



LERGP Crop Update August 28, 2025

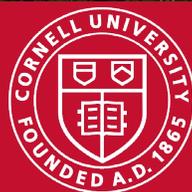
*Photo credit-
Cara Lanning*

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Lake Erie Regional Grape Program



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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.

Business Management

Andrew Holden, Business Management Educator, Penn State University, LERGP

Supplemental Disaster Relief Program (SDRP) Update

Growers who have signed up for the Stage 1 of the Supplemental Disaster Relief Program (SDRP) through the USDA have reportedly received payments already. This program covered crop loss in 2023/2024. If you had an insured loss last year or two years ago, you are able to sign up to enroll at your local Farm Service Agency to receive payment.

The stage 2 enrollment period is targeted to begin October 2025. Stage 2 is for producers with uncovered losses, quality losses, and crop insurance or NAP coverage for 2023/2024 but experienced shallow losses and did not receive an indemnity.

Stage 2 applicant will likely not be contacted by FSA, please reach out to your local office once the application opens.

All producers who receive SDRP payments will be required to purchase [federal crop insurance](#) or [NAP coverage](#) for the next two available crop years at the 60% coverage level or higher.

Producers who fail to purchase crop insurance for the next two available crop years will be required to pay back the SDRP payment, plus interest, to USDA.

The Rules of Farming: 101

by Jay Canzonier

“2025 will be easy,” they said. Crops and livestock will flourish, markets will be favorable, and managing our farm businesses will be a snap, just like the good old days. Then reality set in: policy changes, rising input costs, and Mother Nature’s curveballs remind us how much is outside our control. An old agronomy professor imparted this wisdom on us: **“Rule #2 in farming: Farmers can’t control the weather.”**

He was right—but he left something out. We may not be able to command the weather or the markets, but we can control how we lead our team through challenging times.

As we head into harvest, here are a few controllables worth focusing on:

Attitude – Your most important controllable

- Stay calm, positive, and focused. Your crew will follow your example.

Communication – Keep team members on the same page

- Hold quick daily meetings.
- Set clear expectations in simple terms.
- Encourage team members to speak up when they are unsure or see something wrong.

Safety – Everyone goes home

- Provide water for hydration and watch for signs of heat stress.
- Issue hi-visibility vests and keep first-aid kits and fire extinguishers handy.
- Maintain equipment and ensure operators are trained.

Recognition – The engine that fuels motivation

- Say thank you often and mean it. Body language speaks louder than words.
- Highlight individual and team successes.

- Use small rewards like Freezie Pop breaks to boost morale.

So, what's **Rule #1 in farming?** Too bad for us: **"Farmers can't change Rule #2"**.

But by focusing on the controllables, we can lead our teams through whatever 2025 brings.

Remember, your preparedness and attitude set the tone, and your crew will follow your lead. Good luck to your team and stay safe out there.

Keeping Teams Motivated and Positive When The Work Gets Tough – Virtual Office Hour Sept.10th

The next Virtual Office Hour will take place on Wednesday, September 10th from 12 – 1 PM.

Topic: Keeping Teams Motivated and Positive When The Work Gets Tough

When the pressure's on and the days get long, how do top farm managers keep their teams energized and engaged? Join a dynamic panel of leaders as they share real-world strategies, surprising morale boosters, and the mindset shifts that make all the difference. Whether you're managing a crew or navigating challenges solo, this session will leave you inspired, equipped—and maybe even laughing. Hosted by Richard Stup of Cornell Agricultural Workforce Development
Panelists: Mary Lewis and Kaitlyn Lutz of Cornell Agricultural Workforce Development, Joel Riehlman of Venture Farms, and Jake Minns of J. Minns Farms LLC.

Registration is required to attend our webinars.

[Register now](#) for the Virtual Office Hour on 9/10/2025. You will have the opportunity to submit questions in advance during registration.

What I'm Reading:

- USDA [Considering 'Bridge' Assistance Payments for Farmers](#) – Farm Policy News
- [Alcoholic Beverage Trends 2025](#) - [Kathy Kelley, Ph.D.](#), PSU

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Viticulture

Jennifer Russo, Viticulture Extension Specialist, LERGP

In the Vineyard

Harvest has begun on early ripening varieties for our wine grape growers. In Photo 1 below is Edelweiss harvest in Chautauqua County. The grower reported that berries were smaller than estimated. We had a very hot and dry summer up until lately. This is also evident in Dr. Terry Bates Concord Berry Curve in Figure 1 below, that Terry and his team track weekly from veraison to harvest. The black line on the graph indicates the historical Concord berry curve average, the red line was 2024 Concord berry curve, and the blue line is 2025 Concord berry progress. As the lines indicate, 2025 was on track at crop estimation to be above the average Concord berry weight until just before 40 days after bloom which corresponds to the hot dry weather. For the last approximately 20 days, 2025 weights have been almost the same as the historical average with the blue line almost covering the black line. We have had some recent rain, and the lines are barely separated.



