

Wine-Grower-News #62

September 26, 2008
(Next Newsletter in 2 Weeks)

Midwest Grape & Wine Industry Institute: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Wine>

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Composting Your Pomace

The pomace piles seem to be getting larger this season. Yields seem to be up 25 to 50% over last year for those who managed their grape diseases. Turning these pomace piles into compost piles would be a positive step toward a sustainable healthy vineyard. Compost provides nutrients and biologically active organic matter that enhances both the chemical, biotic and physical character of the soil. High temperatures of 130 - 150°F attained during the active phase of the composting do a good job of killing weed seeds and pathogens present in the raw material prior to composting.



Pomace pile at Snus Hill Winery

<http://www.snushillwine.com/>

It takes approximately 3 tons of grapes to produce a ton of pomace. The content of grape pomace can vary depending on the cultivar, season, mechanical/hand harvested, pressure used during pressing and material other than grapes (MOG). Information from Virginia Tech showed their pomace consisting of approximately 8% seeds, 10% stems, 25% skins and 57% pulp and containing approximately 2% N(nitrogen), 0.5% P (phosphorus), 2% K (potassium) and about 2% Ca (calcium).(1) Grape pomace does not compost well by itself because of its low pH that is often in the range of 3.5 to 4.4, low

moisture content of around 40%, and small particle size. Other materials need to be added to it to create a mix that will rapidly compost.. Bulking materials like wood chips or straw can be used to provide space for air to enter into the composted material. The carbon to nitrogen ratio (C/N) is another key variable for the compost to be digested properly. The digesting microbes work best when the C/N ratio is in the 25-35 range. C/N ratios above 35 tend to tie up nitrogen and slow the decomposition process. C/N ratios below 20 tend to release nitrogen into the air or soil below the pile. The following table provides a range of acceptable and ideal conditions for a good compost pile.

Optimal Conditions for Rapid Aerobic Composting

Condition	Acceptable	Ideal
C:N ratios of the combined feedstocks	20:1 to 40:1	25-35:1
Moisture content	40-65%	45-60% by wt.
Available oxygen concentration	>5%	>10% or more
Feedstock particle size	< 1 inch	Variable
Bulk density	1000 lbs./cu. yd. 37 lbs/cu. ft.	1000 lbs./cu.yd. 37 lbs/cu. ft.
pH	5.5-9.0	6.5-8.0
Temperature	110-150°F	130-140°F

Taken from Table 2. *The Art & Science of Composting* (2)

There is no fixed time for raw materials to be completely composted. For the first several weeks the compost should go through a active phase as the temperature maintains a 130-150°F range. Then there is a curing phase of several months when the temperature lingers around the 100°F. The compost should be considered done when an ambient temperature is maintained inside the pile. The entire process should be completed in 4-6 months. Turning or mixing the pile every 2 weeks is necessary to have a rapid and completely digested compost.



Pomace pile at Summerset Winery
<http://www.summersetwine.com/>

Once the compost is complete a sample should be sent in for a nutrient analysis. This is a common procedure for most soil test labs. I would suggest contacting them prior to determine if any special sample handling requirements are needed prior to sending it in. Nitrogen will be the first key nutrient you will want to manage in the vineyard. 100% of the nitrogen in a completely composted material should be in the organic form. Approximately 30% of the total organic nitrogen will be available to plants. About 15% of the total nitrogen in compost is typically available in the first cropping season. Up to another 20% of the nitrogen is released over the next 4 to 5 years. Most of the potassium will be available the first year. This could be a concern in soils already high in potassium and low in magnesium. (3)

From a practical standpoint, 7-20 tons/acre of compost is a common application range in vineyards requiring additional fertility. A rate of 1-2 tons/acre is commonly applied in higher testing vineyards to recycle nutrients and increase the biological activity of the soil. Compost works best when spread on the soil surface and will positively impact the vineyard for 5-7 years.

The following resources will provide the reader with further information on how to make compost, optional mixing materials, application methods and real examples of its use.

