



*LERGP Crop Update
September 11, 2025*

*Photo credit-
Kim Knappenberger*



Cornell Cooperative Extension
Lake Erie Regional Grape Program



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In this copy:

Grapeseed Oil- Andrew Holden- [page 3](#)

Concord Berry Curve, Wild Life Pressure in the Grapes, Sampling Protocol- Jennifer Phillips Russo- [page 7](#)

PA Update- Megan Luke- [page 15](#)

GDD Chart, NEWA- Kim Knappenberger- [page 19](#)



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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

Grapeseed Oil

Recently, in a conversation with another LERGP team member, the topic of grape seed oil was brought up. I realized that my knowledge of this product was limited and decided to do some research on it. Considering that our grape industry produces large quantities of pomace each year that has the potential to be turned into oil, I thought it would be appropriate to share my findings in this week's crop update. Please find below some of my findings.

What is grape seed oil? Grape seed oil is primarily a byproduct from other grape products, like juice, jelly, and wine. The oil is known for its relatively high smoke point (421 F), low saturated fat, and light taste. In addition to being used as an edible oil, grape seed oil is used in cosmetics and haircare products.

How is grape seed oil made? After the grapes are used for their primary purpose, the remaining residual mass is called pomace. Next, the seeds are separated (usually mechanically) from the skins and other materials. The seeds are then dried, and the oil is then extracted using a variety of methods.

How do you extract the oil from the grape seeds? There are several methods of extracting oil from grape seeds.

- **Cold pressing** is valued higher for culinary purposes as it is purer and generally higher quality. The tradeoff is that cold pressing is more expensive as it takes a lot of energy to physically squeeze the oil out of the seeds. The cold pressed oil is priced at a premium.
- **Solvent extraction** is the most cost-efficient and yields the most oil. The quality suffers from this method as the solvent hexane is used and can be found in trace amounts in the finished product. The heat and chemicals can both degrade the quality.
- **Supercritical Fluid Extraction** uses CO₂ under high pressure and temperature for extraction. This method is not as common and high in cost and complexity.
- **Expeller Pressing** is similar to cold pressing but with heat generated in the process altering the flavor and quality of the oil.

How much oil is produced from extraction? 0.55 to 1.1 Tons of seeds equal about 26.4 gallons of oil depending on the method of extraction.

What is the potential for grape seed oil production in US? In 2023, according to the National Agricultural Statistics Service, the United States processed over 4 million tons of grapes for juice and wine. Approximately 75 % of the fresh fruit's weight is juice and the remaining 25 % is pomace. While I couldn't find the exact percentage of the pomace is seed in concord, I did find one source that stated that seeds are approximately 25%. With those assumptions, we can calculate that 250,000 tons of seeds could be pressed into 6 to 12 million gallons of oil.

Takeaways:

So, if there is value in the grape seed oil, why is most of it being given away or paid to be disposed

of?

At Wegmans, a pint of grape seed oil is \$5.00, which means up to \$96 million dollars in potential value. Of course this is before factoring the cost of production, like pressing, transporting, and bottling. Additionally, the market for grape seed oil is likely already met and by turning large amounts of pomace in the US into oil it would likely cause prices to plummet.

On a smaller scale, one ton of grapes has the ability to produce roughly 13 to 26 gallons or \$104 to \$208 worth of oil. Again, the cost associated with hauling, drying, pressing, refining, bottling, and marketing the oil would take a considerable amount out of that number. But there could still be a value to turning that pomace into oil.

Likely for the economics to make sense, a manufacturer would need to produce oil at a large scale to cover the cost of equipment and overhead. Seeing that there is currently not a market for the pomace in this area, there is potential opportunity for a business to exist. I would speculate that the reason that there isn't one locally is that the current market is difficult to break into, and margins are low.

If anyone has any additional knowledge of grape seed oil locally or in general, I would be happy to hear it. Please give me a call or email anytime.

Sources:

- <https://greengold-int.com/blog/grape-seed-oil-production-and-quality-explained/>
- [https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1756464625001823#:~:text=In%202023%2C%20the%20United%20States,et%20al.%2C%202024\).](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1756464625001823#:~:text=In%202023%2C%20the%20United%20States,et%20al.%2C%202024).)