Photo 1. Edelweiss harvest in Western New York on August 27, 2025.

Concord Veraison in the Cornell Lake Erie Research Extension Laboratory phenology block was called on Aug 20, 2025. This year we are three days later than 2024 Veraison and two earlier than the historical average. Terry's team also collects Brix accumulation weekly from veraison to harvest and the results can be found in Figure 2 below with the same-colored lines for the respective data. This figure graphs the Brix curve. The 2025 blue line is behind 2024's Brix accumulation as of Monday August 25, 2025, but slightly higher than the historical average at 10.4 Brix.

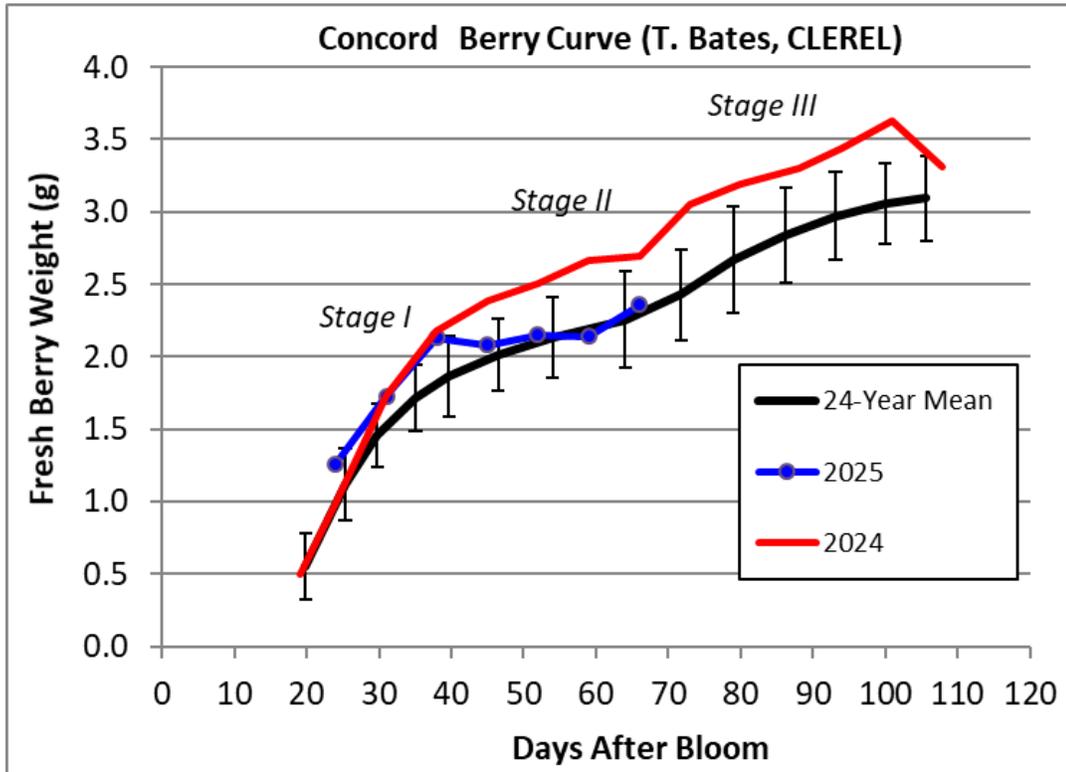


Figure 1. Dr. Terry Bates' weekly Concord Berry Curve from the Cornell Lake Erie and Extension Laboratory.

