Lake Erie Regional Grape Program

LERGP Crop Update
November 6, 2025

Photo credit-
Kim Knappenberger

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Lake Erie Regional Grape Program

PennState Extension

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In this copy:

Jennifer Phillips Russo - LERGP Viticulture Specialist:
jjr268@cornell.edu
Cell: (716) 640-5350

Megan Luke –LERGP Penn State Extension Viticulture and Tree Fruit Educator
MFL5873@psu.edu
Cell:(716) 397-9674 Office:(814) 825-0900

Andrew Holden-LERGP Penn State Extension Business Management Educator
azh6192@psu.edu
716-792-2800 ext 202
Cell: 716-640-2656

Kim Knappenberger – Extension Support Specialist
ksk76@cornell.edu
716-792-2800 ext 209

Kate Robinson – Administrative Assistant
kjr45@cornell.edu
716-792-2800 ext 201

Cara Lanning- LERGP Project Field Technician
cl2748@cornell.edu

Click here to watch Podcasts

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

Programs on the horizon

I have a few programs for growers to keep an eye on in the near future as we wait for them to be released. The first is the Farm Service Agency's Supplemental Disaster Relief Program (SDRP). If you haven't already heard of or participated in this program, it was designed to, "provide disaster relief payments to producers who suffered revenue, quality or production losses to crops, trees, bushes, or vines due to qualifying disaster events in calendar years 2023 and 2024". This applies to the 2024 freeze event. This program was announced a few months ago and the first of two stages has already been released. The stage 1 made payments to those with indemnified losses and if you had said losses, you likely already had FSA contact you. Please contact FSA if you believe you had indemnified losses in 23/24 and did not apply. Stage 2 is for producers who experienced uncovered losses, quality losses, or shallow losses and did not receive an indemnity. According to the FSA website the enrollment period for stage 2 was targeted to begin October 2025. The government currently being shutdown has likely delayed this but keep an eye on this program for when it is released. I will announce it as soon as possible as well.

The second program to watch for is The New York Farm Viability Institute's Beginning Farmer Competitive Grant Program: Round 2. The institute shared that round one, "was extraordinarily competitive with 297 submissions requesting more than $22 million dollars. Following an extensive review process, 19 projects were selected for funding and $850,000 was awarded to beginning farmers across NY State". Round 2 will be announced at any time, so keep checking back if you are interested.

Find more information here: https://nyfvi.org/bfcg-program-2/
SIGN UP FOR ROUND 2 RELEASE NOTIFICATIONS

Finally, we are still waiting to hear back on the Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Equipment-Only Grant. We had a good number of growers apply and were hoping to hear back in October on the results of the grant. Most applicants were applying for bulk harvest equipment. I will report once the recipients are announced.

What I'm Reading/Webinars:

- **Large Increase in Machinery Costs Suggests Need to Reconsider Machinery Purchase Decisions** – Farm Doc
- **Webinar: AgWorks: Farm Taxes—Basic Filing Requirements**
  - Tuesday, December 2, 2025, 12:00 PM EST
- **Webinar: Labor Roadshow IX: Addressing Key Workforce Challenges in Agriculture**
  - December 1, 12:00–2:00 PM
  - December 22, 12:00–2:00 PM
- **In-Person Events:**
  - December 9 – Elks Lodge, Greenwich, NY
  - December 10 – Hilton Garden Inn, Watertown, NY
  - December 17 – Cornell AgriTech, Geneva, NY
  - December 18 – Genesee Community College, Batavia, NY

- Cost: $75 per participant
    - Payment accepted via cash, check, or online in advance.
- Registration Link: https://forms.gle/HheZLetKwyi8J3t6A
    - Early registration is strongly encouraged, as space may be limited.

My contact information:
Andrew Holden, Business Management Educator
Mobile (call or text): (716) 640-2656
Office: (716) 792-2800
Email: AZH6192@psu.edu

Viticulture

Jennifer Russo, Viticulture Extension Specialist, LERGP

NEW YORK STATE | Department of Agriculture and Markets

agriculture.ny.gov

Lake Erie Regional Grape Program

I wanted to share a recent Press Release from the USDA and LERGP.