Resources Used in this article:

1. *Notes on Composting Grape Pomace*, Virginia Tech Univ.:
[http://www.vaes.org.vt.edu/AHSMITHJAREC/Notes%20on%20Composting%20Grape%20Pomace F.%20Westover.pdf](http://www.vaes.org.vt.edu/AHSMITHJAREC/Notes%20on%20Composting%20Grape%20Pomace%20F.%20Westover.pdf)
2. *The Art & Science of Composting*, Univ. of WI:
<http://www.cias.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2008/07/artofcompost.pdf>
3. *Practical Guide to the Application of Compost in Vineyards*, Penn State Univ. 2003, 30p:
<http://fpath.cas.psu.edu/compostguide.pdf>
4. ATTRA – Natl. Sustainable Ag Resource Guide, Farm Composting Resource List:
<http://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/farmcompost.html>
5. *Composting Grape Pomace in the Finger Lakes*, 9-26-06:
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/tenderfr/tf1101a5.htm>
6. Cornell Univ. Waste Mgt. Institute/*Composting*: <http://cwmi.css.cornell.edu/composting.htm>
7. Phil Roth, Pennsylvania Winegrape Grower's experience with vineyard compost and compost tea, 7-04, The Rodale Institute: <http://www.newfarm.org/features/0704/roth/index.shtml>
8. *Composting Yard Waste*, ISU Extension Pm-623:
<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM683.pdf>
9. Iowa Dept. of Agriculture Certified list of Soil Testing Laboratories:
<http://www.iowaagriculture.gov/feedAndFertilizer/certifiedSoilTesting.asp>

New & Improved - IA Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference in 2009

What: Iowa Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association Annual Conference

When: January 29-31, 2009

Where: Sheraton West Des Moines Hotel, 1800 50th St. West Des Moines

Note: This 3 day event will have regionally recognized speakers on three key topics:

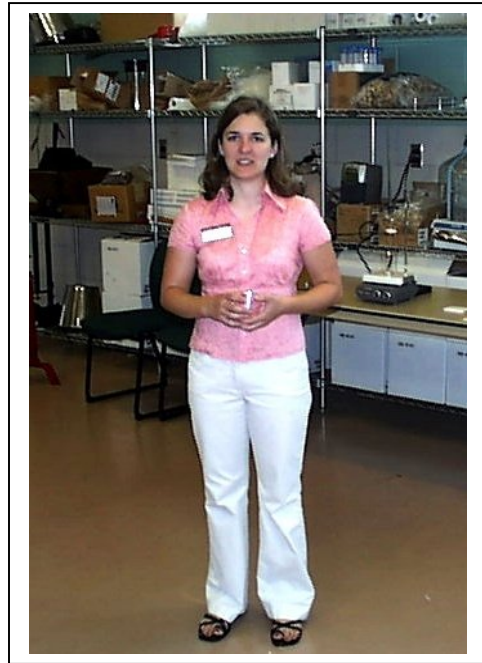
- Fruit & Vegetable Production
- Post Harvest Handling
- Marketing

Conference planning committees are currently putting together the entire agenda. Look for details and registration information in the future. This new & improved 3-day conference is being made possible via grants secured by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship for use in risk management and marketing education.

Congratulations to Dr. Anna Katharine Mansfield

Let's all give Anna Katharine a hand or better yet send her a note of congratulations to mansf007@umn.edu . A little bird (Lisa Smiley) told me that Anna Katharine successfully defended her PhD dissertation entitled "Characterization of Key Volatile Compounds in Red Table Wines Produced from Frontenac" at the University of Minnesota this Wednesday, 9-24-08.

Anna Katharine has been running the University's Enology Lab at the Horticulture Research Center in Excelsior, Minnesota. She went to UMN in the spring of 2002 from Virginia Tech University with a MS degree, where she studied wine aroma and flavor precursors. She soon will be the assistant professor of enology at Cornell University's New York State Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva, N.Y., effective Jan. 1, 2009.



