



The Grapevine

Newsletter of the
Viticulture Association of the Santa Cruz Mountains
August, 2004

Vine Talk

Verasion! For sure most of you have noticed that your grapes are turning color or gaining that luminescence that can only mean that the fruit is reaching a turning point in development. It's early this year; some people think this is the earliest season on record. Of course experience tells us that everything rides on the heat units and fog events during the next 6 weeks. For growers with Pinot Noir and Chardonnay it is already time for the nets. For later ripening varieties it may be time for one last spray.

Be sure and stay alert for signs of botrytis. This is that late season event that can bring down the most promising crop. The last 2 weeks of steady fog and drizzly mornings have set up the perfect storm for a potential botrytis outbreak. Fortunately, most afternoons have been clear, sunny, and breezy. These conditions may relieve the disease pressure without an additional spray in vineyards where leaf removal and good canopy management have been part of the regime this year. More conservative growers (especially with Chardonnay) may consider one last spray of Elevate or Serenade, or another of your favorite products that are labeled effective against botrytis. If you have had the misfortune of some mildew in the vineyard consider removing the damaged clusters. The skin on severely damaged clusters will not expand as the

Next Meetings ...

August 3: "If I grow it, will they come?" – Growing Commercially Viable Fruit, a panel session with local winemakers

3:00pm – at Branciforte Ridge Vineyard
Winemaker panel to include:

- David Gates, Ridge
- John Schumacher, Hallcrest
- Steve Storrs, Storrs Winery
- Stephen Tebbs, Clos la Chance
- George Troquato, Cinnabar
- Michael Walters, Roudon-Smith

October 14: Pete Christensen, Professor Emeritus, Fresno State Univ. on "Post-Harvest Nutrition" He'll also talk about viruses. Location TBD.

... And Events

Sept. 14-19: Santa Cruz County Fair, Watsonville. See our booth!

Nov. 10: CAWG Meeting in Los Gatos
Local growers invited to dinner with the Board of the California Assn. of Winegrape Growers; more information forthcoming.

Dec. 5 (to be confirmed): tentative date for our Holiday Party. Stay tuned.

Note: Meetings/workshops to be held every two months. Each meeting to include a 'vine talk' summary of timely vineyard tasks.

fruit ripens. Instead it will burst and shower the healthy fruit with sticky sweet juice. Botrytis and yellow jackets love these conditions. Pay attention. This could be a great, great year.

Just when you think you have thought of everything, don't forget post harvest plans. For all you growers with nothing else to do, August is an excellent month to plan your fall cover crop plantings and to order your seed. A simple mix of barley and bell beans can hold the soil and provide nutrients and organic matter to your soil.

Thanks to everybody who attended and especially David Moore and Savannah-Chanelle for hosting the last meeting. The discussion on canopy management and a walk through the vineyard was both a joy and a lesson. Hopefully everyone came away with the fundamental awareness that grapes love stippled light and airflow to do their best. We received much positive feedback about the meeting. The free exchange of information and experience is beneficial for everyone. Thank you again and we hope to see you at the next meeting. Bring your questions, answers, ideas, and experience so that we may all grow even higher quality fruit.

Cheers!

- Prudy Foxx

New Website: Coming Your Way Soon

We have secured www.VASCM.org for our new Website, currently in production (when we're not spraying, netting, etc.) You'll see more about this in the coming weeks.

A Note About Who We Are

You may have noticed that this newsletter identifies our organization as the Viticulture Assn. of the Santa Cruz Mountains, whereas previous newsletters were for the Santa Cruz Mts. Viticulture Assn. So which is it?

Earlier this year the new promotional committee discussed it and thought we liked the latter name better. What we didn't know but have since discovered is that the official name per the original charter, as registered for our non-profit status, is the Viticulture Assn. of the Santa Cruz Mountains. So that is the proper name for our organization.

