



...Dedicated to the Success of Ontario's Grape Growers

Inside this issue:

2008 Grape Crush	2
Harvest Program	2
Bud Hardiness	3
Agricorp Update	4-6
Mike Weir Winery	6
GGO 60th Anniversary Wine	7
Upcoming Events	7
For Sale / Wanted	8
Farm Workers Right to Unionize	8

Official VQA Wines for the Legislative Assembly of Ontario

The Grape Growers of Ontario was once again pleased to host the Annual Wines of the Legislature Wine Tasting event. Congratulations are extended to Colchester Ridge Estate Winery and Reif Estate Winery. Colchester Ridge Estate Winery of Harrow was chosen for its VQA 2007 Riesling, and Reif Estate Winery of Niagara-on-the-Lake for its VQA 2006 Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve. "The two wines chosen reflect the synergy that occurs between Ontario quality grown grapes and the winemakers who craft Ontario VQA wines," says Bill George, Chair of the GGO.



Nancy and Bernie Gorski, Colchester Ridge Estate Winery and Lou Puglisi, Grape King 2008 - 2009

Bernie Gorski, owner of Colchester Ridge Estate Winery says that "Colchester Ridge Estate Winery is proud that its 2007 VQA Riesling has been chosen to be served as the official white wine of the Ontario Legislature for 2008-2009. We work diligently to produce top quality 100% Ontario grown wines and this is a testament to our hard work. I would like to thank the members of the Ontario Legislature for choosing our wine."

Klaus W. Reif, President and Owner of Reif Estate Winery states that, "We are delighted and honoured to have our 2006 Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve selected for the Ontario Legislature for 2008-2009. This wine is a wonderful red that showcases the 'terroir' of our 125 acre estate vineyard located in the Niagara River sub-appellation. When you taste this wine you will taste the essence of our vineyard."



(Continued on page 2) Lou Puglisi Grape King 2008 - 2009 and Carol Le Page, Reif Estate Winery

GGO Services

- Grape Research, Pricing & Promotion
- Grape Inspection
- Government & Industry Relations
- Government Lobbying
- Government Policies & Regulations
- Farm Labour Legislation & Program
- Chemical Registration
- Nutrient Management
- Crop Insurance Requirements
- KCMS Code-A-Phone
- Business Risk Management (CAIS & SDRM)
- Weather Innovations Incorporated (WIN)

Official VQA Wines (Continued from pg 1)

Kevin Watson,, Director, Grape Growers of Ontario; Hon. Steve Peters, Speaker of the Ontario Legislative Assembly; Hon. Leona Dombrowsky, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs; Debbie Zimmerman CEO Grape Growers of Ontario; and Lou Puglisi, 2008-09 Grape King

Members of Provincial Parliament gathered to select the Legislative Assembly of Ontario's official red and white VQA wine to be served at official legislative functions.

Participants tasted and marked their preferences on a voting ballot to determine which wines would be selected from six VQA wineries.

Buying VQA has more than 17 times the economic impact as buying foreign wine

2008 Grape Crush

	2008 Crush *		2007 Crush		2006 Crush	
	Tonnes	Value (\$)	Tonnes	Value (\$)	Tonnes	Value (\$)
<i>Wine</i>	54,129	\$72,403,127	52,229	\$73,381,323	52,963	\$64,444,129
<i>Jam/Juice</i>	2,601	\$1,087,296	3,755	\$1,259,466	10,231	\$3,124,011
<i>Home wine</i>	202	\$202,960	331	\$294,987	984	\$964,935
Total	56,932	\$73,693,383	56,315	\$74,935,776	64,178	\$68,533,075

* All 2008 Crush information is up-to-date as of December 1, 2008

2008 Harvest Program

\$4 million in funding was secured from the Government of Ontario in late October. "The objective of the Project is to provide one-time financial assistance during the 2008 harvest to Eligible Producers through the purchase of Eligible Grapes. This assistance is intended to stabilize the industry while the Recipient [Grape Growers of Ontario] works with the Wine Council of Ontario, OMAFRA, and other ministries involved in the Wine Secretariat and the Wine and Grape Steering Committee (WAGS), to complete a sustainability strategy for the sector by January 2009."