Dr. Mansfield in her Enology Lab, 2-15-05

You can check out how Dr. Mansfield makes wine from Frontenac here: <http://www.littlefatwino.com/akmfrontenac.html>

PS: Anna Katharine let me know that she has some small revisions before her dissertation is finalized. The PhD should be coming in the mail in about three months. She will then be an official member of the "Piled Higher & Deeper" crowd.

September 21-23, 2008 grape maturity readings from ISU's research farms:
<http://www.ag.iastate.edu/farms/>

		9/22/2008 Armstrong, IA	9/22/2008 Ames, IA	9/23/2008 Nashua, IA	9/21/2008 Crawfordsville, IA
Cayuga White	Brix			21	
	Initial pH			3.3	
	Titrateable Acids			0.76	
Chambourcin	Brix	18.9	20.2	20.2	19.1
	Initial pH	3.41	2.93		3.24
	Titrateable Acids	1.39	1.34		1.05
Chancellor	Brix		20	19.3	
	Initial pH		3.02	3.46	
	Titrateable Acids		0.89	0.99	

Corot Noir	Brix		17.3	17	
	Initial pH		2.98	3.39	
	Titrateable Acids		0.71	0.99	
Cynthiana	Brix	18.2	18.2	16.9	19.2
	Initial pH	3.23	2.82	3.16	3.13
	Titrateable Acids	1.86	2.05	2.08	1.77
De Chaunac	Brix		18.2	20.2	
	Initial pH		2.9	3.48	
	Titrateable Acids		1.01	0.96	
Esprit	Brix		19.2	19	
	Initial pH		3.24	3.41	
	Titrateable Acids		0.68	0.74	
Frontenac	Brix			24	
	Initial pH			3.47	
	Titrateable Acids			1.41	
Frontenac Gris	Brix		23.6		
	Initial pH		3.16		
	Titrateable Acids		1.38		
GR - 7	Brix		20	20	
	Initial pH		3.24	3.57	
	Titrateable Acids		1.08	0.97	
La Crescent	Brix		22.9		
	Initial pH		3.17		
	Titrateable Acids		1.19		
Landot	Brix		21	20.2	
	Initial pH		3.13	3.57	
	Titrateable Acids		0.82	0.78	
MN 1198	Brix			23	
	Initial pH			3.32	
	Titrateable Acids			1.05	
Marquette	Brix		25.1	24.9	
	Initial pH		3.05	3.52	
	Titrateable Acids		1.13	1.04	

Noriet	Brix		18.1	16.8	
	Initial pH		3.08	3.48	
	Titrateable Acids		0.81	0.87	
NY 76	Brix			22	
	Initial pH				
	Titrateable Acids				
Prairie star	Brix			20	
	Initial pH			3.46	
	Titrateable Acids			0.67	
St. Vincent	Brix	18.7	17.6	19	17.1
	Initial pH	3.39	2.87	3.3	3.16
	Titrateable Acids	1.29	1.39	1.29	1.11
Swenson White	Brix			21	
	Initial pH			3.45	
	Titrateable Acids			0.74	
Traminette	Brix		20.2	20.6	
	Initial pH		2.77		
	Titrateable Acids		0.98		
Vidal Blanc	Brix		20.2	20.5	
	Initial pH		3.07		
	Titrateable Acids		1.06		
Vignole	Brix		22.2	22	
	Initial pH		3.03	3.26	
	Titrateable Acids		1.5	1.32	

8th Annual Iowa Organic Conference – 11-24-08

When: Monday, November 24, 2008

Where: Scheman Building, Ames, Iowa

Keynote Speaker: Bob Scowcroft, Executive Director of the Organic Farming Research Foundation
“Beyond Organic: Practicing Sustainability in Challenging Times”

Featured Sessions: How to Transition to Organic Farming

Surviving the Floods

Local & Organic Produce

Farm Bill Facts

Marketing in an Ethanol World

Registration: <http://www.ucs.iastate.edu/mnet/organic08/home.html>

Organic lunch and all-day trade show included in registration.