STATE AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT AND LAKE ERIE REGIONAL GRAPE PROGRAM CONDUCT COORDINATED GRID SEARCHES FOR SPOTTED LANTERNFLY IN RIPLEY, NEW YORK

Partnership Underscores Proactive, Science-Based Protection Efforts of Lake Erie Grape Industry

The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (AGM) and the Lake Erie Regional Grape Program (LERGP) announced today a comprehensive, coordinated effort to conduct grid searches for the invasive Spotted Lanternfly (SLF) in and around Ripley, New York. This collaborative initiative reflects a shared commitment to safeguard the region's grape industry and reassure growers that state partners and the land-grant system are working together to address the potential impacts of SLF on New York's agricultural crops.

LERGP Team Leader, Jennier Phillips Russo, said, "Protecting our growers is at the heart of our land-grant mission. By combining local expertise with State resources, these structured grid surveys allow us to detect any presence of Spotted Lanternfly quickly and respond decisively. We want growers and community partners to know we are on it—methodically, transparently, and with urgency."

State Agriculture Commissioner Richard A. Ball said, "Thanks to the collaboration with our partners at the Lake Erie Regional Grape Program, we are able to ensure a thorough and rapid response to reports of SLF in the area. While we continue our work to manage SLF, we are focused on doing all we can to protect the grape and wine economy in this region."

SLF (Lycorma delicatula) is an invasive planthopper that feeds on grapevines and other hosts, excreting honeydew that promotes sooty mold and can lead to reduced vigor, fruit quality issues, and significant economic losses. Early detection and rapid response are critical to minimizing spread and protecting vineyards.

The grid searches, conducted by trained teams from AGM's Division of Plant Industry and LERGP, used systematic, block-by-block visual scouting to look for all SLF life stages, including egg masses and adults. Surveys, which took place over the course of a few weeks, prioritized high-risk corridors

and habitats, including vineyard edges, transportation routes, rail lines, warehouse areas, and sites with Tree-of-Heaven (Ailanthus altissima), a preferred host. Data was mapped and shared in real time to inform follow-up actions and, if necessary, containment and eradication efforts.

This effort builds on the strengths of the land-grant system—research-based guidance, local relationships, and responsive extension supported with the enforcement, regulatory, and diagnostic capabilities of the State. Together, the partners will:

focus on early detection, rapid reporting, and rapid follow-up where suspect findings occur,
share timely updates and best practices with growers and the community, and
provide guidance on sanitation and movement of materials to reduce accidental transport.

How growers and residents can help:
Know what to look for, including all SLF life stages: gray, putty-like egg masses (wintertime); black or red-spotted nymphs (spring and early summer); and distinctive adults with spotted wings (late summer to winter).
Know what to do: More information about reporting and egg scraping is below.
Inspect and clean: Check vehicles, equipment, pallets, trailers, and outdoor items before moving them.
Manage hosts: Identify and manage Tree-of-Heaven on and near vineyard properties, where appropriate.
Report suspect sightings in the grape growing regions promptly through AGM's SLF reporting channels and contact your local extension office for guidance. Click here to report: ReportSLF.com.

"Collaboration like this makes a real difference," Jennifer Phillips Russo added. "Our growers can be confident that monitoring is thorough, the science is sound, and the response is coordinated. We will continue to communicate what we find and what it means for vineyard management."

For updates on SLF monitoring and management recommendations, growers can contact the Lake Erie Regional Grape Program or visit the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets' online resources.

Identifying SLF and SLF Egg Masses
Adult SLF are easy to identify and are approximately one inch long and half an inch wide at rest, with eye-catching wings. Adults are active from July to December and begin laying eggs in September.

Eggs are laid in one-inch-long segmented rows of up to about 50 eggs covered in a creamy-white, putty-like substance that becomes pinkish-gray as it dries. After a few weeks the covering turns a darker tan and starts to crack, resembling a splotch of mud. Depending on the substrate, egg masses can be difficult to see and may be laid in protected locations that are difficult to inspect thoroughly.

Photos and additional information about identification and SLF lifecycle is available on New York State Integrated Pest Management's (IPM) website.

Scraping Egg Masses
SLF can lay their eggs on any number of surfaces, such as vehicles, stone, rusty metal, outdoor furniture, and firewood. Residents are asked to scrape egg masses off the surface using scraper

cards, credit cards, or anything else that is hard, tapered, and flat. Kill the eggs by putting them into a re-sealable bag that contains rubbing alcohol or hand sanitizer and dispose of them in the solution to be assured they will not hatch. Each egg mass contains up to 50 eggs, so removing as many as possible can reduce the numbers that will hatch in the spring.

