

August 2017 Victor's Newsletter

First it was cherries, then apricots, plums, chokecherries, pears, and pretty soon apples. And of course the grapes. From my own experience and hearing from others, grapes are ripening a lot earlier than normal. I'm already having to roll out the bird netting for the Chancellor, Leon Millot, and Pinot Meunier. I've heard many of our customers who have already gotten their nets out. I imagine the mild spring and extended heat this summer has something to do with it. I will have the crusher destemmer and bladder press ready for renting, plus try to make sure I have enough supplies on hand to meet your winemaking needs.

I ran across some country wine recipes that may be helpful to you as you try to figure out what to do with this year's fruit largess. They come from WineMaker magazine, which is a great resource for all things winemaking: <https://winemakermag.com/2-10-can-t-miss-country-wine-recipes>

Harvesting and storing homegrown Hops. For the many of you who have planted and coaxed along your hop plants, here's a link provided by the Home Brewers Association on harvesting, preparing, and storing your home-grown hops.

https://www.homebrewersassociation.org/how-to-brew/how-to-harvest-prepare-and-store-homegrown-hops/?utm_source=informz&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=default&zs=3avaA1&zl=h4Tv3

NEW PRODUCTS, SUPPLIES, AND OTHER OFFERINGS.

Escali Digital Scales. We have two models in now: The PR500S Pico scale with a capacity of 500 gr. and to 0.1 gr., and the L-Series Scale with a capacity of 125 gr. and precision to 0.01 gr. I have found that the scales good to 1 gram increments are not good enough when you're trying to measure tartaric acid, acid blend, and even potassium metabisulfite in the quantities typical of home winemaking.

Availability of Local Grapes. (Buy Local – Crush Local.) I've provided at the end of this newsletter a listing of some of the many grapes growers in the Middle Rio Grande Valley that are happy to sell by the bucket, the pound, and possibly by the ton. You are free to contact and purchase the grapes directly from them. This can offer a great opportunity for you to see where the grapes are coming from, and to get to know more about the grapes and growers in our region. When you contact the grower, besides asking about price, availability, and whether or not you pick the grapes, you might want to ask about the pH and sugar levels (°Brix), and if available, Titratable Acidity (TA). Keep in mind that if the grapes are not within the following ranges, they can often be adjusted, for example, with addition of tartaric acid in the case of high pH or low acidity, or sugar to bump up the °Brix.

Published recommended levels are:

White wine grapes: °Brix – 18 to 22, pH – 3.0 to 3.2, TA – 0.65% to 0.75% (6.6 g/L – 7.5 g/L)

Red wine grapes: °Brix – 21 to 24, pH – 3.4 to 3.5, TA – 0.60% to 0.70% (6.0 g/L – 7.0 g/L)

1.0 g/L (0.13 oz./gal.) addition of Tartaric Acid will increase the Titratable Acidity by 1.0 g/L and will decrease the pH by 0.1 pH unit.

For acid adjustment with tartaric acid in English units:

Add 0.13 oz./gal. tartaric acid to increase TA by 1g/L and decrease pH by 0.1 unit

For example, if you have 5 gallons of red wine must with a pH of 3.8 and want to get it to 3.5:
Ounces of tartaric acid to add = 5 gal. x (3.8-3.5) x 0.13 oz./gal = 5 gal x 3 units x 0.13 oz./gal = 1.95 oz.
or 2 oz. = 56.7 g

Since wine must is a complex of different acids and buffers, it's not entirely predictable how a certain amount of acid added to the must will affect the pH and TA. Consequently, it's always a good idea when adjusting pH and acidity to do it in increments. So in this example, add 1 oz., allow it to react a few hours, and measure. Then add more as necessary, possibly recalculating the amount needed to get to your target number.

There are available numerous sources of information on the subject such as WineMaker's Academy on-line. And I'm always happy to try to help address your specific needs.

Clone Kits

The **New Moon Clone Kit** has proven very popular and I have often been caught without them on the shelf. I've assembled some more and hope to keep them stocked. I did get one comment that there was a bit too much sweet orange peel in the recipe (3 oz.). That's what the clone recipe calls for and in most cases it seems just fine. However, if you make it, you might consider holding 1 oz. in reserve in case you decide 2 oz. is just right. Your comments and suggestions are always welcome and put to good use. So thank you.

Another kit I am planning to roll out this month is a **Pliny the Elder** clone based on the published recipe. We will do a test brew in the shop to see how it turns out before we put it on the shelf. And we're continuing refinement of our **Double White IPA**. Will be available soon too.