Partners: Iowa Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship

Iowa State University Extension Organic Valley/Organic Prairie
Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture Practical Farmers of Iowa
Midwest Organic & Sustainable Educational Services

Note: Plan on attending the Iowa Organic Association Annual Meeting on Sunday, Nov. 23.
The speaker will be Timothy LaSalle of The Rodale Institute.
4 PM Presentation, 5 PM Meeting, 7 PM Reception

2008 Great Lakes Expo - Fruit, Vegetable & Farm Market Conference

What: One of the largest fruit & vegetable grower conferences in North America. Over 3,700 registered in 2007. This conference will have over 50 sessions, bus tour and trade show.

When: Tues. – Thurs. Dec. 9-11, 2008

Where: DeVos Place Convention Center & Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, Grand Rapids, MI

Cost: varies between \$60 to \$90 each. \$20 discount if pre-registered prior to 11-11-08.

Complete Information: <https://glexpo.com/>

Great Lakes EXPO Farm Market Bus Tour

What: A tour of five farm markets in the Greater Grand Rapids, Michigan area.

When: Monday, Dec. 8, --- the day before the Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable and Farm Market EXPO

Where: Greater Grand Rapids, Michigan area

What: Join the Fruit Growers News, Vegetable Growers News and the Michigan Farm Marketing & Agri-Tourism Association as we visit five phenomenal farm markets.

Why: See how other agri-tourism locations have strategized to maximize year-round sales, while networking with other farm marketers and learning new marketing tips.

Tour Stops: Anderson & Girls Farm Market Hart Christmas Tree Farm
Klackle Orchard Koetsier's Greenhouse Robinette's

Cost: \$149 Includes transportation to all farm markets, lunch and snacks during the tour. Unlimited networking opportunities and information gathering.

Reservations are limited: reserve your spot today here: <https://glexpo.com/register>

More information: <http://bustour.greatamericanpublish.com>

New Things Posted on the Univ. of Vermont's Cold Climate Grape Website

<http://pss.uvm.edu/grape/>

- Presentations by Mark Chien, Wine Grape Educator of Penn State University Cooperative Extension. Mark was the featured guest speaker at the 2008 Grape Workshop & Vineyard Tour on August 6, 2008: "[Need Quality? Try Canopy and Fruit Zone Management Vermont and New Hampshire](#)", "[Grapevine Nutrition](#)", and "[Vineyard Floor Management](#)".
- Presentation given by L.P.Berkett, University of Vermont, at the 2008 Grape Workshop and Vineyard Tour on August 6, 2008: "[Cold Climate Grape IPM - Diseases and Insects](#)".

Show n Tell



(Above) Dr. Rob Denson, President of Des Moines Area Community College drives the DMACC semi tractor and trailer in the Log Cabin Days parade in Indianola, IA. Captain Tab Bartling of the Indianola Police Department was very impressed at how well Rob maneuvered between all the obstacles around the square. Good job Rob! 9-20-08



(Above) Grasshopper ready to munch on some St. Pepin Grapes. 9-24-08



(Left) Chalkridge Vineyard presents check for \$735 to center couple representing the Ft Madison HyVee Relay for Life Team for helping pick their Seyval grapes.

Becky & John Lake (left couple) and Carla & Ray Pilkington (right couple) are the owners of Chalkridge vineyard located at Ft Madison, Iowa.



(Above) Multicolored Asian Lady Beetle (MALB) just about ready to dine on a Concord grape.



(Above) Two MALB's caught in a romantic moment as another MALB to the left heads out to eat some soybean aphids seen on leaf.

Comments from Readers

“My husband and I grow ½ acre of Frontenac grapes in MN. I have had a very difficult time accessing relevant information...your enewsletters are wonderful. Thank you.”

--- Thank You Renae for the kind comment. To-the-point relevance is very important in a busy world!

Quotes of the Week

*“If you want better results, lower your expectations”
“I only have patience for my own ignorance.”*

--- Two quotes gleaned from a recent (unnamed) wine cellar conversation.

