



Viticulture Association of the Santa Cruz Mountains

The Grapevine

February, 2011

VINE TALK

Winter 2011. January has come through with record high temperatures, sunny skies, and perfect waves. A month made for Santa Cruz. Cover crops and weeds alike have sprung forth with new vigor, eager to absorb more sunlight and to multiply in size. The gophers are out as well, reveling in the warm moist soil featuring just the perfect texture for new tunnels and nests.

Now is an excellent time to set gopher traps and minimize weeds around the vines before they get out of control. The soil is the perfect consistency to replace broken or rotting end posts and to straighten line posts. Tightening wires can wait until after pruning when the entangled canes will be out of the way. Winter is the time to prepare the trellis to handle the emerging weight of the new vintage.

Many people are eagerly underway with pruning. In our area it may be best to start with the more vigorous, late ripening varieties and save the delicate Pinot Noir cuts for closer to spring. As always, prune for fruit and canopy balance. Look closely at each bud and imagine the cane that will emerge from it and where it will grow. Minimize opportunities for crowding or crosses. Many disease and shading problems can be overcome before they happen with proper pruning attention.

Cut out diseased and damaged wood. Pay attention to pruning cuts and watch for discoloration or unusual black wedges on the newly exposed surface. Symptoms like these could indicate disease issues like Eutypa. If possible cut the wood back until the exposed tissue is clean and unblemished.

Visit your winemaker and sample the product from 2010. Discuss the challenges of last season and what you as a grower can and cannot control. Fruit load, exposure, and canopy vigor might all be topics to review. Make a list for yourself on what improvements and adaptations you would like to see in the vineyard this year.

Consider new sustainability techniques like cover crop management, slow release soil amendments, and new plantings to enhance the biodiversity of the site and to attract beneficial insects to your vineyard. Consider an application of compost before the rains are done. *(cont.)*

Next Program

February 16, 8:00-1:00: Sustainable Winegrowing Self-Assessment Workshop and Certification Overview

Program with the California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance (CSWA). This is a sustainability self-assessment workshop: a great opportunity to learn best practices in the vineyard and winery, and to (re)assess your operations. It also introduces the CSWA's new statewide Sustainability Certification program to the Santa Cruz Mts.

- This program is for growers and wineries.
- It is for you even if you have done the self-assessment before.
- It is for you if you are doing this for the first time, or just want to find out more about sustainable practices and the certification program.
- Certification is based on doing the self-assessment.
- Even if you are not interested in pursuing certification, the self-assessment is a valuable educational opportunity.

Registration begins at 8am; program starts at 8:30. Lunch included. There is no charge for this program or lunch.

Location: Loma Prieta Community Center, 23800 Summit Rd., Los Gatos 95033 (at the Loma Prieta Elementary School) *See directions on the back of the newsletter.*

RSVP to: Lisa Francioni, lisa@wineinstitute.org or call 415-356-7545

See the enclosed flier for the agenda. *Please note: This is a special program, not one of our regular meetings. No alcohol or smoking at the Community Center, please.*

President's Corner

As Prudy says in this issue's *Vine Talk*, "Make a list for yourself on what improvements and adaptations you would like to see in the vineyard this year." Our February program, the Sustainability Workshop with the CSWA, will give you a great opportunity to review your practices, learn from a huge repository of 'best practices', and create that list to work from during the coming year and into the future.

(cont. next page)

(Vine Talk, cont. from page one)

If you had significant disease issues last year you may want to apply a lime sulfur spray while the vines are still completely dormant. This is available as an organic product but still carries significant regulatory restrictions. Follow the label and worker safety rules closely when applying. Update employee training and posting.

Best of all enjoy this special time of year and the rhythm of pruning. A great deal can be learned about the vineyard during this process. The diameter and length of the canes, the intermodal spacing of the buds, the number of suckers, and the density of the canopy all tell the story of what came before. Observe and respond. Your vineyard will thank you.