Mission Statement. At our bi-monthly meetings you've heard a little about the 'Promotional Committee'. This small group of members has volunteered to explore activities promoting our appellation vineyards and grapes. One of the basic foundations for our marketing activities is the identification of a mission statement. We welcome your comments to the draft of the mission statement we have created for the VASCM:

To serve the common interests of all Santa Cruz Mountains appellation winegrape producers, and to enhance the quality, profitability and reputation of winegrape production in the appellation through promotion and education.



Classifieds

Hallcrest Vineyards has custom crush space available – contact John Schumacher at 831-335-4441.

Premium Chardonnay grapes available from Zayante Vineyards – 8-10 tons for sale from 15-year old vines. Contact Kathleen Starkey at 831-335-5770. References available.

If you have an 'ad' to list, contact the newsletter editor.

See Our Exhibit at the County Fair!

The Promotional Committee has also been busy securing and planning an exhibit at this year's Santa Cruz County Fair – the first year the VASCM will have a booth there. We're creating a display highlighting our appellation fruit - showing a map of all the vineyard locations, plus photos and an educational display that will address sustainable practices, the characteristics of the appellation, and what is unique and excellent about the grapes we grow.

We need volunteers for the booth!
We need to man the booth during the hours of the Fair and need members willing to give a couple of hours to represent the VASCM. If you can, please email or call Mary at mary@lindsaypr.com or 408/984-7242.

The Santa Cruz County Fair

Sept. 14 - 19

The Fairgrounds in Watsonville
On Hwy. 152

Weekdays, 12:00 noon – 11:00pm

Saturday, 10:00am – 11:00pm

Sunday, 10:00am – 9:00pm

VASCM exhibit in the Harvest Bldg.

Buy/Sell Exchange To Be Created - Provide Your Email Address to Participate

A number of members, including a couple of winemakers, have suggested a mechanism to connect winemakers and growers for the purpose of buying and selling Santa Cruz appellation grapes. Such an exchange would also be an opportunity to make available services known, i.e. custom crush facilities. We are setting up such an Exchange on an email basis. To participate, we will need your email address. Send a message to mary@lindsaypr.com and we will let you know how it works. Once the Website is operational the Exchange can be posted to the site as well.

Awards for Wines Produced from Santa Cruz Mt. Grapes

Hallcrest Vineyards

Gold Medal, Orange Co. Fair:
2002 Ciardella Vineyard Pinot Noir
Silver Medal, L.A. County Fair:
2002 SCM Chardonnay

Hunter Hill

2000 Estate Merlot:
Silver Medal, S.F. Chronicle / Silver Medal,
L.A. County Fair / Silver Medal; San Diego
National Competition / Bronze Medal,
California State Fair

Clos la Chance

2002 Santa Cruz Mt. Chardonnay
Wine Spectator (June 30, 2004): solid, with good acidity and moderate complexity and pleasant apple and mineral fruit. Drink now. Score: 86 Points
Wine & Spirits (June, 2004): Focused on richness and texture, this fat chardonnay seems extremely ripe for Santa Cruz Mountains. It runs loose-limbed toward a milk-braised pork loin. Score: 88 Points

Note: This is not a complete list, but recognition for just a few of the award-winning wines produced using SC Mountain grapes.

**Officers of the Viticulture Association
of the Santa Cruz Mountains:**

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About the Newsletter

The goal of the VASCM newsletter is to be a helpful resource and means of communication for our members. We welcome your suggestions and contributions for articles and content. Please contact Prudy Foxx or the newsletter editor, Mary Lindsay, per the contact information in the box on this page.

Awards for Winers Produced from Santa
Cruz Mt. Grapes

Historical Vineyards
Gold Medal, Orange Co. Fair
2002 Central Valley Fruit Fair
Silver Medal, L.A. County Fair
2002 SOM Chardonnay

The Santa Cruz Mountains
Viticulture Association
P.O. Box 126
Saratoga, CA 95071



Newsletter

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Grow It, Will They Come?"**

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