Bottom Line: *Clusters in the cluster-thinned and shoot-thinned treatments (and the combination) were more advanced in ripening (as evidenced by the increased brix) compared to the standard treatment. Exposed clusters may have higher brix, higher pH, and especially lower titratable acidity than ‘shaded’ clusters.”*

--- *“Corot Noir Canopy Management & Difference in Vine Size” 2008 research report noted in “Veraison to Harvest” Newsletter noted on next page.*

Neeto-Keeno WWW Stuff

1. *Fifty States of Wine*, Time Magazine 8-28-08:

<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1837245,00.html>

2. Check out the latest Veraison to Harvest Newsletter from the Cornell University Extension Viticulture program: <http://blogs.cce.cornell.edu/grapes/08-veraison-to-harvest-newsletter/>
3. Central Washington University now offers a Global Wine Studies degree, a first of its kind: <http://www.capitalpress.info/main.asp?SectionID=67&SubSectionID=618&ArticleID=44821&TM=51257.21>

Post & View Classified Ads here: <http://iowawinegrowers.org>

Free Posting - Buy or Sell Grapes: <http://www.iowawinegrowers.org>

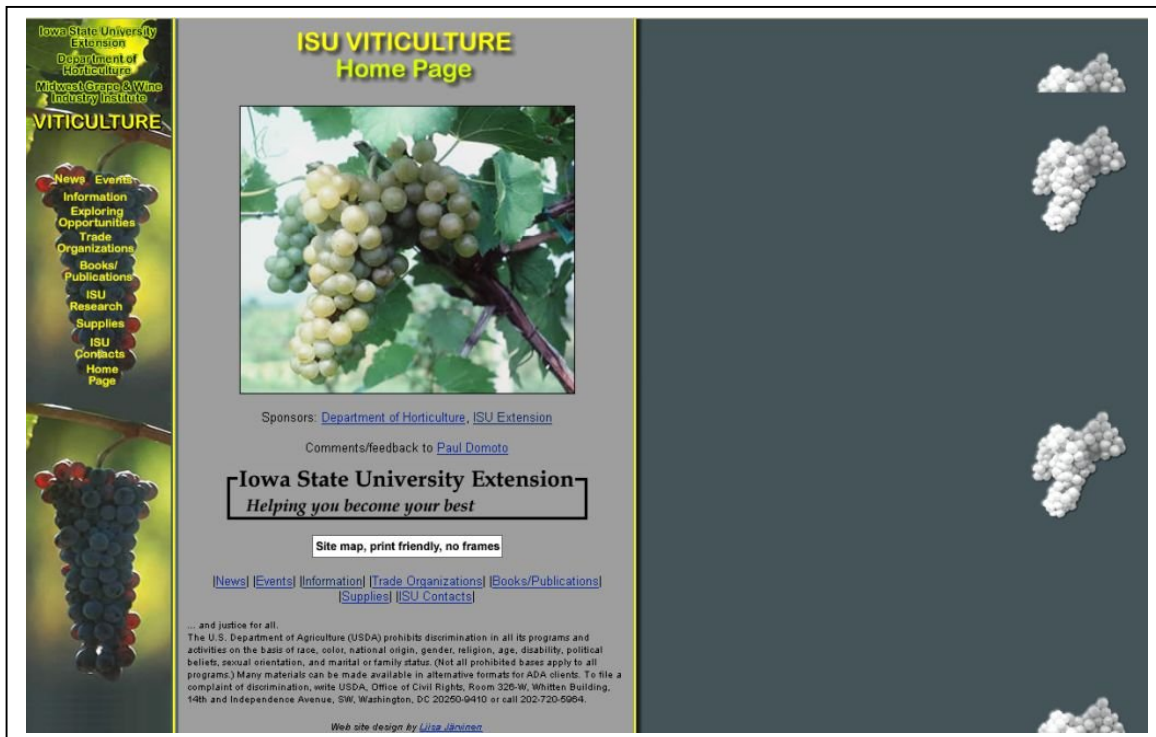
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