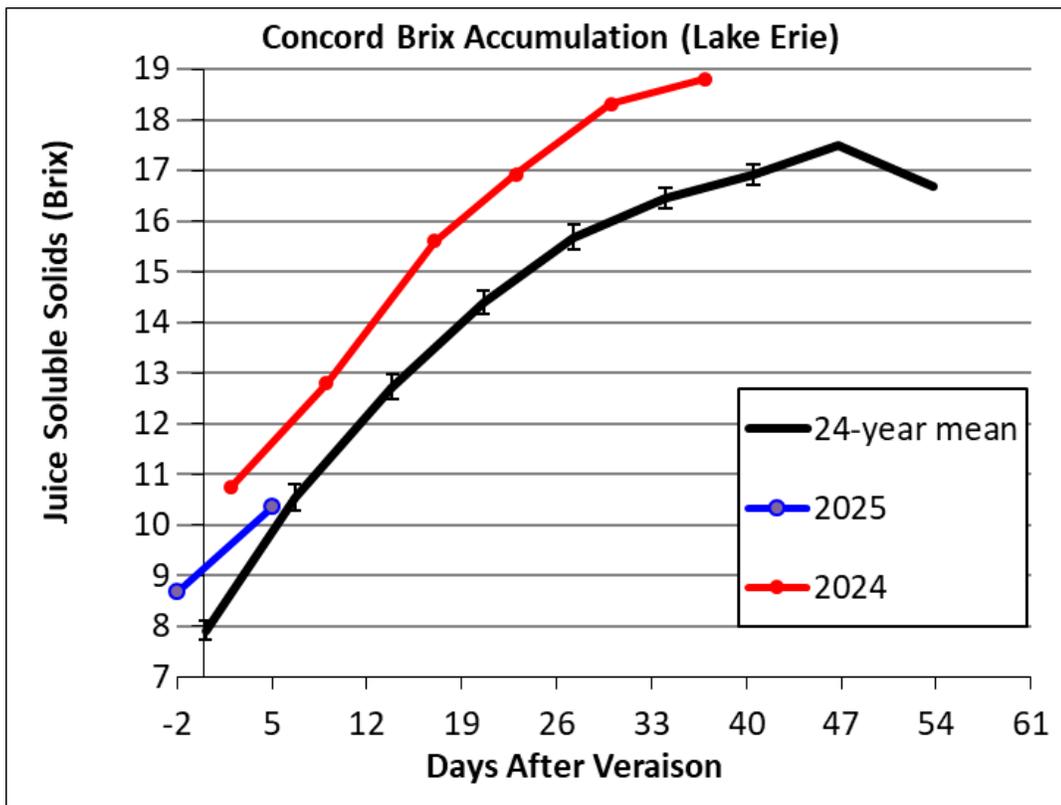


Figure 2. Dr. Terry Bates Concord Brix Accumulation graph for August 25, 2025.

Disease

Rain and cooler temperatures have fueled downy mildew leaf infections (fruit have been resistant to powdery and downy mildew and black rot, for several weeks). The remainder of any fungicide applications should focus on control of powdery and downy mildew on leaves.



2. Powdery Mildew on Concord leaves August 28, 2025, by Jennifer Phillips Russo



3. Downy Mildew on Niagara leaves on August 28, 2025, photo by Jennifer Phillips Russo.

Per Bryan Hed: Scout your vineyards to maintain good control of downy mildew. With all the rain we've been getting, it continues to be a threat for varieties with susceptible leaves. Look for it primarily on young leaves of still actively growing shoots. Under these wet conditions, it's very important to keep this disease under tight control: if this disease blows out of control (and it easily could if we continue to receive regular wetting periods in August and control measures are not taken seriously), it can defoliate a vineyard and essentially end the season for that block. If you get into a pinch and downy mildew blows up on your leaves, 2-3 consecutive copper sprays (on varieties that can tolerate copper) can go a long way to bringing things back under control. For wine varieties that don't tolerate copper, Captan may be an option for treating an epidemic of downy mildew. It won't eradicate what's already there, but it will help to control future infections and there is relatively little concern about resistance development with Captan. Continue protecting leaves from powdery mildew for as long as you feel necessary to ripen the crops you have developing. This is especially important for high-end wine grapes (*Vitis vinifera*).

Also, the larger the crop beyond your average, the more justification you'll have for continuing to keep leaves clean and firing on all cylinders. For juice varieties, average to small crops require no additional powdery mildew control. It's important to start the ripening period with a relatively clean, efficient canopy, and those first 2-4 weeks after veraison are critical to reaching the finish line. Of course, the weather is the wild card over which we have no control. As we all know, cool, wet weather will slow the ripening process.

