



Nebraska VineLines

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Lincoln | EXTENSION

University of Nebraska Viticulture Program

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**July 2023
Issue XXVI – 5**

HARVEST TIME!

Some Eastern Nebraska vineyards will soon start harvesting, with Central and Western Nebraska soon to follow, so may a good harvest reflect the “fruits of your labor”! As Wine Business Monthly’s Jake Lorenzen said, “I love almost everything about wine, wandering through the vineyards enthralls me any time of the year and the excitement and tension of harvest exhilarates me.” This comment reminds me to encourage all Nebraska growers and winemakers to avoid the “tension” part by using diligence in your preharvest planning and preparations. Some important things to consider (not necessarily in this order):

- Be sure to observe PHI (pre-harvest intervals) regarding any fungicide applications. Follow all label requirements - the label is the law!
- Equipment. Make sure that you have all of the equipment that you need and that it is clean and in good working order.
- Harvest labor. If you are harvesting by hand, be sure to have harvest personnel ready to report when you are going to need them.
- Machine harvest. If contracting with a harvest machine owner, be sure to have agreement on availability, price and equipment size (turning ratio, etc.). If using your own harvester, does it need a tune-up? Is it clean? Does it need any parts replaced? Do you have replacement parts available (bow rods, etc.)?
- Harvest containers. Whether harvesting by machine or by hand, buckets for hand harvest, bins for machine harvest, do you have enough? Are they clean?

- Bin dumpers, wagons, tractors and other field equipment should be tested/checked for potential efficient use (is everything ready to go at a moment’s notice?)
- If purchasing fruit, communicate expectations. Crop estimate? Berry parameters (pH, degrees Brix, TA, other considerations?) Is it to be delivered or picked up? Communication is key!
- Tank space/barrel capacity. Do you have enough? Although it varies with cultivar, a general rule is to have 210 gallons capacity for white wines per ton of fruit and 250 gallons for red wines. Ultimately, storage capacity should be at least 165 gallons per ton.
- In the winery. Is all equipment clean, tested and in good working order? Do any items need repair or maintenance procedures?
- Sanitation. As mentioned in several of the previous items, cleanliness is a must. Have you cleaned and sanitized all parts of the processing equipment? In this case, “Cleanliness is (really) next to godliness”!

Although there are many additional suggestions that I might mention, be well prepared, plan ahead, and process great Nebraska wine! We at the University of Nebraska Viticulture Program wish you a bountiful tension-free harvest and we can hardly wait to try wines from the Nebraska 2023 vintage!

Don’t miss the calendar on page 2.

Items for your Calendar:

August 16, 2023 2023 International Cold Climate Wine Competition, held at University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum in Chanhassen, Minnesota, entries and wines must be received by August 11, 2023. See recently forwarded information for details.

November 4, 2023, Holiday TOAST

May 17-18, **2024**, TOAST Nebraska, Stinson Park, Omaha, NE



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