Additional studies:

- [Production of biodiesel from winery waste: Extraction, refining and transesterification of grape seed oil](#) – SD
- [The fatty acid and tocopherol constituents of the seed oil extracted from 21 grape varieties \(Vitis spp.\)](#) – SD
- [Waste By-Product of Grape Seed Oil Production: Chemical Characterization for Use as a Food and Feed Supplement](#) - NIH

What I'm Reading/Webinars:

- [Immigration Essentials for Farm Employers](#) - The Ag Workforce Journal
 - Our friends at MSU Extension are offering a webinar series that may be of interest to many New York producers. See details and registration below. Title: Immigration Essentials for Farm Employers Session Dates/Times: Session 1 — ICE Insight: September 11 at 10am Session 2 — I-9 Compliance: September 18 at 10am Session 3 — Immigration Policy: September 25 at 10am Flyer:
- [A Recent Change to FSA Program Payments is Good for Farmers](#) – OSU
- [Factors Impacting Farm Growth](#) – Farm Doc

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STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND MARKETS**

NOTICE TO PRODUCERS TO PRESENT CLAIMS AGAINST:

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In accordance with the provisions of Article 20 of the Agriculture and Markets Law, notice is hereby given to New York producers who have claims arising from the sale of farm products grown by them to said Dealer during the license year May 1, 2024 to April 30, 2025. **Claims must be emailed to FPDL@agriculture.ny.gov or postmarked no later than October 9, 2025**, to the Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets, c/o Division of Agricultural Development, 10B Airline Dr., Albany, New York 12235.

Claims must be verified. Claim forms may be obtained by writing to the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, Division of Agricultural Development, 10B Airline Dr., Albany, New York 12235 by email at FPDL@agriculture.ny.gov or by telephoning the Division at 518-457-7076 or by downloading a copy from the Department's website at <https://agriculture.ny.gov/licenses/farm-products-dealer-licensing>

Richard Ball, Commissioner
of Agriculture and Markets
of the State of New York

BY: 

Tim Pezzolesi, Director
Division of Agricultural Development

Albany, New York
September 4, 2025

Viticulture

Jennifer Russo, Viticulture Extension Specialist, LERGP

In the Vineyard

The weather in the Lake Erie Grape Growing Region was beautiful and the screenshot of Cornell's NEWA site for Portland, NY, on September 11, 2025 (Photo 1), shows that the warm weather will continue with highs for the next five days predicted to be in the 70's Fahrenheit, and in the 50's each day. There is a chance of rain on Saturday and Sunday.

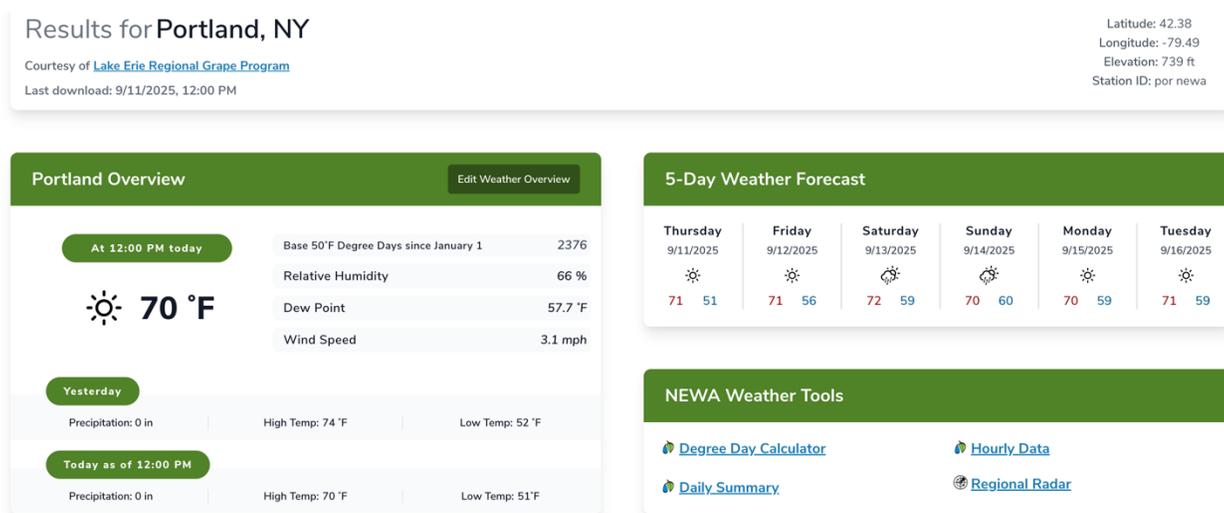


Photo 1. Screenshot of Cornell's NEWA dashboard for Portland, NY.