New York State's Response

Since the first detection of SLF in New York on Staten Island in 2020, AGM, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), and New York State Integrated Pest Management (IPM) have been working closely with partners statewide and nationally, such as the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Department of Transportation, Thruway Authority, the United States Department of Agriculture, and the Cornell Cooperative Extension network to slow the spread of this invasive insect. The State's work focuses on tracking the presence of SLF to be sure that growers and other impacted parties are prepared and have access to current management information.

Learn more on the Department's website at agriculture.ny.gov/spottedlanternfly. Additional information about managing SLF can be found on Cornell CALS IPM's website.

SLF Impacts to New York Agriculture

The estimated total economic impact of invasive insects in the United States exceeds $70 billion per year, and if not contained, SLF could have an impact to New York State of at least $300 million annually, mainly to the grape and wine industry, which ranks third in the country in production. SLF also has the potential to significantly hinder quality of life and recreational activities due to the honeydew and the swarms of insects it attracts.

About the Lake Erie Regional Grape Program

The Lake Erie Regional Grape Program provides research-based extension support to the grape industry in the Lake Erie region, helping growers improve vineyard productivity, sustainability, and profitability through timely education, diagnostics, and on-farm collaboration. The Lake Erie Regional Grape Program is one of many programs offered by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chautauqua County (CCE-Chautauqua). CCE-Chautauqua is a subordinate governmental agency with an educational mission that operates under a form of organization and administration approved by Cornell University as agent for the State of New York. It is tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The association is part of the national cooperative extension system, an educational partnership between County, State, and Federal governments. As New York's land grant university Cornell administers the system in this state. Each Cornell Cooperative Extension association is an independent employer that is governed by an elected Board of Directors with general oversight from Cornell. All associations work to meet the needs of the counties in which they are located as well as state and national goals. For more information, call (716) 664-9502 or visit our website at cce.cornell.edu/chautauqua. Cornell University Cooperative Extension provides equal program and employment opportunities.

About the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets

The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets'

mission is to promote New York State agriculture and its high-quality and diverse products, foster agricultural environmental stewardship, and safeguard the state's food supply, land, and livestock to ensure the viability and growth of New York's agriculture industries.

2026
What is Your Spray Program?
Wednesday, December 3, 2025
1:00pm- 4:00pm via ZOOM

We are pleased to announce that we will be holding our 2026 Spray Preparation Program on December 3, 2025, from 1:00 PM -4:00 PM. This is a ZOOM meeting so you can attend right from your living room!

Line Up of Speakers-

Dr. Tim Miles, Michigan State University, Dr. Flor Acevedo, Penn State University, Dr. Katie Gold, Cornell University, Megan Luke, Penn State University, and Dave Combs, Cornell AgriTech

Talk topics are being strategized now and more information will follow in the near future.

NY & PA credits have beeen applied for.

Come join us for an afternoon of learning and preparation for your next growing season!

REGISTER NOW! (you must register on-line for this course)

****If you are looking for credits, please make sure you send Katie a copy of your current pesticide license after you register**** kjr45@cornell.edu

PA Update

Megan Luke, Penn State Extension Viticulture and Tree Fruit Educator

Soil Fertility Testing - I received a question regarding the best techniques for soil sampling, so please enjoy this reprint of an article I wrote back in April during a slow news week.

While many folks wait until spring to test soil nutrient levels, there are benefits to sampling in the fall as well. Sampling prior to snowfall can give you more time to price out amendments, and, if you plan to petiole sample at bloom, more time to focus on the tasks at hand. Current recommendations suggest sampling every three to five years; more frequent sampling is used when actively working to build soil health or remediate concerns, such as nutrient deficiencies.

Testing your soil early, or in the previous fall, before applying any fertilizer, can save time and money by providing information about plant-available nutrients for the upcoming growing season. Sampling early also means that you have more time to apply amendments and for them to take effect. The best practice is to stick to the same time of year each time you sample, so it is easier to identify trends and assess the efficacy of your management strategies over time. It is also important to compare your soil test results with your plant tissue samples, as this allows you to confirm that the nutrients in the soil can be taken up by the grapevines. The organic matter content, percentage of clay in the soil, and pH can affect this relationship, and additional amendments may be necessary for optimal plant uptake.

