



## North Texas Vineyard News

September 2008

### Between Harvest & Dormancy

During this time between harvest and dormancy (post-harvest/pre-dormancy), the pressure of the growing season has eased off, but the vines still attention. It is important to continue to keep the vines healthy, with a canopy for as long as possible – until Thanksgiving. Some important areas include irrigation, fungicide and weed control, and young vine care.

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### **Irrigation.**

Though grapevines are no longer producing, they still need water. The amount of water to apply through irrigation is a function of vine & row spacing, canopy size and water loss from evaporation and transpiration (evapotranspiration). In North Texas that means there is a broad range when considering the amount of water to deliver through your system. To give an example, based on a 10x8 spacing, the amount of water to irrigate could range from 4gal/vine – 13gal/vine/week depending on size of canopy (young to full mature), vineyard location, and weather.

In East Texas, young vines require about 4gal/vine/week. While mature, full canopied vines require more – about 11gal/vine/week. On the west side of I-35, the young vines will require a bit more with 5-6gal/vine/week. Mature, full canopied mature vines will require about 13gal/vine/week. Smaller canopies will require about 8gal/vine/week. The vines will need less as the weather cools and the days grow shorter (1gal/vine-6gal/vine). Please don't hesitate to contact me for clarification.

To correctly calculate your need, please visit <http://winegrapes.tamu.edu/grow/irrigation.html>

### **Fungicide Control.**

Post-harvest usually requires two fall sprays for primarily downy mildew. The first application could have been sprayed already or should be soon, with the second application to follow before the next hurricane or heavy rain event. Dithane and Captan are good pre-infection fungicides. For vineyards with downy mildew infection present, there are two recommended options. Phosphorus Acid products, such as Aliette, Rampart, or Prophyte are effective for light to moderate downy mildew infections. They are relatively inexpensive without the threat of the pathogen developing any resistance to the fungicide. Severe cases of downy mildew may need more to knock down the disease and in that case, Ridomil would be the better choice. Caution: The goal is to control Downy Mildew so you don't have to use Ridomil – our last resort weapon. Spores can develop resistance to Ridomil.

Since healthy leaves promote healthy trunks, it is essential to maintain a healthy canopy for as long as possible. A weak trunk can contribute to winter injury to the trunk, and other diseases that attack a grapevine's trunk, such as crown gall, bot cankers, Eutypa, and Pierce's Disease.

Read all labels, some may need rereading many times.

### **Young Vines.**

Your young vines are developing their woody tissue now, so if you have not already done so, it is time to select the vine's future trunk. Keep in mind that the cane you select will become the future main load-bearing structure of your grapevine. The strongest shoot is normally not the largest shoot, so steer away from the bull canes. Although they look strong because they are the largest, they have grown too large too quickly, making them actually weaker for the long haul. Choose the shoot that has evenly spaced nodes with internodes of 2-3 inches that is pencil to finger size in diameter. This is the shoot that needs support now to enable it to grow straight. Leave the pruning until next March.

### **Sick/Underperforming Vines.**

Mark or tag your underperformers before leaf drop. When to remove the vine is up to your fancy, so, make sure now that will be removing the correct vine.

## **Events for North Texas- Region 2**

### **Prospective Grower Workshop**

Oct. 23, Thurs, 9-3pm  
Oak Creek Vineyard  
528 Wagner Road  
Saint Jo, Texas

This workshop is designed to provide the information needed before deciding whether to start vineyard, such as site considerations, risks, costs, labor requirements, necessary expertise.

Cost: \$125/person, \$200/couple

Please call or email me (Fran), if you plan to attend.

### **Texas Wine & Grape Growers Assoc.**

#### **Grape Camp**

Nov. 8, 9 Sunday-Monday  
Fredericksburg Inn & Suites  
Fredericksburg, TX

Please visit the call TWGGA office:

(817) 424-0570, or visit  
<http://www.txwines.org>

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