Spotted Lanternfly

Viticulture Extension Educator, Jennifer Phillips Russo, with the Lake Erie Regional Grape Program has developed a public service announcement (PSA) to educate New York state residents of the threat the Spotted Lanternfly poses to the agricultural community and how they can fight back. [please help protect NY Agriculture by sharing this PSA widely](#)

The spotted lanternfly is an invasive species from southeast Asia. This insect is a phloem feeder meaning it feeds on the fluid found in plant cells, because of this it is a threat to several agriculture crops grown in New York State including grapes. As of January, 2023, there are known cases of established spotted lanternfly populations in and near our grape growing region, with one in Buffalo, NY. We have been monitoring SLF traps around our region all season and have not located any. At this point in the season, one would possibly still find some fourth instars and also may find adults when scouting around their vineyard blocks (Photo 3 and 4). Please refer to Megan's article and also your Spotted Lanternfly Pocket Guide for scouting and management tools. If you do not have a copy of the guide, then one can be downloaded from our website. It is available in both English and Spanish [click here to access our Spotted Lanternfly Pocket Guide here.](#)

If you see a Spotted Lanternfly:

1-Take a photo

2-Collect it

3-Squish it

4-Report it in NYS to [ReportSLF.com](#)

[Click Here to Report in Pennsylvania](#)



4. Cornell NYS IPM photo of Spotted Lanternfly adults



5. Cornell NYS IPM photo of Spotted Lanternfly fourth instar

Department of Transportation Commercial and Farm Vehicle Awareness

Lake Erie Regional Grape Program collaborated to bring a Department of Transportation program for the agricultural community on Wednesday, August 20, 2025, at the Cornell Lake Erie Research and Extension Laboratory in Portland, NY. It was orchestrated for growers to learn from New York State Trooper, Andrew Lawrence, on Commercial and Farm Vehicle Awareness prior to the harvest season. Polling the attendees, the consensus was that it was a very successful program that was full of information that can be confusing to those trying to decipher the law for regulations and violations. Trooper Lawrence discussed many things which will be relayed below, but most important he simulated a roadside inspection of an agricultural vehicle that hauls ag commodities. It was requested that this program occurs every other year. Trooper Lawrence graciously provided us with his slide deck presentation, and I am summarizing points below. [Click Here for the entire presentation.](#)



6. Photo of a semi truck and trailer provided in Trooper Lawrence's presentation

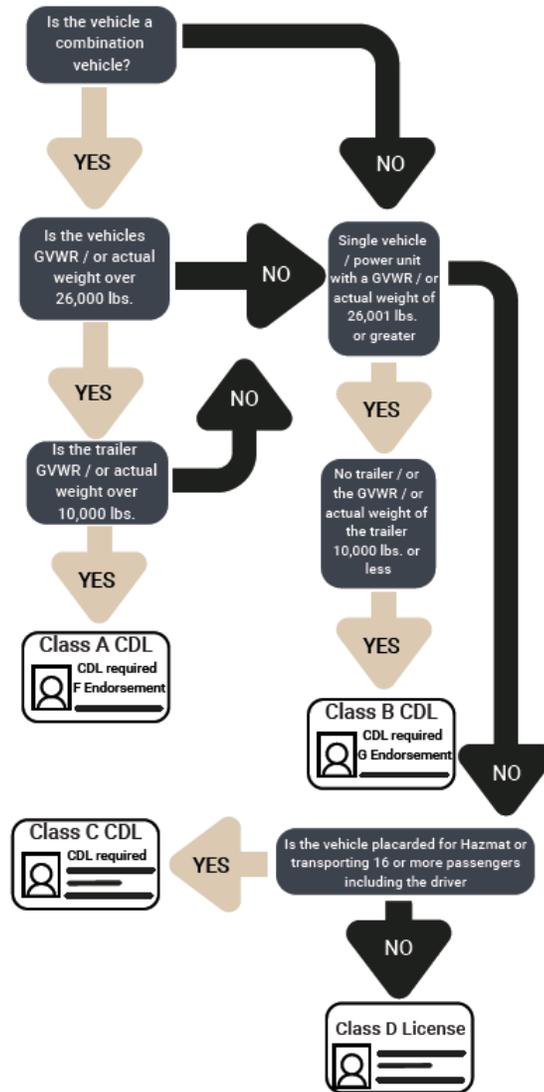
Trooper Luft from our 2023 presentation provided the following phone number for anyone to call and leave a message requesting information in regard DOT regulations: (585) 344-6247.

Trooper Lawrence had some interesting questions, and he sent the following information below: "There was a question regarding a "farm" tractor/trailer from Pennsylvania coming into New York during harvest... The guidance provided to him was in line with what I had told him during the presentation.... Pennsylvania issues a farm "sticker" to qualified vehicles considered "Covered Farm Vehicles" so these vehicles would be the equivalent of a NY plated farm vehicle (PA does not issue plates only the sticker). These PA trucks with a farm sticker are legally able to travel 50 miles from the farm (including coming into NY) using that sticker or designation. This also means that PA growers are also able to operate the truck/tractor in NY with their non-cdl class D license without any endorsements (PA does not require any like NY). These PA "farm" vehicles are also not required to possess that CFV-1 form I spoke about since it is a PA driver/vehicle. So, in short, Mr. Terrell was in compliance.