Keep in mind that sampling your soil in the fall **DOES NOT** mean that you apply your fertilizer in the fall. Nitrogen applications, in particular, need to be made within the six-week period around bloom, during which time the vines absorb the most nutrients from the soil to avoid losing them to volatilization, leaching, or runoff.

The general procedure for collecting soil samples is straightforward; however, several important points must be considered to obtain the most accurate information possible from the reports. Determining where to sample within your vineyards is key to acquiring the best data. One sample (comprised of several subsamples) should be obtained from each unique block. A unique block is a block that differs from the other blocks in your vineyard due to elevation, planted variety, soil type, etc. Basically, any section of your vineyard that may receive different management practices or may benefit from that approach. Some examples would be sampling Concord and Riesling plots separately, splitting a 20-acre block into an “upper” and “lower” sample due to a 20’ change in elevation from one end of the block to the other, or sampling the eastern half of the vineyard separately from the western half because the eastern half has sandier soils. Keep in mind that the scale at which you choose to divide up your sampling will match your management approach, and 10 acres is the maximum recommended size for a sample block.

Once you have determined the boundaries for each sample, you need to collect your subsamples. The strategy used for most mail-in soil tests is referred to as “bulk sampling”; a representative sample of a given area is collected by digging 15-20 small subsamples per 10-acre block, or 3-5 subsamples **per one-acre block**. Small samples are collected from random locations within the boundaries of the chosen block and then thoroughly mixed. **A single uniform sample is taken from the mixed material** and used for analysis. The sub-samples should be collected randomly,

following a zig-zag pattern within the block, avoiding areas around the perimeter or in locations with frequent equipment traffic. Generally, you want to collect from the feeder root zone at least 12” from the trunk of the vine. Samples should be collected when the soil is neither saturated nor completely dry; a 50/50 air-to-water ratio in the soil pore space is ideal. Your soil is too wet if several scoops of soil in a bucket cannot be mixed to a uniform consistency due to stickiness. A thin sliver or scoop of soil, 10” deep, is placed in a clean bucket. Remove the top inch of soil if thatch is present, and avoid including rocks, roots, or twigs if possible. Once all the subsamples are collected, the soil is thoroughly mixed, and a small bulk sample (2-4 cups, depending on lab requirements) is collected for analysis, again avoiding the inclusion of rocks and vegetative material. Take notes on the location of your sub-samples for future collection years.

Penn State and Cornell Extension each offer soil testing for growers in our region, as well as several independent labs. All labs request sample collection using the methods described above; however, there are some differences in the types of tests offered and the method for shipping the sample once it is obtained. Always double-check the website associated with the lab of your choosing to confirm sampling and shipping methods. Sample kits can be ordered online and are available for purchase at the Erie Extension offices, at CLEREL or at the LERGREC. LERGP members are always welcome to request assistance in interpreting soil test results from any source*.

**We do not endorse the use of one lab over another; below is information for two university-hosted labs offering a range of services, with information provided to aid in your personal research. Many private labs may be better suited to your individual needs.*

Penn State: The basic Penn State Extension soil sample is analyzed for water pH, Mehlich buffer lime requirement, and for phosphorus, potassium, magnesium, and calcium by the Mehlich 3 (ICP) test. The final report includes the chemical analysis of the soil, along with recommendations for lime and fertilizer for the specified crop, in this case, grapes. Standard tests cost $10/sample; additional tests can be added, such as total nitrogen ($15) and organic matter ($5). When submitting a sample to the Penn State lab, please allow the soil to air dry by spreading it out on newspapers or paper towels overnight before packaging and mailing. Be sure to label carefully if you have multiple samples. Discounts are available for large numbers of tests. Contact the lab for instructions on submitting multiple tests.

The submission form for grapes can be found at: https://agsci.psu.edu/aasl/soil-testing/fertility/soil-fertility-submission-forms

Use crop code 3500 (grapes, unspecified), 3504 (grapes, American), or 3506 (grapes, European) as appropriate for your operation. Recommendations based on testing results can be found at: https://agsci.psu.edu/aasl/soil-testing/fertility/

handbooks/small-fruits

General information about how to submit your sample is found at: https://agsci.psu.edu/aasl/soil-testing/fertility

PSU Ag Analytic Lab services: aaslab@psu.edu (814) 863-0841

Cornell CALS: The Cornell Soil Health laboratory offers a much more extensive range of soil testing services, including (but not limited to) active carbon, aggregate stability, organic matter content, and total nitrogen in the basic test. These pieces of information provide a much more granular image of what is occurring in your soil and what management practices may be available to mitigate any issues you may have. Results are scaled to reflect severity, and a 10+ page report is provided outlining strategies and practices relevant to your results.