Happy New Year!
Prudy Foxx
Foxx Viticulture
Santa Cruz Mountains

HOSPITALITY – Need Volunteers

We would like to enlist the help of a few people to help with the Hospitality ie **food**, at our meetings and annual BBQ in the summer. June Salsbury will coordinate those that would like to volunteer.

What is involved you ask? Purchasing food and the appropriate eating & serving utensils for our meetings and submitting for reimbursement. There will be a budget and a basic suggested list of what is needed based on our past meeting needs.

How many volunteers are needed? We could have a committee of 6 to 8 people that could share the duties throughout the year. Maybe 2 or 3 people could help with each meeting. It looks like there will be about 6 meetings this year.

How do I sign up? If you are interested, contact June or Mary either by e-mail or at the February meeting.



Cooper Garrod Vineyard, Saratoga

(President's Corner, cont. from page one)

The CSWA has been a tremendous resource, and the VASCM has brought in numerous of its sustainability programs over the years, including sessions on pest management, water quality/conservation, energy efficiency, ecosystem management, and several self-assessment workshops.

Even if you have done the self-assessment before, it has been several years since we last brought the workshop here and so it is a good time to do it again, reassess your practices and set updated goals. If you have submitted your prior results they will be online and you can set up an account to access them, see how much you have improved since then, and pat yourself on the back. Plus, if you are interested to consider certification, this credential is based on doing the self-assessment. If you already have one, bring your workbook to the workshop.

If you have not done the self-assessment before, you will receive a valuable 500-page binder/workbook of best practices to work from. You use the questions in the book to assess and benchmark your own practices, learn from the best practices it describes, and set your own goals for improvement. Then you are encouraged to come back, reassess, mark your changes and continue to work to improve.

Look forward to more VASCM programs and meetings this year. We have some good ones planned. Here is to an excellent 2011 vintage.

Mary Lindsay
President, VASCM



Vineyard Profile: Cooper-Garrod Estate Vineyards

- by Suzanne Purnell

As I was driving along the rolling Saratoga foothills in late August, the car thermometer displayed an outside temperature of 96 degrees. "Finally," I thought, "some heat! All summer, we've been freezing our buns off on the Santa Cruz side of the mountains."

As I arrived at Cooper-Garrod Estate Vineyards (www.cgv.com) and Garrod Farms, the first aroma was not of grapes, but the wholesome one of horse manure. Cooper-Garrod isn't just a vineyard and winery, it is a family-run, real working ranch with close to 150 boarded horses.

(continued next page)

Some Details About the February 16 Program: Sustainable Winegrowing Self-Assessment Workshop and Certification Overview

If you are considering attending the Feb. 16 program, here is some further information about it, in addition to the flier included with this newsletter:

- **Self-assessments can now be done online. If you have a laptop with wireless connection, bring it to this session.** You will get a password to set up your online account when you call to RSVP, and you can work online from the session. If you do not bring a laptop, no problem - you will work from the workbook. (This program is being held at the Loma Prieta Community Center because it has sufficient wireless bandwidth.)

- **If you have previously done the self-assessment: please bring your binder/workbook.** If you previously submitted your results, they will be available to you online once you set up your account.

- **If you are doing this for the first time, you will get a binder at the session.**

- **This program is free!**

- Cooper-Garrod is the first vineyard and winery in the Santa Cruz Mountains to be certified. **Bill Cooper** will talk about why they got certified, why it is important, and their experience. Bill is on the Board of the California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance (CSWA), and was Chairman a few years ago. You can read more about CGV and Bill's involvement with the CSWA in the Vineyard Profile in this newsletter.

This workshop is a great opportunity to learn best practices in the vineyard and winery. It also includes a presentation by the California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance (CSWA) on how we can achieve Sustainability Certification (if you want to try to do that).