A total of 85 growers applied to have a portion of their uncontracted wine grapes that are fit for processing and meet acceptable industry standards (brix levels and VA) purchased under the Program. Grapes have been sampled and analysed by independent laboratories to determine whether they meet the Minimum VQA Niagara Brix and 0.25 g/l VA standards. The GGO is in the process of completing verification of eligible tonnage and vineyard inspection.



2008/2009 Cold Hardiness Testing of Grape Buds in Niagara

Grape Growers
of ONTARIO

Brock University



Cultivar	Date	Location	BUD LT 10% °C	BUD LT 50% °C	BUD LT 90% °C
Chardonnay	24-Nov-08	GRS – Vineland (West Central)	-20.4	-21.5	-22.2
	21-Nov-08	West Lakeshore	-17.3	-20.7	-22.1
	26-Nov-08	NOTL – Virgil (East Central)	-18.5	-20.8	-22.2
Riesling	25-Nov-08	GRS – Vineland (West Central)	-19.3	-21.2	-22.3
	26-Nov-08	NOTL – Virgil (East Central)	-19.9	-21.6	-22.7
Sauvignon Blanc	25-Nov-08	GRS – Vineland (West Central)	-13.3	-17.5	-19.8
	26-Nov-08	NOTL – Virgil (East Central)	-15.5	-19.2	-20.8
Pinot Gris	24-Nov-08	GRS – Vineland (West Central)	-18.8	-20.4	-21.7
	26-Nov-08	NOTL – Virgil (East Central)	-20.3	-21.7	-22.4
Pinot Blanc	24-Nov-08	GRS – Vineland (West Central)	-11.8	-19.3	-22.0
Gewurztraminer	24-Nov-08	GRS – Vineland (West Central)	-17.8	-20.8	-22.5
Merlot	25-Nov-08	GRS – Vineland (West Central)	-15.1	-18.3	-20.0
	21-Nov-08	West Lakeshore	-14.5	-17.8	-19.8
	26-Nov-08	NOTL – Virgil (East Central)	-13.9	-18.4	-20.8
Cabernet Sauvignon	25-Nov-08	GRS – Vineland (West Central)	-16.2	-18.8	-21.4
	21-Nov-08	West Lakeshore	-14.5	-18.3	-20.6
Cabernet Franc	25-Nov-08	GRS – Vineland (West Central)	-12.2	-17.6	-19.7
Pinot Noir	24-Nov-08	GRS – Vineland (West Central)	-21.7	22.8	-24.0
	21-Nov-08	W. Lakeshore	-18.1	-20.4	-21.1
Gamay	24-Nov-08	GRS – Vineland (West Central)	-18.6	-20.9	-21.9
	26-Nov-08	NOTL – Virgil (East Central)	-18.9	-21.1	-22.4
Syrah	21-Nov-08	W. Lakeshore	-17.3	-19.2	-21.1

BUD LT10 is the temperature (degrees Celsius) at which 10% of the primary buds will be killed. BUD LT 50 and BUD LT 90 refer to 50% and 90% bud damage respectively. Vine hardiness ratings are site specific and may vary depending on your specific environmental conditions, overall vine health and viticultural practices. KCMS is not responsible for any damage from the use or misuse of this information.



Agricorp Update for the Grape Growers' of Ontario

How to participate in 2009 Production Insurance

New Customers:

Insure all fruit acres in each of the following groups: Apples, Grapes, Tender Fruits – Peaches and Nectarines, Pears, Plums, Sweet Cherries, and Sour Cherries.

Follow good farm management practices and report crop damage immediately.

Meet all deadlines in the following table.

Pay your premium deposit using one of the following methods:

Internet or telephone banking

Mail your cheque, payable to Agricorp Insurance Fund, to: Agricorp, Box 3660, Station Central, Guelph, Ontario, N1H 8M4

An Agricorp representative will visit you to complete your application and verify your coverage and claim options.

Existing Customers:

Renewal Packages for Fruit crops have been sent to producers. Please be sure to read the responsibilities described in your renewal notice. Your Renewal Notice outlines your coverage options and deposit amount based on last year's contract.

Change your coverage, pay your premium deposit, or cancel your coverage before December 20, 2008.

Deadlines	
Action Required	Deadline
Last day to cancel your 2009 insurance contract	December 20, 2008
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, 2009

2009 Premium Rates for Grapes (customer portion only)				
Grape Categories	Customer Premium Rates by Coverage Level			
	85%	80%	75%	70%
Labrusca	5.35%	4.42%	3.94%	3.54%
French Hybrids	5.02%	4.25%	3.78%	3.40%
Vinifera	9.50%	7.67%	6.82%	6.13%



Grapes

Grape claim prices are determined by class. Each class is valued based on last year's negotiated industry price, as determined by the GGO, less harvesting costs and board fees.

Grape Vine Rider

To be eligible for the grape vine rider, you have insured your grapes for a minimum of two years. Your coverage is based on the number of healthy vines at least two years old in your inventory. The following claim prices represent the cost of removal and replanting and are available with a deductible of 12.5 percent:

- Labrusca: \$11.68/vine
- French hybrids: \$11.88/vine
- Vinifera: \$10.91/vine

AgriStability update

AgriStability Deadlines	
Action	Deadline
Last day to pay your 2008 fee with a late penalty	December 31, 2008
Last day to apply for a 2008 interim payment	
Last day to pay your 2009 fee without a late penalty	April 30, 2009



Become a new participant in 2009 AgriStability

To become a new participant in 2009 AgriStability, send a completed New Participant Form to Agricorp. The New Participant Form is available on Agricorp's website at www.agricorp.com.

AgriStability interim payments available

You can get half of your estimated AgriStability benefit early by applying for an interim payment. To apply, you must have completed at least half of your program year. Applications are available at Agricorp.com, or by calling 1-877-838-5144.

Accrual adjustments in your reference margin

Your production margin includes accrual adjustments for changes in your inventory, purchased inputs, accounts receivable, and accounts payable. For 2008 AgriStability, your accrual adjustments will be included in your reference margin as well.

Most participants have already provided Agricorp with accrual information for their reference period. If you have not provided all of your accrual information, Agricorp will contact you to complete a Reference Period Inventory Form.

New structural change calculation for 2008 AgriStability

AgriStability compares your production margin to your reference margin. If you change the production capacity of your operation (by growing different crops, expanding, or downsizing), Agricorp adjusts your reference margin to account for your structural change.

Starting in 2008, there is a new way of calculating structural change. Agricorp adjusts each production margin in your reference period using four steps:

1. Calculate your production margin using BPU values for the reference year. BPU values are expected margins per unit of production.

(Continued on page 6)

Mike Weir Announces New Partnership with Chateau des Charmes and New Location with Niagara Parks Commission

Mike Weir unveiled plans for the future of the award-winning Mike Weir Wine, which includes a new production partnership with Chateau des Charmes and an innovative affiliation with the Niagara Parks Commission. “Our goals for the future of the Mike Weir Wines were to continually build on the quality of the wine, grow our production, and maintain the winery’s strong ties to Niagara,” said Weir. The partnership with Niagara Parks will see the construction of Mike Weir Winery, winery retail and hospitality centre, food and beverage components, the planting of grapes and on-site processing, and a Mike Weir gallery. The concept combines the marketing power and golf tradition of the Niagara Parks with the burgeoning Niagara Wine Industry, all along the storied Niagara Parkway and all linked through golf, VQA wine and Mike Weir.



Agricorp (Continued from pg 5)



Re-calculate your production margin using your 2008 production totals and BPU values for the reference year.

Calculate your structural change ratio by dividing the production margin in Step 2 by the production margin in Step 1.

Multiply your operation’s actual production margin by the ratio from Step 3.

These four steps are repeated for each production margin in your reference period. Your reference margin is an Olympic average of your adjusted production margins. If this adjustment changes your reference margin by at least 10 percent and \$5,000, Agricorp calculates your benefit using your adjusted reference margin.

Canada-Ontario Orchards and Vineyards Transition Program (OVTP)

Applications to the OVTP are accepted on a first-come first-served basis, until annual funding has been fully allocated. Applications submitted to date now exceed funding limits for the first year of the program. Interested growers should continue to submit applications this fall to stay in the queue for funding. As Agricorp processes applications, we will send letters to growers either confirming their acceptance or advising them that they have been placed on a priority list for the 2009 program year. Agricorp will notify applicants once funding becomes available. Growers who have already applied do not need to resubmit their application.

Contact Agricorp at: Phone: 1-888-247-4999 * Fax: 519-826-4118 * Email: contact@agricorp.com

Web: www.agricorp.com * 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday



Up-Coming Events:

• Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association

**January 12, 13 & 14, 2009 at
Niagara Falls Crown Plaza Hotel**



The Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association Annual General Meeting and Convention will be held January 12-14, 2009 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Niagara Falls, Ontario. For more information, visit www.ofvga.org or call 1-866-898-8488.

♦ Ice Wine Festival January 16 - 25, 2009



Tickets on sale soon!

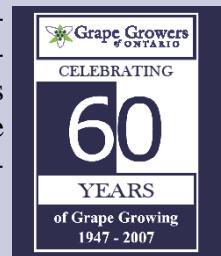
Please call 905 688-0212 or visit www.niagaraicewinefestival.com

A Perfect Gift - Celebrating 60 Years of Grape Growing Experience *Private Labeled 60th Anniversary Grape Growers of Ontario Wine*

The past 60 plus years of grape growing in Ontario are years of remarkable change marked with great challenges, great success and milestones of progress. It is a story of grape growers' entrepreneurial spirit, vision, skill and determination in an ongoing quest for quality and recognition. In celebrating 60 years of grape growing excellence, Private labeled Grape Growers of Ontario 60th Anniversary wine is now available for sale at the Niagara College Wine Store located at the Niagara Culinary Institute, Niagara College, 135 Taylor Road, Niagara-on-the Lake, Ontario.

VQA 2007 Unoaked Chardonnay St David's Bench \$14.95

VQA 2007 Cabernet-Baco-Dornfelder \$10.95



Electronic GGO

If you are interested in receiving the Grape Growers of Ontario newsletter in electronic format, please call Julie Dixon at:



(905) 688-0990 Ext. 228 or email:
jdixon@grapegrowersofontario.com

MCLARTY & CO

Value Beyond Service

Did you introduce a new grape variety?
Or perhaps a new growing or winemaking technique?
Have you attempted new cultural management or planting strategies?
Are the yields with this new product/process less than your target?
If so, your vineyard could be eligible for Scientific Research & Experimental Development Tax credits for up to 70% of your costs.
Contact Kevin Goheen, Director of SR&ED Tax Services, McLarty & Co, 613.726.1010 x227, kgoheen@mcclartyco.ca, for a free consultation.

Disclaimer: This is a paid advertisement and as such does not reflect the views, support and/or opinions of the Grape Growers of Ontario.

To advertise in the newsletter, please contact:

Sylvana Lagrotteria at
(905) 688-0990 Ext. 231

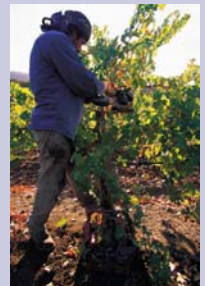


For Sale	Contact	Telephone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Icewine juice; Wilmes grape press, 3-4 tonnes. 	Jim	(519) 676-5512
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wine hose (red) 100 mm diameter, 4 meters long; 60 mm diameter, 4 meters long & 5 meters long. 	Bruno	(905) 562-1212
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steel posts, 7 feet, used. Best offer. • Used wire gate 9, good condition. Best offer. • 8 ft. post and 8 ft cedar post. Excellent condition. • National Grape Concord contract, 6 acres. 	Anton	(905) 643-2423
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large, clean, plastic container - 1500 US gallons. \$700. 	Peter	(905) 562-6295
For Lease		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 acres of grapes, West St. Catharines. 	Doug	(905) 984-3457
Wanted		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wine Bottle Filler • Weighing Scale - floor model • Manure spreader - max. 6 feet. 	Fred	(416) 283-0320
Looking to buy or sell grapes.	Julie at the GGO Office	(905) 688-0990 X228

Ontario Farm Workers - Right to Unionize

Since 1943, most Ontario workers have had the right to join unions. However, farm workers have been excluded as agriculture has been considered unique.

On Monday, November 17, 2008, the Ontario Court of Appeal ruled that farm workers have a right to unionize. The Court decided that the Agricultural Employees Protection Act that bars farm workers from unionizing is unconstitutional. It is estimated that the ruling will impact approximately 32,000 farm workers in Ontario.



Season's Greetings

The Board of Directors and staff of the GGO extend our best wishes to you and your family for a joyous and peaceful holiday season and a healthy, happy and prosperous New Year.