Additionally, I looked into those tubs that are now being utilized to haul the grapes. Everything is fine in terms of how they are permanently affixed to the flat bed trailers. However, I would caution that it would appear these setups may be close to exceeding legal weight requirements, so additional NYS overweight permits would be a good idea to avoid any overweight violations. If anyone is interested in getting permits, they will need to go to <https://www.oscar.ny.gov/OSCR/OSCRCarrierHome> to apply for one.

Hopefully all of this information helps. Feel free to reach out anytime with questions."

CDL Flow Chart



updated 5/2025

7. The DOT CDL Flowchart provided in Trooper Lawrence's presentation.

Véraison to Harvest is a weekly electronic newsletter put out by viticulture and enology extension personnel from Lake Erie, Long Island, the Hudson Valley and the Finger Lakes. Each issue provides accurate and up-to-date regional data while giving a statewide perspective as well. V to H begins in early September and concludes in late October.

Below are the results from the Lake Erie Grape Growing Region sampled on August 25, 2025. This table compares this year's results with last year's. We will continue to update you all on a weekly basis and you can also tune in to the [Veraison to Harvest podcast](#). The podcast can be accessed on Spotify and Amazon.

Variety	8/25/2025 Berry Weight	8/26/2024 Berry Weight	8/25/2025 Brix	8/26/2024 Brix	8/25/2025 pH	8/26/2024 pH	8/25/2025 TA	8/26/2024 TA	8/25/2025 YAN	8/26/2024 YAN
Concord	308.2	351.2	9.3	12.1	2.72	2.85	22.8	15.9	229	160
Niagara	353.2	387.2	11.9	14.4	2.85	2.98	11.3	10.7	84	134
Seyval blanc	129.3	158.6	12.2	17.0	2.83	2.94	15.1	13.2	179	162
Marquette	128.9	159.1	20.1	19.3	2.98	3.05	17.4	16.9	495	565
Riesling	124.1	145.5	7.4	11.1	2.71	2.78	25.7	20.3	170	159
Cabernet Sauv	94.8	116.5	11.0	13.7	2.65	2.80	27.1	19.7	193	150
Lemberger	151.1	227.9	14.7	15.4	2.89	3.10	14.5	13.1	204	277
Vignoles	177.7	162.2	17.0	17.8	2.82	2.83	20.2	16.8	227	202
Cabernet Franc		129.4		14.1		2.80		16.5		52
Gewurztraminer	139.3	170.7	13.7	16.6	2.98	3.18	13.3	9.3	182	198
Chardonnay	163.6	159.0	10.6	14.1	2.82	2.95	23.3	17.4	244	231
Elvira	173.5	210.7	10.9	13.7	2.73	2.87	21.9	15.2	108	94



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PA Update

Megan Luke, Penn State Extension Viticulture and Tree Fruit Educator

Reminder for Commercial Pesticide Applicators: check your credits to be sure that you are in compliance before your renewal date in September! Reach out if you need assistance finding classes to avoid the expiration of your license.

For those considering a **Private Applicator License** in PA: after this year, the exams will no longer be open-book. If you are on the fence about testing, you may want to consider taking your exam while this advantage is still available. There are testing dates available in Meadville, PA, before the end of the year.

No updates on any pesticide labels or registrations at this time.

Spotted Lanternfly Scouting Tips

So far, there have been NO new reports of adult SLF in Erie County, PA. The LERGP team has received one call regarding a fourth instar nymph near Eden, NY, that was confirmed through the proper reporting channels and appeared to be a single hitchhiker from Ohio. The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture has not found an established population of SLF so far this year, nor the DEC or Ag and Markets in NY. Erie County is not currently expected to come under quarantine.

That being said, the PDA and Penn State Extension are strongly encouraging any sightings to be reported. In the event of the discovery of an aggregation or established population in Erie County, the PDA will provide mitigation and eradication of the pest on your property to prevent it from spreading.

If you see an adult SLF, catch and crush it, take a photo, report it, and contact a member of the LERGP team immediately!