- This program is for growers and wineries.
- It is for you even if you have done the self-assessment before.
- It is for you if you are doing this for the first time, or just want to find out more about sustainable practices and the certification program.
- Certification is based on doing the self-assessments.
- Even if you are not interested in pursuing certification, the self-assessment is a valuable educational opportunity.

**Wednesday, February 16, 2011
8:30am - 1:00pm**

**At the Loma Prieta Community Center
23800 Summit Rd., Los Gatos**

**Registration begins at 8am; program starts at 8:30
(see agenda on the flier)
Lunch included. There is no charge.**

**RSVP to: Lisa Francioni, lisa@wineinstitute.org
or call 415-356-7545**

2011 MEMBERSHIP

2011 VASCM member dues are now due. An updated form is attached and can be found on the VASCM website: www.vascm.org. Please complete the form and mail with your check to: June Salisbury, 160 Spring Hollow Rd., Los Gatos, CA 95033 OR bring both with you to our next program.

Pinot Paradise, Sunday March 27

**Technical Session, 9am-12pm:
The Santa Cruz Mountains Acid Test:
Unlocking the secrets of Santa Cruz Mts. Pinot Noir
- A program for growers and winemakers**

This session will delve into the origins of natural acidity levels in the fruit we grow in the Santa Cruz Mts. and the wine made from it. Our wines in general, Pinot Noir as well as other varietals, are known for their acidity. Learn about viticulture practices that can manage and affect acidity levels. Learn how this contributes to the age-worthy, food-friendly, legendary wines for which our region is known.

Keynote speakers:

Dr. Roger Boulton, Professor and Chair of the Enology Department of Viticulture and Enology, Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, UC Davis and co-author of "The Principles and Practices of Winemaking" will lead off the discussion. Dr. Boulton was named among "the 50 most influential people in the US Wine Industry" in 2000 by Wines and Vines Magazine.

Greg La Follette, an international vineyard and winery consultant and currently owner of La Follette Winery will follow Dr. Boulton with a discussion focused on viticulture and the management of acidity levels in the vineyard. Among his many contributions to the wine industry, Mr. La Follette is the former winemaker with Flowers Winery where he achieved wide acclaim as a top Pinot Noir producer.

Following these extremely knowledgeable and experienced speakers a panel of veteran Santa Cruz Mountains winemakers will share their experience and offer a tasting of AVA wines: Jeff Emery, Santa Cruz Mountain Vineyard, Nathan Kandler, Thomas Fogarty, Dave Moulton, Burrell School, Jim Schultze, Windy Oaks. Moderator: Nick Guerrero, Vine Hill Winery

Take the test! The Santa Cruz Mountains acid test!

Stay for the Grand Cruz Tasting, 2:00-5:00

At Villa Ragusa
35 S. Second St., Campbell

Tickets \$55 each event
More info and tickets at
www.scmwa.com



The 120-acre ranch has been in the family since 1893 through four generations. Once a prune and apricot orchard, 28 acres are now planted in seven winegrape varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Chardonnay, Syrah, Viognier, Merlot and Pinot Noir. George Cooper started the vineyards in the 1970s. Educated as a mining engineer and trained as a pilot in WWII, he flew the P-47 "Jug" with the 412th Fighter Squadron in the European Theater. After the war, he was a chief research test pilot for NASA. Wanting something fun to do after his 1973 "retirement", he planted grapes and set about learning to make wine.

I met with winemaker, Bill Cooper (by the end of our session I'd nicknamed him "Mr. Sustainability"), who runs this wide-ranging operation along with his first-cousin, Jan Garrod, and other family members.

Sustainability

Bill introduced me to 227 sustainable practices, including two broad areas in the sustainability arena: recycle and reuse, which CGV is very good at doing.

But first, some history. When Bill returned to the family ranch in 1996, after a career in the Foreign Service, he was eager to learn all the ins-&-outs of the wine business. He is a big believer in trade organizations as "places to learn", including: VASCM, Wine Institute, California Association of Winegrape Growers (CAWG), SCMWA, California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance (CSWA), etc.

