

Sonoma County Winegrape Commission
June 2008
Grower Appellation Meeting Notes

Welcome and Announcements

- Code of Sustainable Winegrowing self-assessment workshop June 17th.
- Organic Producers Group at Kaz Vineyard June 25th.

General Topics

- Little to no early bunch stem necrosis (EBSN or shatter) reported.
- Laguna Ranch is going on 5th fungicide application, alternating Pristine and Procure after the first two JMS Stylet-oil + Cu treatments. No issues on the ranches at this time. Beginning leafing, using a Blue Line blower on a couple of hundred acres. Starting to think about irrigation in blocks reaching 8 to 9 bars. Will start with 10 hours and then irrigations will be at 80% Eto. After 22 Brix, vines will be watered at 100% Eto since work has been done showing wine quality effects are gained early season and not later.

- Barricia Vineyard removed a cab franc vineyard that was diseased with Phyloxera and replaced it with Zin.

- *Mark Greenspan* – Advanced Viticulture consulting. Water conservation and BMP's with the Sonoma County Water Agency. Water conservation more difficult this year due to less spring rain, but on the positive side, growers may have more control over canopy than in years where spring rains create overly-vigorous vines.

Long-term water stress can be reduced by: increasing organic matter, mulch, to increase water holding capacity of soil; frequent short irrigations to keep water in root zone of shallower areas; grow an appropriate canopy, not too vigorous, and the water needs of the vines will be less. Try interplanting in chronic low-vigor areas to help grow appropriately sized vines for the soil, rather than trying to grow large vines in lower vigor sites. Use a shovel to check irrigation depth 24 to 48 hrs after watering. Ted Klopp noted that using pomace as a mulch may increase the soil pH over the years.

Monitoring vine water stress: shoot tip indicators useful while canes are still growing ([see SCWC website for how to use this method](#)); pressure bombs are an old standard; porometers are a new tool that measure how open or closed a leaf's stomates are. Mark likes the ease of the porometer and the fact that it gives information perhaps more useful than the pressure bomb.

- *Dead Arm Disease* – Now is a good time to remove cordons or cut back trunks for retraining due to dead arm disease since the risk of rain is slight and dead arm spores are moved in rain to fresh pruning wounds.

Heads up

- *Powdery Mildew* – Chalk Hill saw some sulfur burn on zin and chardonnay from last heat spell. Dennis saw a bit of sulfur burn on some chardonnays. Mildew Risk Index rising – heat spells may slow growth of mildew but unless very hot, will not kill it. There will be parts of your vineyard that are cooler, and mildew may be doing well there.

John Kiger is trying a novel spray program consisting of JMS Stylet-oil at budbreak, then waiting for the Mildew Risk Index to indicate mildew growth before initiating his regular spray program. So far, he has saved two sprays.

- *GLH* – First instar nymphs are out now and most indications are of light populations so far.
- *Light Brown Apple Moth (LBAM)* – A new pest with finds in the North Coast is giving concern not only to grape growers, but nursery and landscape industries, too. Quarantines will disrupt smooth operations and may prohibit normal commerce.

Monitoring Points

- *Willamette, Pacific and Predatory mites* – As always, presence/absence sampling is recommended. Take a random representative sample of the block and determine what percentage of leaves have one or more mites. You do not count them, just note presence or absence. Using a handlens if necessary, tally the presence/absence of predators, i.e. predatory mites or predatory thrips. 6-spotted thrips are beige with 3 darker spots on each wing. Banded thrips are black with 3 white spots on each wing.
- *Vine and Grape Mealybugs* – GMB are laying eggs under the bark. Applaud works on juveniles, the smaller the better. When you start to see 3rd instars would be good timing for this treatment since you want to let as many of the eggs hatch as possible, yet not let the first hatched get too big for control. The new Bayer ant bait, Vitis, is working well.

Mealybugs are moving leafroll virus more than has been considered usual. If you see new leafroll in a vineyard, check for mealybugs (grape, obscure or vine).

- *Western Grapeleaf Skeletonizer (WGLS)* – A moth pest of grapes established in more southern counties, Sonoma has not surveyed for this pest for several years. We have detection traps that can help determine if moths may have come into the county since the last survey. The Winegrape Commission in conjunction with the Ag Commissioner's office is asking growers to help deploy the WGLS detection traps this year, aiming for one trap per square mile, to help insure this pest does not become established in our county.

Special Guests

Insect Detection Dogs (ID Dogs) – Carolyn Upton and Shay Cook have started a VMB detection service using their skilled search and rescue dogs with high tech GPS equipment and years of experience. They have had success in locating VMB in the field and are currently booking clients – see www.iddogs.com.

Suterra - Detection trapping for VMB is recommended. Use the red delta traps June through September to help find new infestations. Suterra's CheckMate VMB mating disruption are twist ties placed in the vineyard. They interfere with mating and can be an effective, low non-target impact way of keeping established VMB populations under control.

Adjourn - Thanks for coming!