- **Pennsylvania Reporting:** 1-888-4BAD-FLY (1-888-422-3359) or <https://services.agriculture.pa.gov/SLFReport/>
- **New York Reporting:** Email a photo with your contact information and location to: spotted-lanternfly@agriculture.ny.gov or report your findings [here](#)

Additionally, if you or someone you know is traveling into a quarantine zone, be sure to check vehicles for adult SLF hitchhikers PRIOR to arrival in Erie County, PA, or Chautauqua County, NY. Encourage folks to go through a car wash on their way back to the area to reduce the likelihood of bringing in adult SLF.

I had the opportunity to travel to Kutztown, Pennsylvania, last summer for a veraison workshop at Setter Ridge Winery. While in the area, I visited several vineyards and research plots and observed spotted lanternfly infestations. I thought it would be a helpful refresher for our growers to see some of the signs of infestations that may be present in early-stage infestations, even when the

insects are not easy to find, and I have collected some photos that I think will help when scouting vineyards.

Signs of SLF in Woodlands

When scouting the edges of woodlots surrounding vineyards, look for areas of general decline, including yellowing leaves, flagging, and a scorched/blackened area near the base of trees and shrubs.



Woodline with spotted lanternfly damage; yellow, flagging leaves are circled, indicating possible SLF damage and a prime location for traps or scouting efforts.

Out-of-season yellowing and decline in black walnut trees caused by spotted lanternfly feeding.

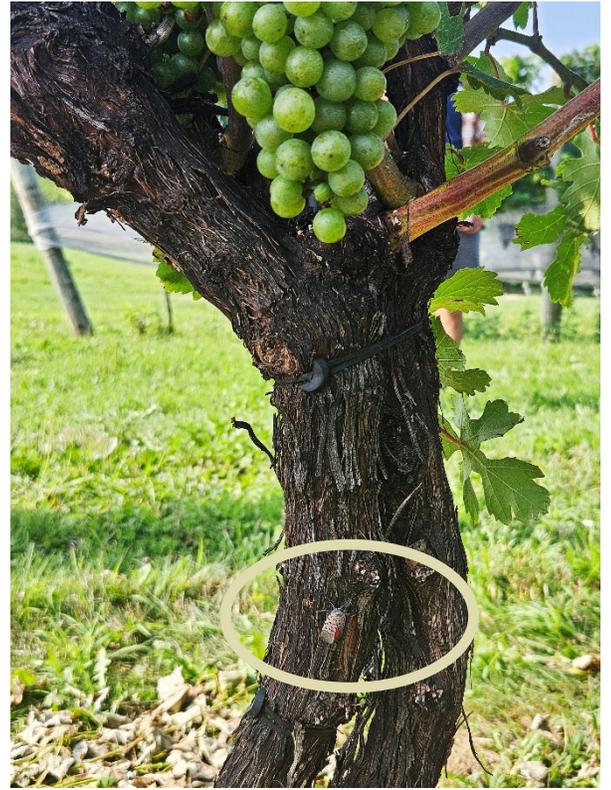


Spotted lanternfly feeding damage on ailanthus (Tree of Heaven). The black coloration that causes the tree to look like it has been scorched by fire is caused by sooty mold forming on excessive honeydew. This is a telltale sign of SLF infestations in the landscape.