I wrote about the dry weather in our region the past couple of weeks and the affect that has had on berry size. I am getting reports from wineries that vineyards with the drought-like conditions are experiencing more wildlife damage to fruit, small berries with high sugars, and that it is taking growers longer harvest times to fill trailers. I put together a month-by-month comparison of NEWA data for the 2024 and 2025 growing season for Portland, NY (Table 1.). You can also work with the weather data on the station nearest you to do similar comparisons. June 2025 was warmer than 2024 by 1.5°F and experienced 0.6 more inches of rain. July was also warmer in 2025, but only by 1.3°F and received 0.8 inches less rain than 2024. August temps were comparable, however, August of 2024 which during Stage III of berry development when the cells are expanding, had 4.8 inches of rain that was over 3.7 more inches of rain than 2025 with 1.1 inches. During the first 10 days of September for both years, the 2024 was warmer than 2025, and received 0.1 inches of rain where 2025 is at zero rain for September to date.

Dr. Terry Bates and the research team continue their weekly efforts to bring the Concord Fresh Berry Curve and Brix Accumulation graphs to our growers and industry stakeholders. Figure 1 is the Concord Berry Curve as of September 8, 2025. The blue line represents this year's growth, the red was 2024, and the black line is the historical average. The same color schemes apply to Figure 2, which is the Brix Accumulation. Note that the Berry curve for this year, which previously flattened out due to lack of precipitation, jumped up higher than the historical average with the rain last week. However, if you look at Figure 2 below, you will notice that the Brix is now lower than the historical average. The weather looks promising for continued ripening, but there is also the chance of rain.

We will continue to monitor this for you.

Table 1. Comparison of Cornell's NEWA data from 2024 and 2025 growing seasons in Portland, NY.

date	Avg Air Temp (*F)	Total Precipitation	Leaf Wethess (hrs)	Relative Humidity (hrs >= 90)	Solar Radiation (langleys)	Avg Wind Speed (mph)
Jun-24	69.5	2.1	2.2	0.0	474.6	4.8
Jun-25	71.0	2.8	24.0	5.7	487.5	5.1
	-1.5	-0.6	-21.8	-5.7	-12.9	-0.4
Jul-24	72.3	2.9	2.2	0.7	482.1	3.3
Jul-25	73.6	2.0	23.9	5.6	514.0	4.1
	-1.3	0.8	-21.8	-5.0	-31.9	-0.7
Aug-24	68.9	4.8	2.4	6.0	411.5	4.6
Aug-25	68.7	1.1	22.7	5.1	466.1	4.4
	0.3	3.7	-20.3	0.9	-54.6	0.3
Sep-24	63.2	0.1	2.6	2.7	401.8	6.2
Sep-25	62.0	0.0	22.3	3.8	416.7	4.4
	1.2	0.1	-19.8	-1.1	-14.9	1.8