Information about the lab and its reporting methods is at: https://soilhealthlab.cals.cornell.edu/

The rates start at $90/sample and range up to $165 per sample/sample with the inclusion of additional metrics such as soil respiration rate, soil texture, and predicted water-holding capacity. Individual tests are available. Rates and services are found here: https://soilhealthlab.cals.cornell.edu/testing-services/soil-health-analysis-packages/

There are significant differences in how samples are handled and shipped once they have been collected in order to preserve the quality and quantity of biological components and microbes for these tests. Details on handling samples destined for the CSHL are found here: https://soilhealthlab.cals.cornell.edu/testing-services/sample-storage-and-shipment/

Cornell Soil Health Laboratory services: soilhealth@cornell.edu

For additional information on soil testing in vineyards, visit:

https://lergp.cce.cornell.edu/vine_nutrition_and_soils.php
https://grapes.extension.org/soil-sampling-in-vineyards/

AgroOne/DairyOne: Samples brought to LERGP at CLEREL are sent here for testing. Sample forms can be found at their web-site here: Call 716-792-2800 ext 201 or e-mail Katie for more information.

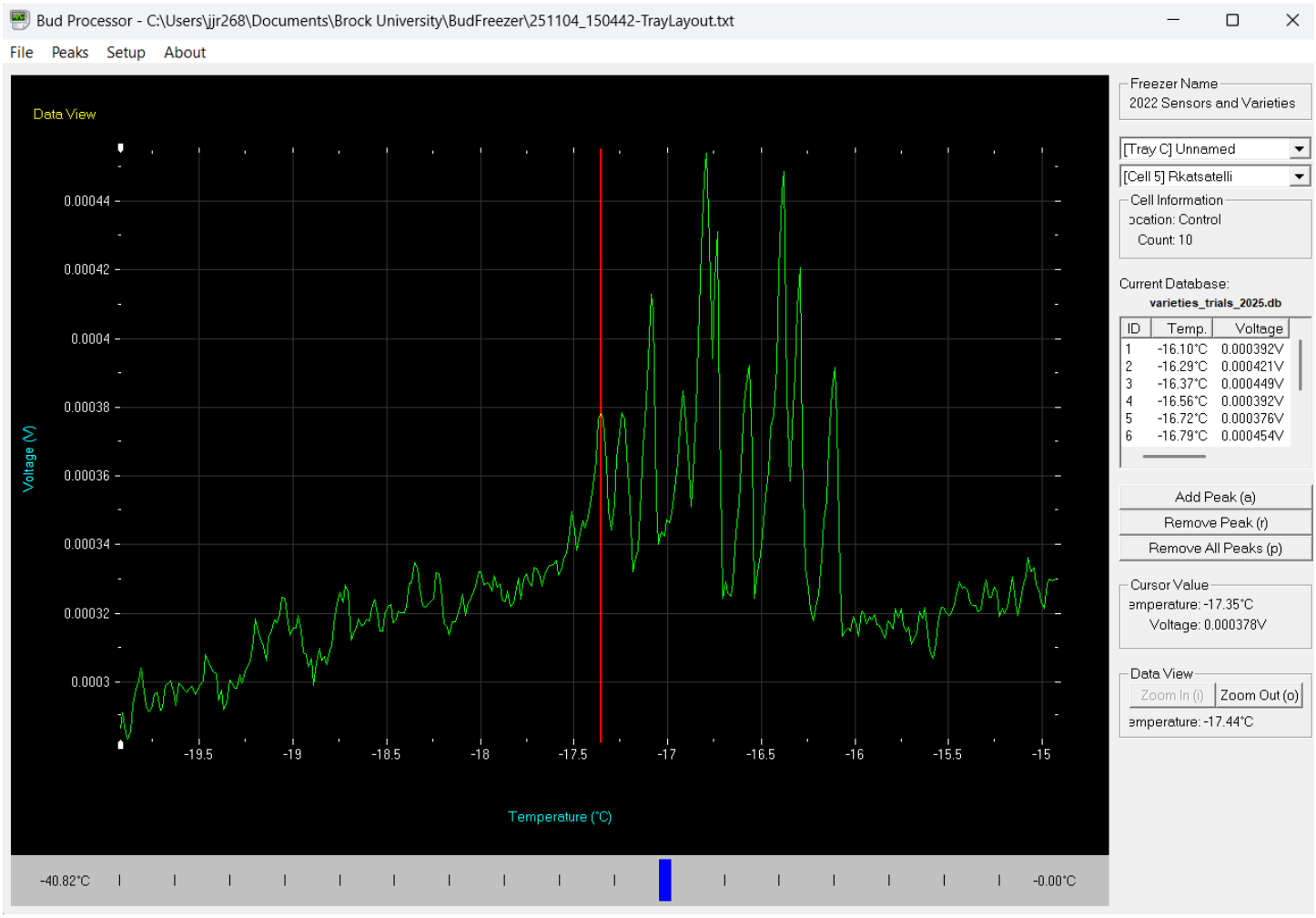
Updates and Information

Kimberly Knappenberger, Viticulture & IPM Extension Support Specialist, LERGP

NEWA Location	Precip. this week	Precip this growing season	Precip this year
Burt (Lakeside Tabor)	1.27	11.37	21.12
Newfane (Chateau Niagara)	1.57	10.32	19.49
Ransomville	1.44	10.10	21.36
Lockport	1.39	13.39	23.91
Brant	1.87	21.00	35.19
Versailles	1.93	16.05	31.31
Hanover	1.69	16.83	28.94
Silver Creek (Route 5)	1.50	18.73	32.14
Silver Creek (Double A)	1.73	15.80	29.39
Dunkirk (Route 5)	1.87	14.91	25.44
Sheridan	0.89	16.85	31.00
Sheridan (Liberty)	1.57	17.20	28.51
Forestville	1.15	10.57	20.83
East Fredonia	0.24	14.86	25.26
Brocton Escarpment	1.75	18.03	31.53
Portland/Portland LERGP West	1.65/1.61	13.19/14.32	34.01/28.94
East Westfield	1.53	15.36	26.67