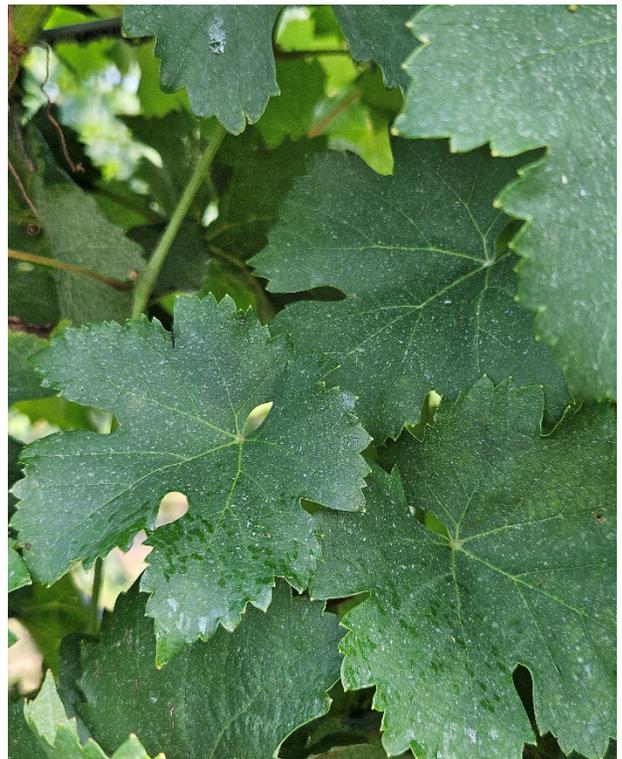


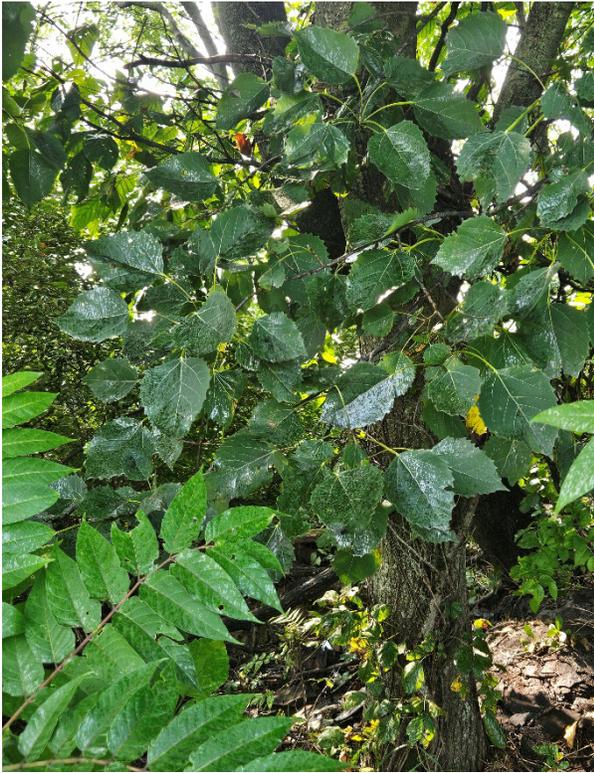
Spotted lanternfly adults feed on a tree trunk and leave deposits of honeydew that cause sooty mold to form and blacken the surrounding area.

Spotted lanternfly adult on a mature grapevine (circled). Notice the darkening of the trunk wood caused by sooty mold and multiple years of SLF feeding.



Honeydew deposits on grape leaves are caused by spotted lanternfly feeding. Look for shiny, sticky spots on the upper surface of the leaves. Oftentimes, you can search within the canopy directly above the honeydew and find the adult lanternfly responsible.





Honeydew deposits on grape leaves are caused by spotted lanternfly feeding

Honeydew deposits on various trees may be caused by spotted lanternfly feeding. A high level of shiny honeydew in the wood line can indicate spotted lanternfly infestations in the canopy.

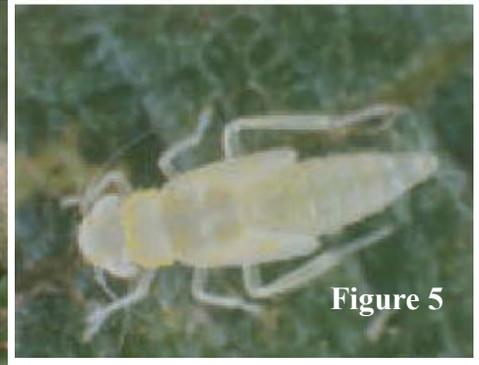
Honeydew deposits on grape leaves can lead to the growth of sooty mold.

- These photos have been provided to aid you in your SLF scouting efforts. Observing these common signs can help you locate SLF adults and potential sites for traps or treatment going forward. If you have questions about SLF, find an adult insect, or observe any of these signs of infestation, please contact the Lake Erie Regional Grape Program Team and report as necessary to state authorities.

Grape leaf hopper: Grape leaf hopper (Figure 3) has been a problem in several PA vineyards in the past two years. In many cases, the insecticide application for grape berry moth should provide management for leaf hoppers as well, but if you used Intrepid as a single active (Intrepid Edge has an additional insecticide that will control leaf hoppers), this product is **ONLY** effective against lepidopteran insects (moth and butterfly larvae). Additionally, if you used a short-acting insecticide such as Mustang Maxx, you may not see effective control, as leaf hoppers will leave the vineyards during a spray application and return after the insecticide loses efficacy. Within the requirements of the label PHI and processors' guidelines, use the product with the maximum residual activity time that you have access to.

