

# *Newsletter*

*May 2004*

Next Meeting: Thursday, May 20th, at 7:30 PM.  
Meeting Place: Maplewood Community Pool, 7550 Lohmeyer, Maplewood, MO  
Website: [www.mowinemakers.org](http://www.mowinemakers.org)  
Submitted by: Paul Hendricks

**Next meeting: Thursday, May 20th, at 7:30 PM**

The program and tasting will feature **Honey and Mead** by Charlie Franke. He will have three different flavors of honey and mead. He will discuss his procedure and recipe, which he has developed over several years.

**Cellar Notes:**

Unlike that made from vinifera grapes, wine made from locally grown red grapes is likely to end up with a high pH unless the winemaker takes steps to control it. Monitoring and adjusting pH is a common practice of local professional winemaker.

Without adjustments, wines made from varieties such as Norton and Chambourcin (with malolactic fermentation) can end up with pHs as high as 3.7 to 3.8.

Characteristics of High pH wines:

- ? Tastes flabby and lacks fruitiness
- ? More susceptible to spoilage.
- ? Less active (free) SO<sub>2</sub> available to protect the wine
- ? More prone to oxidation, which causes browning and loss of flavor

Most winemakers will strive to keep the final pH in the range of 3.3 to 3.5.

To lower pH without a significant increase in titratable acid:

- ? Add tartaric acid to bring the pH below 3.5
- ? Then cold stabilize

To measure pH, one must have access to an accurate pH meter and know the correct procedure for calibrating and using it (see March 04 newsletter). The minimum requirements for a pH meter to be useful in winemaking is:

- ? +/- 0.01 resolution
- ? +/- 0.05 accuracy

### Vineyard Notes:

Keep in mind that our goal is to manage the vines so as to produce high quality fruit in quantities that don't over-tax the vines. Following dormant pruning, **cluster thinning** is a good strategy for fine-tuning the vines crop load.

As the new shoots emerge in the spring one to three clusters of flower buds will develop on each shoot. Most varieties will produce two clusters per shoot. Generally some of these should be removed to limit the vine's total number to the target.

Target crop loads for mature vines are approximately:

- ? 40 clusters for large clustered varieties.
- ? 60 clusters for small clustered varieties.

Some of the hybrid varieties such as Seyval, de Chaunac, and others are also apt to produce clusters on shoots that emanate from old wood as well as new wood. If not removed these extra non-count clusters would over crop the vine. It is generally best to remove most of these shoots entirely.

### **Cluster Thinning:**

- ? Best done before the flowers open in the spring.
- ? Remove all but one cluster per shoot on large clustered varieties.
- ? Leave the cluster closest to the cane.
- ? Remove all small weak non-count shoots/clusters.
- ? Remove all or most clusters on low vigor vines to allow it to rejuvenate.

It is important to **control weeds** in the vineyard especially around new plantings. Weeds compete for nutrients and will retard the growth of young vines. Tall weeds will also restrict air movement around the vine and increase the risk of fungal diseases.

Weed control is best accomplished by shallow cultivation or hoeing. Herbicides can be used to clear a strip under the vine but take care to spray only when there is no wind. Use a shield around the trunk and do not allow herbicide contact with green tissue of the vine.

Keep up with your **spray schedule**. The early sprays are more effective at keeping diseases in check.

### Spray Chemicals for sale:

Bayleton \$4.50/for 1oz, Ferbam \$3.00/for 8oz, Dithane F-45 \$7.90/for 8 oz,  
Captan 50 WP \$2.40/for 8 oz, Sevin 80WP \$4.50/for 8 ounces,  
Imidan 70WP \$4.80/for 8 oz, Latron B1956 Spreader & Sticker \$2.80/for 8 ounces  
Contact Ken Dreher at 636-932-9605

**Grape Vines for sale:**

I have five potted Delicatessen grape vines for sale at \$5 each. I may have a few Norton also. Paul Hendricks 636-379-0722.

**Sauce Magazine article:**

See the May 2004 issue (page 32) for an interview with yours truly about Missouri Winemaking Society. Sauce is a free newspaper, which provides information on the area's restaurants, bars, and entertainment.

**Calendar of Events:**

? June 15<sup>th</sup>, Viticulture Field Day at the Southwest Missouri State Fruit Experiment Station in Mountain Grove, MO.