In 2000, CAWG and Wine Institute formed a joint committee to develop a state-wide sustainability program. As a member of that committee, Bill and 50 others met over 18 months to identify 227 best management practices for winegrowers and vintners (www.sustainablewinegrowing.org/). The 227 practices are divided into 14 topic areas that form the Code of Sustainable Winegrowing Practices.

Based on that work, CSWA has conducted over 200 free self-assessment workshops for the California winegrape industry. The core of the program is the self-assessment workbook in which participants rate their practices on a continuum of four levels, with the ability to compare results to regional and state-wide averages. Based on the self-assessment, the participant writes an action plan for improvement in the coming year. You are encouraged to repeat the self-assessment and engage in a cycle of continual improvement. In 2010, Cooper-Garrod was one of the first in the state to receive the California Sustainable Winegrowing certification.

Bill introduced me to "The Three E's of Sustainability": **E**conomically Feasible, **E**vironmentally Sound, **S**ocially Equitable. While I understand that viticulturists seek to preserve the environment, the economically feasible factor was impressive.

From Bill's perspective, the goal of sustainability is **to produce a better product at a lower price in an orderly fashion**, and he invites all VASCM members to ask him three questions about how they might improve the sustainability of their operation. Bill noted that VASCM could form a group to share the cost of a Sure Harvest Farming MIS (www.sureharvest.com) subscription to provide the sustainable data.

Some Cooper-Garrod Practices

Of their seven vineyards, one is CCOF-certified organic (in 2009) and the others are in transition to be certified by 2012. When they were successful with the first (trial) vineyard, they decided to do the rest.

About 50% of their electricity (including the stables) comes from a 17 Kw, 84-panel solar array installed in 2005.

All Cooper-Garrod vineyards are dry-farmed, since water has always been a precious commodity in the Saratoga foothills. The vineyards are mowed only, with a no tilling practice for erosion control. Organic cover crops attract "beneficials", such as lady bugs, butterflies, bees, bluebirds, etc. Owl boxes promote natural gopher control, and wildlife corridors allow wildlife to move across the hills. Stylet Oil and sulfur constitute the mildew regimen.

In the areas of recycle and reuse, CGV recycles glass, cardboard and winery waste (pomace and lees). Bill was bummed by the change two years ago to single-stream recycling, which reduces the amount of glass and cardboard that recycling plants are able to recover, due to contamination. Bill arranged with their local Safeway to accept their cardboard for baling, and is considering the feasibility of selling their cardboard and glass directly to recyclers. The tasting room recycles corks and capsules (printed with water-based inks to eliminate acids in manufacturing), among a myriad of other types of reuse and recycle activities.

Last-but-not-least, there's all that horse manure - a rich compost, CCOF-certified organic of course!

For more info on CGV's sustainable practices: <http://www.cg.v.com/dyn/sustainability>, <http://www.cg.v.com/vineyards>



Directions to the Loma Prieta Community Center

for the February program::

23800 Summit Rd., Los Gatos, 95033

From San Jose/Los Gatos:

- Take Hwy. 17 South towards Santa Cruz
- Exit Summit Rd., make a right off the ramp and go over the overpass, then make a left onto Summit Rd.
- Drive 2.8 miles to the Community Center on the right, which is at the Loma Prieta Elementary School. You will see the driveway at the sign for the school.

From Santa Cruz:

- Take Hwy. 17 North towards San Jose
- Exit Summit Rd. and continue on Summit Rd. for 2.8 miles to the Community Center/Elementary School on the right.

Officers of the Viticulture Association of the Santa Cruz Mountains:

President: Mary Lindsay, Muns Vineyard, 408-234-2079, mary@munsvineyard.com

Vice President: Rachel Ormes, 831-427-0436 Rachel@winesofvinehill.com

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Newsletter



***Next Program: February 16, Sustainability Workshop
And Introduction to Certification
With the California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance***