



IN THE VINEYARD

Dedicated to the Success of Ontario's Grape Growers

Newsletter Volume 9—October 2011

CHEQUE DAY

All grape growers are invited to pick-up their grape cheques on:

When: Monday, November 14, 2011

9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Where: Grape Growers of Ontario Board Office

1634 South Service Rd, St. Catharines

A reception will be held during cheque pick-up day, where you may take the opportunity to have a snack, coffee and chat with our staff.

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WE GROW THE WINES YOU LOVE



Meet Gord Mitchell and his family from Sprucewood Shores Vineyard in Southwestern Ontario at www.facebook.com/grapegrowersofontario. You don't need a Facebook account to view our page!



In Memoriam

The Grape Growers of Ontario extend our deepest sympathies to the families of Jean George and Dorothy Pennachetti.

Mrs. Jean George, beloved wife of the late William L. George and mother of current Grape Growers of Ontario Board Chair Bill George Jr., passed away suddenly on Friday, October 28, at the age of 81. Jean will be missed by her family and friends. The Grape Growers of Ontario are saddened by the loss of Mrs. George and offer our condolences to the George family.

Mrs. Dorothy Pennachetti, beloved wife of the late John Pennechetti and mother of Len, passed away on Thursday, October 6, after a year-long struggle with cancer. She will be deeply missed by her family and friends. The Grape Growers of Ontario extend our condolences to the Pennachetti family.

Ontario Vineyard Improvement Program Update

Intake One of the Ontario Vineyard Improvement Program closed October 21, 2011. All funds budgeted have been allocated and some growers have been placed in a priority queue for Intake Two.

The offers to proceed for eligible applicants are in the process of being sent out and growers should start receiving them in the mail. A Claims Submission package accompanies the offers to proceed so growers can begin to submit claims immediately. Growers with applications that were submitted after the funds were fully allocated but before the Intake closed will be notified in the coming weeks of the status of their application and placement in priority queue.

The Grape Growers of Ontario website and OMAFRA website have been updated to reflect the Intake closure. Any further submissions will be rejected. Intake Two is expected to launch late in December 2011. We will notify growers when dates have been finalized.

There is an annual review of eligible improvements underway. Recommendations on administrative improvements and any updates to the eligible improvement list will be brought to the OVIP management committee before Intake Two opens.

Grower Education—Upcoming Events

Growing Your Farm Profits

Vineland Station

Day 1—Wednesday, November 30, 9:30 am—3:00 pm

Day 2—Wednesday, December 7, 9:30 am—3:00 pm

Please contact Cathy Mous at 905-516-5188 or cathy.mous@ontariosoilcrop.org to register.

Haldimand

Day 1—Tuesday, November 29, 9:30 am—3:00 pm

Day 2—Tuesday, December 6, 9:30 am—3:00 pm

Farm Credit Canada Forums

2011 Ontario FCC Forums feature CFL legend, Michael “Pinball” Clemens, business succession guru, Dr. John Fast, and extreme adventurer, Jamie Clark, who all want to share their stories of success with growers!

Kingston—November 22

Vaughn—November 24

London—December 6

To register for an FCC Forum or for more information, please visit www.fcc.ca/learning or call 1-800-387-3232.

Industry Updates

GROU program – OFVGA has submitted new products for inclusion on the Grower Requested Own Use (GROU) program. The program allows Canadian farmers to import crop protection products approved for GROU from the U.S. for use on Canadian farms.

IR-4 meetings – At the recent IR-4 (Inter-Regional Research Project No. 4) program meetings, 23 of 45 projects were selected for joint registrations between Canada and the U.S. This means farmers on both sides of the Canada-U.S. border will receive the same minor uses at the same time for the same maximum residue limits.

Technology Day at Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Convention

OFVGA and OMAFRA are working together with VRIC to organize a session focused on new technologies in the fruit and vegetable sector at the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Convention in February. This is the first time this type of session is being offered and is part of OFVGA's ongoing commitment to the betterment of the industry, including supporting continuing education and learning opportunities for growers. For more information on the Convention, visit www.ofvc.ca.

The New Vineland

The Vineland Research and Innovation Centre (VRIC) has launched a capital campaign to raise funds for a new, state-of-the-art 25,000 square foot facility complete with modern laboratories and business spaces. Well-known gardening personality Mark Cullen is the fundraising chair for the New Vineland. The campaign's goal is to raise \$12.5 million to match funds committed by government.



VQA Grape Documentation Requirements

VQA rules require that documentation be provided from GGO on all grapes used in VQA wines. Beginning with the 2011 harvest, the only acceptable "weigh slip" for VQA purposes will be a print out from the electronic SETGO system administered by GGO. Records must include at least the identity of the grower, vineyard location, grape variety, tonnes, brix (as independently tested) and date of harvest. Please note that handwritten slips or any documentation generated outside of the GGO system will not be accepted. Grapes that are not properly registered in SETGO will not be eligible for use in VQA wines.

Congratulations to Tawse Winery who has been named Canada's 2011 Winery of the Year for the second year in a row at the Canadian Wine Awards. Their wines were awarded 24 medals, including six gold.



Cold Hardiness Database Continues to Help Growers Combat Grapevine Winter Injury



Winter injury is a major threat to the grape and wine industry, and this year, Brock's Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI) continues to monitor and gather data for Canada's grape growers.

CCOVI, along with the Grape Growers of Ontario and KCMS Applied Research and Consulting, is continuing with its Regional Grapevine Bud Hardiness Program. With this year's program, initiated in October, CCOVI will track the vines' progress in acclimating to the cold to help grape growers manage winter injury for the 2011/12 season.

Each winter, bud hardiness ratings from Ontario's Designated Viticulture Areas are compiled into a database called VineAlert. Using this data, grape growers can determine when to use protective actions such as wind machines to protect grapevines from cold injury.

Preliminary studies have shown that the previous growing season has a big impact on vine hardiness, says Kevin Ker, CCOVI professional affiliate and project researcher. Researchers expect that vines may be slower to develop hardiness this fall due to the prolonged wet weather compared to last fall's ideal conditions.

"This ongoing research should help us understand why and how to develop practices to manage this situation and give growers good advice to make sure that vines are in the best shape to handle winter temperatures," says Ker.

VineAlert can be found at www.ccovi.ca/vine-alert. Growers and researchers who sign up on "My Alerts" can obtain data based on location, time and cultivar and receive up-to-date notices about new winter injury data.

This initiative is part of the \$1.4 million in funding under Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's (AAFC) Developing Innovative Agri-Products Initiative, which supports industry-led research and innovation. This outreach project is a collaborative effort between AAFC, the Grape Growers of Ontario, Ontario Grape and Wine Research Inc., Weather Innovations Incorporated, KCMS Applied Research and Consulting and CCOVI. This is part of CCOVI's heightened emphasis on outreach to the grape and wine industry.



Agricorp Programs for Grape Producers



Production Insurance for Yield Reductions and Crop Losses

The Production Insurance plan for grapes provides protection for all fresh and processing varieties of grapes against yield reductions and crop losses caused by insured perils. A list of insured perils is available at www.agricorp.com.

Renewing Production Insurance for Grapes

You will receive your renewal package outlining your coverage options and deposit amount for 2012 soon. Be sure to review your responsibilities and the coverage shown on your renewal notice. Your coverage will reflect the coverage you chose last year, unless you contact us by December 20, 2011 to change your coverage options.

How to participate

2012 Production Insurance deadlines for grapes	
Action required	Deadline
Last day to cancel your 2012 insurance contract	December 20, 2011
Apply for coverage or change your coverage selection	
Pay your premium deposit (non-refundable)*	
Declare assignment of indemnity	
Pay balance of your premium	May 1, 2012

*Your premium deposit is 25 percent of an estimated underwritten value at the time of application. An Agricorp adjuster will determine this value with you. Final premium is calculated in the spring.

Grape vine rider

Grape categories	2012 Customer premium rates by coverage level			
	70%	75%	80%	85%
French hybrids	2.46%	2.74%	3.07%	3.44%
Labrusca	2.56%	2.85%	3.20%	3.58%
Vinifera	4.44%	4.94%	5.55%	6.87%

The rider gives you the advantage of additional protection if your grape vines die as a result of any of these insured perils:

- Drought
- Excessive wind*
- Flood
- Freeze
- Hail
- Ice damage
- Lightening

*More details on this peril are available in the *Contract of Insurance, Part III – Fruit crops insuring agreement*.

To be eligible for the grape vine rider, you must have insured your grapes for a minimum of two years. Your coverage is based on the healthy vines in your inventory that are at least two years old.

Agricorp Programs for Grape Producers

Cost of removal and replanting	
Grape category	Claim price = \$/vine*
French hybrids	\$14.29
Labrusca	\$14.45
Vinifera	\$12.78

*Claim prices are available with a deductible of 12.5 percent

AgriStability Protects Producers From Large Declines in Farming Income

If you are an Ontario grape grower, you need to know about AgriStability. The program protects producers from large declines in their farming income due to market conditions, production loss or increased costs of production. Your allowable income and expenses for all the commodities you produce are used to calculate your margins, protecting the income of your whole farm.

Fees due by December 31

If you have not paid your 2011 AgriStability fee, you must pay the fee by the December 31, 2011 deadline to be eligible for a benefit. A late penalty will be added to your fee.

Interim payments available

If you are experiencing financial pressure you can apply to receive an interim AgriStability payment before you complete your fiscal year. An interim payment is half your estimated 2011 AgriStability benefit. To apply, download an Interim payment application at www.agricorp.com or contact Agricorp for a printed application.

How to participate

To sign up for 2012 AgriStability, send your completed 2012 New Participant Form to Agricorp by April 30, 2012. You can download a 2012 New participant form at www.agricorp.com or contact Agricorp for a printed form.

Self-Directed Risk Management Plan Available for Grape Growers

The Self-Directed Risk Management (SDRM) plan for edible horticulture is part of the new Risk Management Program to help producers manage risks beyond their control, like fluctuating costs and market prices. Under this plan, Ontario producers of edible horticulture commodities can establish an account with Agricorp and receive matching government contributions to help cover risks to farm business.

How to participate

Participant packages were mailed to eligible producers in the fall. The deadline to submit a deposit request is February 1, 2012 or 90 days after the date on the deposit notice.

Contact Agricorp

Phone: 1-888-247-4999

7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday

Fax: 519-826-4118

contact@agricorp.com

www.agricorp.com





Focus on the Grower: Daniel Lenko

Daniel Lenko is a third generation grape grower who took over the family farm in Beamsville in 1998. Since then his passion for growing led to the establishment of a winery and is visible in his hands-on operation. We recently spoke with Daniel to learn about his experience as a grape grower.

QUESTION: Tell us about your farm's history.

ANSWER: The farm was purchased by my grandfather, John, and my dad, William, in 1947. At that time, the farm was planted with traditional labrusca grapes and hybrids. They bought a second farm in the 1950's, and my dad bought another parcel of land in the 1980's. Today we have a total of 33 acres. In 1959 my father planted the first Chardonnay vines in Canada. He continued with his pioneering plantings of Merlot in 1974, Riesling in 1980, and Viognier in 1993.

I was looking for a way to reach out to the customer directly and in 1999 the winery was established. From a size stand point I wanted to make our acreage more profitable. The winery was a value-added profit.

Q: What is unique about your vineyards?

A: We are situated in the Beamsville Bench appellation. We only use the grapes we grow to make our wines. We have the oldest Chardonnay in Canada. Some of these vines are six to eight inches across which makes harvesting quite labour intensive and requires a lot of hand harvesting.

Q: What keeps you up at night?

A: The weather. We're always worried about rain, especially excessive rain. We're always at the mercy of the gods. Too much rain can play havoc on the grapes.

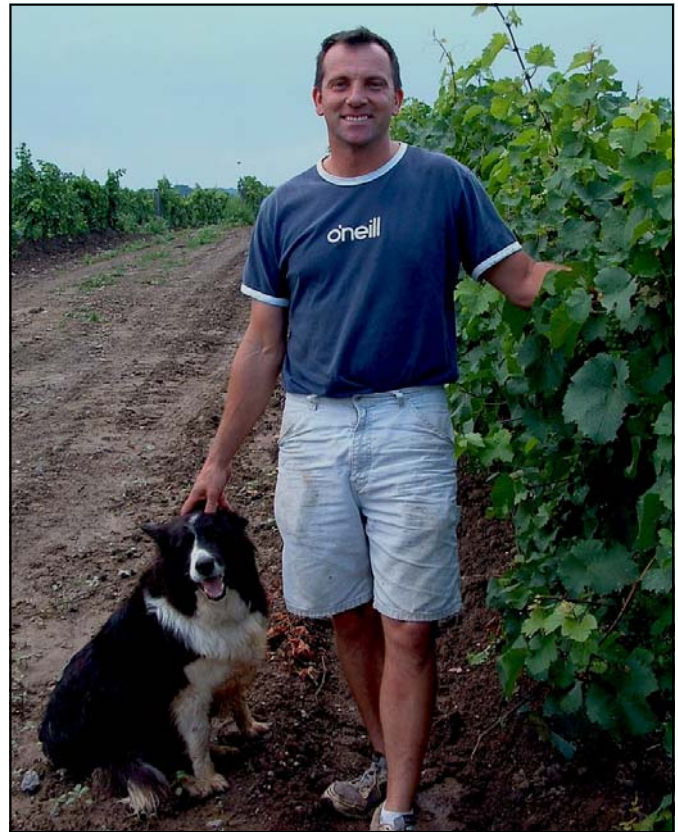
Q: What makes the perfect grape?

A: An early bud break year. A normal spring with ample moisture that is followed by a hot summer and a warm fall. Getting two tonnes per acre. Leaf removal and hand harvesting so there's no spoiling of the grape. You want to be the one to crush the grapes.

Q: What advice would you give a new grower?

A: Everybody's got their own ideas for what they want to do. But the one thing you have to have is a good quality product that provides good value. With the current economy, we've seen bottle prices drop. Whether the industry can survive at that price is another question. These are troubling times for selling wines.

