy some equipment or bulk wine? List your ad on the [NY Grape & Wine Classifieds website](#) today!

### Finger Lakes Grape Program Advisory Committee

**Eric Amberg**- Grafted Grapevine Nursery  
**Bill Dalrymple**- Dalrymple Farm  
**Matt Doyle**- Doyle Vineyard Management  
**Eileen Farnan**- Barrington Cellars  
**Chris Gerling**- Cornell University Extension  
**Luke Haggerty**- Constellation Brands  
**Tina Hazlitt**- Sawmill Creek Vineyards  
**Cameron Hosmer**- Hosmer Winery  
**T.J. Brahm** – Randall Standish Vineyards

**Harry Humphreys**- Overlook Farms  
**Gregg McConnell**- Farm Credit East  
**Herm Young**– Young Sommer Winery  
**John Santos**- Hazlitt 1852 Vineyards  
**Steve Sklenar**– Sklenar Vineyards  
**Justine Vanden Heuvel**- Cornell University  
**Peter Weis** – Weis Vineyards  
**Kim Marconi** – Three Brothers Wineries & Estates

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## Cornell Cooperative Extension Finger Lakes Grape Program

**Hans Walter-Peterson**—Team Leader  
**Donald Caldwell**—Viticulture Technician

The Finger Lakes Grape Program is a Cornell Cooperative Extension partnership between Cornell University and the Cornell Cooperative Extension Associations in Ontario, Seneca, Schuyler, Steuben, Wayne and Yates Counties.

[flgp.cce.cornell.edu](http://flgp.cce.cornell.edu)



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