If you see stippling (white dots on leaves caused by leafhopper feeding) throughout the vineyard block, scouting should be conducted to determine if an insecticide treatment is recommended (Figure 4). Sampling for leafhoppers is focused on the abundance or quantity of first-generation nymphs. Check four different areas in the vineyard (two exterior and two interior). At each area, look

at five lower (basal) leaves (leaves #3-#7 when counting from the base of the shoot) per shoot on five different shoots at each location and check for leaf feeding. If no damage or minimal injury is observed, proceed to the next sampling site. If moderate to heavy leaf stippling is observed, then begin counting nymphs on the undersides of leaves. If a threshold of five nymphs/leaf is reached, then an insecticide application is recommended.



Grape leaf hopper adults, leaf damage, and nymphs. Photos courtesy of Penn State Extension, Andy Muza

As always, be aware of the quality of your tank water when preparing your tank mix. Insecticides are particularly susceptible to water pH, and a pH over 6 can render many insecticides ineffective or greatly reduce their activity and efficacious period once applied. Always check pH and make adjustments using conditioners and buffers PRIOR to adding your active ingredients. The pH of your water should be stabilized FIRST, while it is safe to test the tank. In periods of drought or low rainfall, surface water and well water can see significant changes in pH from the early season. Even municipal water can see changes throughout the year, so always test prior to mixing, ESPECIALLY if you have concerns about material breakthroughs.

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Updates and Information

Kimberly Knappenberger, Viticulture & IPM Extension Support Specialist, LERGP

NEWA Location	Wild grape bloom date*	DD total on 8/28/25	Forecasted DD for 9/2/25
Burt (NYS Mesonet)	6/9/25	1943	2024
Newfane (Chateau Niagara)	6/5/25	2114	2194
Ransomville	6/3/25	2244	2321
Lockport	6/3/25	2216	2288
Brant	5/29/25	2247	2311
Versailles	5/30/25	2295	2360
Hanover	6/4/25	2106	2174
Silver Creek (Route 5)	6/4/25	2132	2206
Silver Creek (Double A)	5/30/25	2225	2294
Dunkirk (Route 5)	6/4/25	2109	2182
Sheridan	5/29/25	2237	2308
Sheridan (Liberty)	5/31/25	2226	2297
Forestville	6/3/25	2123	2194
East Fredonia	6/4/25	2081	2152
Fredonia (NYS Mesonet)	6/4/25	2059	2133
Brocton Escarpment	6/3/25	2097	2167
Portland/Portland LERGP West	6/3/2025	2139/2190	2214/2268
East Westfield	6/4/25	2072	2147
Westfield	6/3/25	2148	2222
Westfield (South)	6/3/25	2136	2210
East Ripley	6/2/25	2215	2295
Ripley	6/3/25	2180	2255
Ripley Escarpment	6/3/25	2121	2196
Ripley State Line	6/3/25	2167	2244
North East State Line	6/4/25	2079	2148
North East Escarpment	6/3/25	2125	2194
North East Sidehill	6/3/25	2113	2181
North East Lab	6/4/25	2126	2206
Harborcreek	6/2/25	2213	2293
Harborcreek Escarpment	6/4/25	2028	2101
Lake City	6/2/25	2180	2257
Lake City (Mason Farms)	6/3/25	2180	2257

*Table 1. Phenology-based Degree Day model results for Grape Berry Moth by NEWA station location in the Lake Erie Region.
Estimated date provided by NEWA website

Pest Status	Pest Management
Reduced egg-laying after this time, most pupae enter diapause (overwintering stage) after 1700 DD.	With the exception of extremely warm years no further action is required.

Status and Management as provided on newa.cornell.edu

As you can see from the chart, we have slowed a bit on accumulating GBM GDD due to the cooler temperatures. Daily accumulations ranged between 11 and 27 depending on the location of the weather station with average GBM DDs in the high teens to low twenties. Some of the stations may hit the 2430 milestone of the 4th generation before September 10-11th as predicted last week, but most will still probably be pretty close to that estimation. As you all know, it is best to keep scouting - especially in those problem areas and making sure your fruit is in good shape prior to harvest. Currently the weather stations seem to be functioning as expected. If you do notice anything that seems off with your favorite one, please send an email to ksk76@cornell.edu so I can check it out!

Many thanks!



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Links of Interest:



Cornell Cooperative Extension:

<https://cals.cornell.edu/cornell-cooperative-extension>

Efficient Vineyard:

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

LERGP:

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

<https://lergp.com/>

NYSIPM:

<https://cals.cornell.edu/new-york-state-integrated-pest-management>

Veraison to Harvest:

<https://cals.cornell.edu/viticulture-enology/research-extension/veraison-harvest>

Spotted Lanternfly Pocket Guide:

<https://lergp.com/spotted-lanternfly>