It's important to have good communication with your buyers. You don't know what some people want so it's important to have frank discussions. There has to be mutual respect and you have to listen and be patient. Sometimes things work out well, and sometimes they don't.



Daniel Lenko

Q: What are some of the challenges you see for the industry?

A: It's more of a lifestyle when you're starting a winery. It's a tough lifestyle to have. You have to carry a large inventory and there has to be great strides in distribution. One hour away we have a million people who don't know we exist. It's hard connecting the buyer with the wines. Inter-provincial laws have to be updated. Right now somebody could ship a gun from Alberta to someone in Ontario but I can't ship a bottle of wine to somebody in Alberta. It's a left-over law from prohibition that needs to be removed. Why can't somebody from Manitoba phone me to order a bottle of wine and I have it shipped out to them tomorrow? That would really open a lot of opportunities for wineries.

Q: One of the wines you sell is a Chardonnay, with a rainbow label. How did this come about?

A: The Chardonnay is the same wine as our 2008 Unoaked Chardonnay. When I was selling to the LCBO they suggested a promotion and I thought AIDS research was a cause worth supporting. A dollar from each bottle of Chardonnay sold goes to AIDS research. And what's so interesting is the simplicity of it. We wanted to embrace all of our customers, all year round, and we get to give back to the community.

Did you Know?

GGO Base Brix by Variety Compared to VQA Standards

The Brix scale is a system used to measure the sugar content of grapes and is typically used as a simplified measure of ripeness and quality.

VQA Ontario establishes the minimum brix requirements for grapes by variety, with a different brix required for Provincial designation and for wines identifying the Viticultural Area, Estate Bottled and Vineyard designation. Minimum average brix for Provincial designation ranges from 17.0 to 19.5 brix depending on the variety and Viticultural area designation is 1 – 1.5 brix higher than the Provincial designation requirement.

The average brix of Ontario grapes over the past 12 years has exceeded both VQA Provincial Designation and Viticultural Area minimum standards each year for all varieties. Average brix of grapes are exceeding VQA brix standards by 1 – 3 brix depending on the variety and designation of the wine.

The five-year weighted average brix are used to establish base brix for pricing on the sugar schedules. For the 2011 harvest, base brix is calculated as the weighted average from 2006-2010.

2011 base brix for the major varieties compared to VQA standards are:

Variety	2011 Grape Average Brix	VQA Ontario Provincial Designation Brix	Difference Average Grapes and VQA Provincial (Brix)	VQA Ontario Viticultural Area Designation Brix	Difference Average Grapes and VQA Viticultural Area (Brix)
Cab Franc	21.3	18.0	+3.3	20.0	+1.3
Cab Sauv	21.4	19.0	+2.4	20.0	+1.4
Chardonnay	21.0	18.0	+3.0	20.0	+1.0
Riesling	19.1	17.0	+2.1	17.0	+2.1

LCBO Sales Update — ‘Go Local’ Campaign

‘GoLocal’ is the LCBO’s largest annual promotion of Ontario wines. The LCBO calendar is divided into 13 periods per year, with the ‘GoLocal’ promotion running in period 7 from mid-September to mid-October.

This year’s ‘GoLocal’ marketing efforts included VQA products featured in LCBO stores, tastings, and wine and food pairings hosted at LCBO event kitchens with food prepared on-site by chefs using local ingredients. Customer testimonials were recorded during sampling events to appear on the www.lcbogolocal.com microsite. There were contests and television spots with Canadian personalities, Larry Rosen (owner Harry Rosen), Michael Budman (owner Roots), Lucy Waverman (food writer for Food & Drink and Globe & Mail), Jamie Kennedy (chef and local food and wine ambassador) and Angela Aiello (wine club owner and blogger). The autumn issue of Food & Drink magazine carried more coverage of VQA wines than they have before (including a GGO “We Grow the Wines You Love” ad).

While the LCBO is still analyzing the results of the promotion, it appears that sales growth fell short of the merchandising targets. That said, it is apparent that period 7 VQA sales by volume increased markedly over period 6, showing that targeted promotions result in increases in Ontario wine sales.





For Sale	Contact	Telephone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plastic grape boxes in good condition for \$5 each. 	Andy	905-945-0995
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1998 GMC Handicap-equipped Short Bus with rear side entrance door and lift. Diesel, body excellent, good rubber, runs great. Would be a great people mover, farm truck or market truck. \$3,500 OBO. Pictures available or for viewing. 	Mark	905-327-4878

Niagara; Matt | 905.328.6276
 PEC; Sean | 905.376.2362
 South West; Brian | 519.870.3731
 Simcoe; Dave | 519.586.3713
 Central; Jaymes | 416.460.9665

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To place an ad, please contact
 Gillian McWilliams at 905-688-0990 x224 or
gillian@grapegrowersofontario.com

Grapes for Sale?
**Please call Nick Lemieux at
 905-688-0990 x228**

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