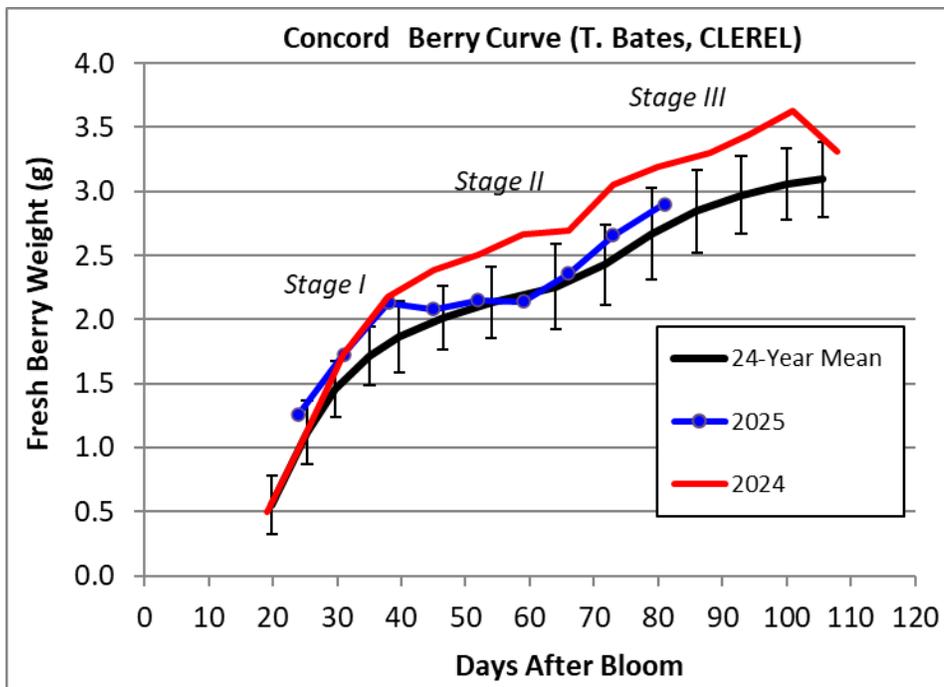


Figure 1. Dr. Terry Bates Concord Berry Curve September 8, 2025.

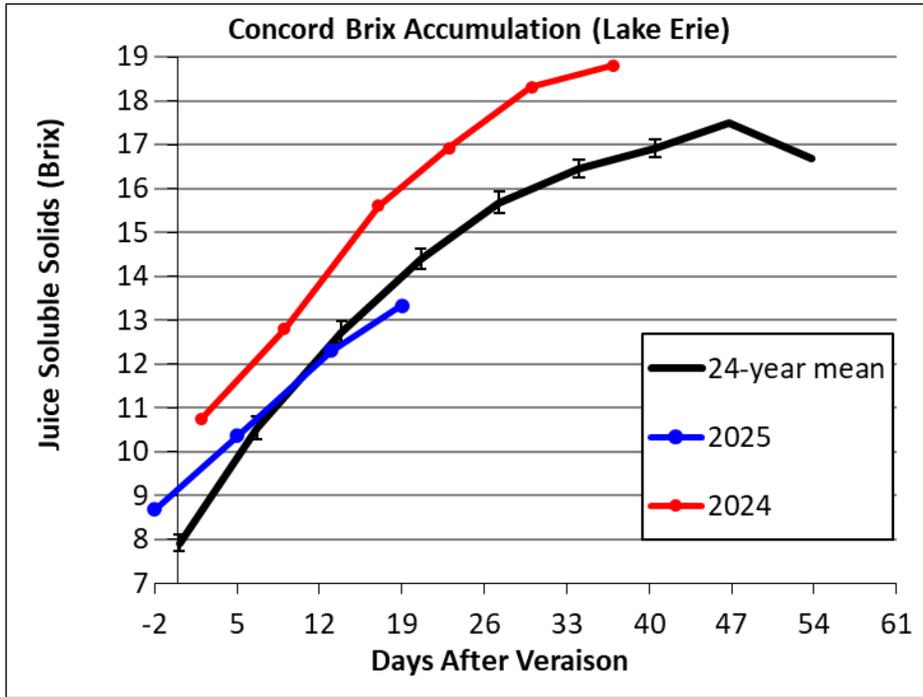
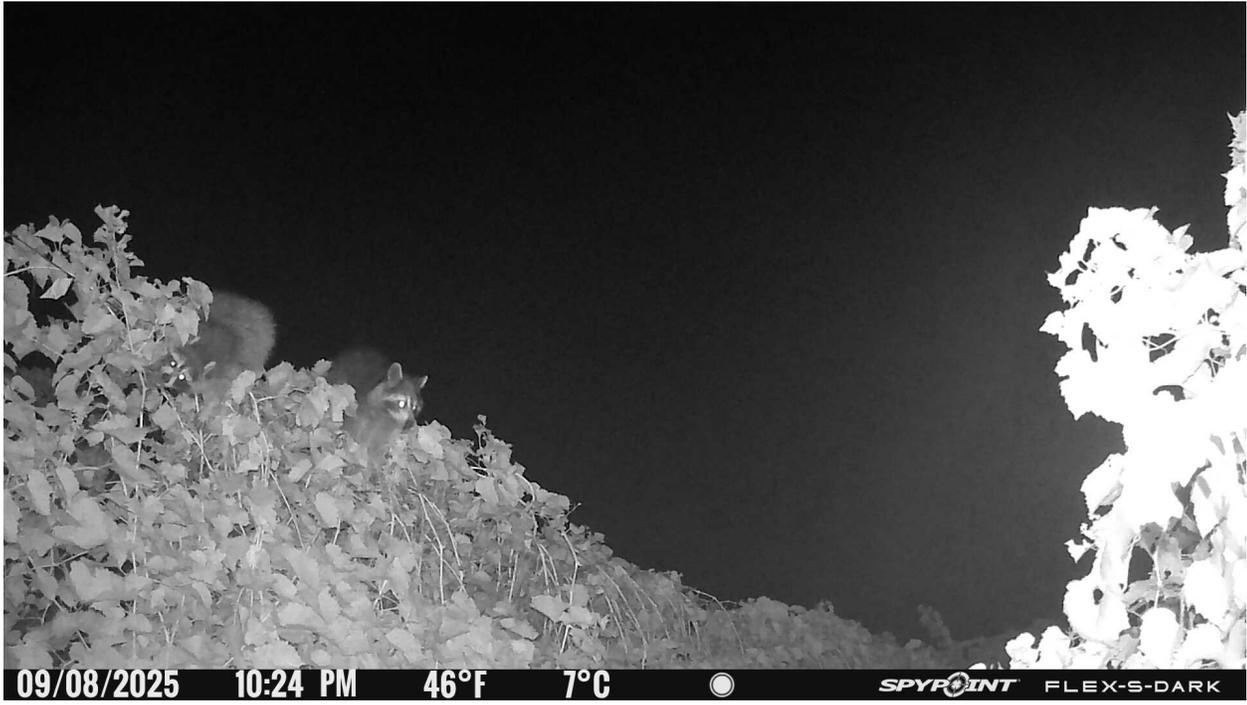