HopShots in 3 mL and mL doses

Whole Leaf Hops from Freshops. A new shipment that includes 2 oz. packs of Amarillo, Cascade, Centennial, CTZ, Fuggle, Golding, Magnum, and Mosaic.

Variable Volume 100L Stainless Steel Fermenter

Manual Crusher Destemmers. I have two reserved for delivery end of August. I'm told that they are part of the last shipment coming in from Italy, so no more after that. Let me know if you'd like me to hold one for you.

Fruit Presses. 50lb. capacity Wooden/ratchet type and a smaller stainless steel/aluminum one.

Grainfather All Grain Brewing System on sale for \$699.

March Pump 815-SS Hi-temp Beer Pump

FOR RENT

Crusher Destemmer, Bladder Press

CLASS SCHEDULE

Wine Class. We will have a winemaking class on **Saturday, August 26, from 1:00 to 4:00.** Emphasis will be on making wine from fresh grapes, but we'll demonstrate using a wine kit. We will cover fruit processing equipment, sanitation, adjustments to pH and total acidity, and the basics of sanitation, fermentation, and bottling. If we have grapes available, we'll run some through the crusher destemmer.

Brew Class. Ted will teach another brew class toward the end of September. Please give us a call if you're interested in attending and I'll make sure to let you know the date as soon as we have that nailed down. Be prepared to participate.

Both wine and brew classes are \$10 for individual or couple. Call ahead to hold a spot: 505-883-0000

Bi-monthly Cheese Making Group. The next meeting of the Cheese Making Group under discussion. Anyone interested in joining can call me for date and time. The group is self-forming and growing. Next meeting will either be at Victor's or at Meghan's goat farm.

Shop Holiday Schedule

We will close September 3rd and 4th for the Labor Day weekend.

LOCAL GRAPES AVAILABLE

Ambrosia Springs Vineyard 505-573-7924 Albuquerque South Valley ambrosiasprings@comcast.net

We expect up to 2 tons of **Leon Millot** available around the 3rd week of August.

\$0.50/lb. or \$12 per 5 gallon bucket. U-pick

La Joya (a micro vineyard). Albuquerque South Valley walkingwinemaker@hotmail.com 505-255-7361

The first to harvest (middle of August) is the **Marquette** \$0.50/lb. There will be approx. 600 lbs. avail.

Makes a great stand-alone robust red wine.

Next (beginning of September) is the **Traminette** \$0.50/lb. There will be approx. 1100lbs. Makes a great spicy white wine.

Then the **Baco Noir** (end of September) \$0.40/lb. approx. 1700 lbs. Baco makes a great table wine for hearty foods, and it is used to mix with other reds to add color and lower pH.

Last is the **Vidal Blanc** \$0.45/lb. approx. 1400 lbs. Vidal Blanc makes a great white with big flavor and mouth feel.

Prices listed are for picked grapes. If you wish to pick them yourselves, you are welcome to do that.

Luz de Cielo Vineyard [505-459-9997](tel:505-459-9997) Los Chavez. U-pick unless otherwise arranged.

Reds - **Chambourcin, Marechal Foch, Leon Millot.** The Marechal Foch and Leon Millot will be ready for picking soon

Whites - **Golden Muscat, Cayuga White, Vidal Blanc**

Call for prices and availability

Martin Padilla [505-274-9003](tel:505-274-9003), Bernalillo

Grapes for picking: **Baco Noir, Cabernet Franc, and Riesling**

"U PICK" for \$.70 Cents a pound. I have scales, everyone bring their own containers for grapes, CASH

ONLY.

In the past Riesling has matured around the middle of September. Boca Noir around the end of September, and Cabernet Franc the first of October. This year we had a warm spring and not sure what will happen. I wish I had that crystal ball to predict the future.

Anyone interested please call me and let me know what grape they would like to pick. I will put their names on a list and call them individually when the sugar content test results reflect the grapes are ready to pick. I test the grapes several times each week and will call when they are ripe.

Jaramillo Vineyards [505-859-0951](tel:505-859-0951) or [505-895-0684](tel:505-895-0684). Belen

Petit Verdot, Barbera, Tempranillo, Chambourcin

Call for prices and availability

Walter Morris 505-345-3245 Albuquerque North Valley

Varieties that will be available include **Muscat, Chardonnay, and Vidal Blanc**. These will be U-pick.

Please call for prices and timing of availability.

It's always a pleasure to hear from you and have you visit the shop. Thanks for coming in.

Happy Fermenting, Jens