Westfield	1.63	17.22	28.88
Westfield (South)	2.77	25.27	44.09
East Ripley	1.70	16.06	29.13
Ripley	1.77	19.30	32.11
Ripley Escarpment	1.49	18.19	32.23
Ripley State Line	1.54	16.01	20.74
North East State Line	1.84	20.32	34.66
North East Escarpment	1.55	19.99	32.01
North East Sidehill	1.58	20.83	34.67
North East Lab	1.51	18.85	32.71
Harborcreek	1.51	18.91	31.27
Harborcreek Escarpment	1.58	18.64	31.24
Lake City	1.94	19.50	34.34
Lake City (Mason Farms)	2.03	16.01	28.95

Table 1. Precipitation as reported by NEWA at newa.cornell.edu. Data is subject to functionality of the weather stations at each site. Precip for this week includes 10/26/25-11/6/25 at 11:00 AM. Growing season includes 6/1/25-11/6/25. Year includes 1/1/25-11/6/25.

Bud Cold Hardiness Has Begun!



We are currently 2 weeks into our bud cold hardiness trials. Thanks again for funding from the New York Wine and Grape Foundation we have begun the testing under the direction of Dr. Jason Londo and Jennifer Phillips Russo. This year we have switched to some different varieties to continue to solidify the models for grape bud hardiness. In addition we continue to collect Concord buds from Jennifer's microsensor sites across the belt from east to west and in the different zones – lake, bench and escarpment. The trials began a week earlier this year in an effort to capture more of the decline going into the winter. FYI… the bud hardiness is ranging between 5 - 0°F so far. Below is an image of the data from the bud freezer. Once the cycle in the freezer is complete we need to access the data and "call the peaks" to determine the temperature that each of the buds in the freezer "dies". At this time the bud has an exothermic reaction and gives off a bit of heat that is recorded as a peak.

Upcoming Events and Mark Your Calendar Days

Wednesday, December 3, 2025- “What’s Your Spray Program?” ZOOM Meeting
More information to follow in very near future.

Thursday, March 19, 2026-Winter Grape Grower Conference

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