Figure 2. Dr. Terry Bates Concord Brix Accumulation for September 8, 2025.

Previously, I had reported that we were not experiencing as much wildlife pressure as our growers in the eastern half of New York, but that has since changed as wildlife water sources may be depleting do to the lack of rain and they begin to search for alternate sources, such as grapes. Our colleagues at Penn State University shared with us photos of one of their research vineyards where they placed a trail camera to monitor wildlife suspects and were surprised at what was visiting. The photo credits below are to Don Smith, Penn State University. Photo 1 has a parade of racoons, Photo 2 has the racoons caught in the act, Photo 3 has an opossum, and Photo 4 was the shocker of what I am being told is a bobcat, but I like to call it a Nittany Lion!







When I first started with Cornell’s Lake Erie Regional Grape Program and began work with Veraison to Harvest I was sent the following berry sampling protocol. The reason I am sharing this is to help guide your sampling efforts to ensure that you are capturing variation within your vineyard blocks when testing for fruit quality. Please note that this was several years ago, and there have been more sampling protocols from Cornell that utilize sensor data for precision. Capturing variation is very important and below is Figure 3 from Dr. Terry Bates sensor validation research block. Terry shared this with me when we were discussing how sometimes your weekly sampling efforts may have different results when the block is harvested. Terry mentioned that ‘the discussion on sampling is interesting. There is variation between berries on a cluster, between clusters on a vine, and between vines in a vineyard. Here are some 2022 BRIX data from our intensive hand samples in railroad...13 to 20 BRIX on the same day.’



Figure 3. Dr. Terry Bates Railroad Intensive Brix Sampling Variation Map 2022

Sampling Procedure

Protocol:

1. 100-berry sample
(random sample, stratify among 'top to mid cluster' and 'cluster tip' in about 3:1 ratio)

In commercial vineyards - best way to do it randomly (yet cover the vineyard) is to sample down one row, stopping at pre-determined panel intervals (eg. every 3 panels) and sticking your arm into the canopy (without looking) until it lands on a cluster. Collect equal amts of berries from each side of the row, and it shouldn't be necessary to sample more than one or two clusters per vine. Try to vary where in cluster you pick grape - (e.g. top to mid cluster - 3 berries for every 1 from near shoot tip).

2. Put berries into a gallon plastic Stomacher bag and label carefully using consistent numbers (eg. from last year's samples in same blocks).

Labels should indicate the Region, or your block, variety, sample number, and (if there is a thinning/crop level variable in same block) an indicator about this. Keep cool in ice-filled cooler.





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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.

As always, and especially due to the current drought conditions present, be aware of the quality of your tank water when preparing your tank mix. Lowered water levels in wells and surface water can concentrate minerals and raise pH. 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.

Spotted Lanternfly Scouting Tips

So far, there have been NO new reports of adult SLF in Erie County, PA. 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.

Signs of SLF in Woodlands

- Last week's Crop Update contained photos 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 late-season problem in several PA vineyards in the past two years. Insecticide applications for control of fruit flies (sour rot complex) should provide management for leaf hoppers as well. If you use 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. Additionally, many fruit fly species are resistant to many common insecticides, so follow current guidance for managing these pests to reduce damage to maturing clusters in the warm weather expected next week. Within the requirements of the label PHI and processors' guidelines, use the product with the maximum residual activity time that you have access to.



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5

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

Fruit flies: Sour rot infections are a function of invasion of bacteria, yeast, and fruit flies on damaged grape berries, which encourages disease progression throughout the entire cluster as ripening occurs. Sour rot symptoms have been observed when berries are around 15 Brix and daily temperatures are at least 68°, and tight-clustered cultivars (e.g., 'Pinot gris', 'Riesling', 'Sauvignon blanc', 'Vignoles') are at greatest risk compared to those that have looser clusters. A chemical program using antimicrobials and insecticides directed at controlling yeast, AAB, and fruit flies can minimize the risk of sour rot. Weekly applications of insecticides and antimicrobial sprays, commencing at 15 Brix, may be necessary for vineyards with extensive disease or insect damage to prevent added pressure from sour rot. Given the warm temperatures in the coming week, consider treatment if there is damage present in your vineyard.



Drosophila species on grape clusters (left) and *Botrytis* bunch rot on sour rot-infected grape clusters (right). Note the fungal growth, which is not part of the sour rot complex but exacerbates the damage. Left photo courtesy of Rachael White, University of Georgia; right photo courtesy of Cain Hickey, Penn State Extension.

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Updates and Information

Kimberly Knappenberger, Viticulture & IPM Extension Support Specialist, LERGP

NEWA Location	Wild grape bloom date*	DD total on 9/11	Forecasted DD for 9/16
Burt (NYS Mesonet)	6/9/25	2120	2203
Newfane (Chateau Niagara)	6/5/25	2303	2383
Ransomville	6/3/25	2451	2536
Lockport	6/3/25	2425	2505
Brant	5/29/25	2406	2483
Versailles	5/30/25	2283	2361
Hanover	6/4/25	2298	2380
Silver Creek (Route 5)	6/4/25	2346	2431
Silver Creek (Double A)	5/30/25	2427	2510
Dunkirk (Route 5)	6/4/25	2320	2404
Sheridan	5/29/25	2446	2530
Sheridan (Liberty)	5/31/25	2437	2522
Forestville	6/3/25	2320	2405
East Fredonia	6/4/25	2272	2357
Fredonia (NYS Mesonet)	6/4/25	2253	2338
Brocton Escarpment	6/3/25	2292	2374
Portland/Portland LERGP West	6/3/2025	2348/2405	2434/2493
East Westfield	6/4/25	2266	2352
Westfield	6/3/25	2357	2443
Westfield (South)	6/3/25	2337	2423
East Ripley	6/2/25	2435	2526
Ripley	6/3/25	2393	2481
Ripley Escarpment	6/3/25	2316	2404
Ripley State Line	6/3/25	2373	2461
North East State Line	6/4/25	2279	2361
North East Escarpment	6/3/25	2323	2404
North East Sidehill	6/3/25	2309	2390
North East Lab	6/4/25	2340	2432
Harborcreek	6/2/25	2431	2521
Harborcreek Escarpment	6/4/25	2218	2304
Lake City	6/2/25	2388	2476
Lake City (Mason Farms)	6/3/25	2388	2476

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.

NEWA

As you can see from the table we are either approaching or at the 2440 GBM GDD benchmark for a fourth generation. As you know, Grape Berry Moth don't really follow the rules and it seems that 1700 DD diapause does not apply to all... or maybe even most. As we go further into the season each year we know that the generations kind of blend together and its impossible to tell if we are dealing with third or fourth generation insects at this point. It doesn't matter. What I do know is that we definitely have seen evidence of them in the vineyards this past week. There is a lot of webbing between berries and even some larvae. This is a gentle reminder to not give up yet! Be sure to continue to scout and if you need to spray be sure to check the label for the PHI – we are getting pretty close to harvest as you might have noticed!



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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>

