



# Nebraska VineLines

UNIVERSITY OF  
**Nebraska**  
Lincoln<sup>®</sup> EXTENSION

University of Nebraska Viticulture Program

Editors: Dr. Paul Read, Professor of Horticulture & Viticulture and  
Stephen J. Gamet, Department of Agronomy & Horticulture

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## WOW! WHAT A WORKSHOP!

### That was the best Extension program that I have ever experienced!

Such were the comments from attendees of the Smart Viticulture Workshop held at Soaring Wings Winery on Saturday, June 23, 2018. Following words of welcome from Jim Shaw, Soaring Wings Winery owner and winemaker, Dr. Richard Smart led off the program with a detailed and in-depth discussion of Canopy Management designed to provide “management of vine balance for better wine and for profit”. Dr. Smart, “The Flying Vine Doctor”, presented basic principles to govern canopy and vine management. His “Golden Rules” suggest 1) pruning should be aimed at leaving a range of 9 to 14 buds per pound of pruning mass and 2) aim for 4 to 5 shoots per foot of canopy.

He also made the point that you should be able to see another person on the opposite side of a balanced canopy, that is, if the person can't be seen, the canopy is too dense. Dr. Smart also discussed the use of cover crops for reducing excessive vegetative growth (vines that are unbalanced) along with the choice of training system. Dr. Nelson Shaulis, inventor of the Geneva Double Curtain (GDC) training system, was a mentor to Dr. Smart and Dr. Smart emphasized that much of Dr. Shaulis' advice still holds true today.

Dr. Smart also introduced the subject of Trunk Diseases, primarily caused by *Botryosphaeria*, a fungal disease not so affectionately referred to as “Bot”. He said that this is a severe problem that has world-wide implications for the grape industry, having found it in many of the world's grape producing regions such as Europe, Australia, New Zealand, China and the Midwestern part of the United

States. It appears to be almost epidemic and Dr. Smart proposed steps that could be taken, such as treating all pruning wounds with fungicides such as Rally or Topsin, and cutting infected trunks back to at least 8 inches (20 cm) below the infected part of the trunk and re-growing new trunks.

Dr. Smart's discussions were followed by a presentation on Crop Estimation by Paul Read, UNL Viticulture Program and by a discussion on Herbicide Drift by Mike White, Iowa State University viticulturist. Dr. Read presented reasons why crop estimation is so important and described methods to compute crop estimation. The traditional system and the “Log Phase” systems are described in the “Crop Estimation” fact sheet that can be found on the UNL Viticulture web site <http://viticulture.unl.edu> Mike's discussion reminded attendees that they can be their own worst enemy if not following the proper weed management precautions. He also provided a number of examples of problems related to herbicide drift and improper use of herbicides.

After lunch, Dr. Smart spent more than an hour in the vineyards cutting into and cutting down several vines, with the resulting observation that all of the vines were infected with *Botryosphaeria*. What a shock to all in attendance! Even vines that appeared to be producing a modest crop were infected. Lots more research needs to be pursued to learn more about this disease, referred to as “insidious” by Dr. Smart and is epidemic in the grape and wine industry. More information on this problem will be forthcoming from the UNL Viticulture Program and from many researchers elsewhere in the grape and wine world.

The program concluded with a winery and brewery tour and discussion, led by Jim Shaw. For many in the audience these discussions were enlightening and the samples illustrated wine and beer making methodologies and characteristics. Appreciation is extended to Jim and Sharon Shaw for graciously hosting this workshop.

#### **IMPORTANT DATES TO NOTE:**

**Tuesday, July 24, 5:00 pm** – Session number 3 in the Serial Tailgates series - Mileta Vista Winery, St. Paul, Nebraska.

**Wednesday, July 25, 5:00 pm** – Session number 3 in the Serial Tailgates - James Arthur Vineyards, Raymond, Nebraska.

These tailgates will provide the opportunity to see the impact of the pruning efforts that took place at the first installment of the series and what was observed at the second session (fruit set stage). It is anticipated that the vines that we are following throughout the growing season will be at *veraison*, or

perhaps in some cases approaching harvest maturity. Please note: you do not have to have participated in either of the first or second tailgates to attend one of these third tailgates. We will review what took place at the first and second tailgates and evaluate the vines at this stage of development. We'll also discuss what vineyard tasks need to be addressed at that time and stage of vine development.

**SAVE THE DATE! September 22, 2018 - FALL VITICULTURE WORKSHOP – SAVE THE DATE!** Up-dates on the Trunk Disease challenges, the progress of the 2018 vintage and other timely topics will be featured, with further details to be noted in future issues of the Nebraska VineLines and on the University of Nebraska Viticulture web site <http://viticulture.unl.edu>.

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### **Reminder Calendar:**

**July 24, 2018, Tuesday, 5:00 pm** Session number 3 in the Serial Tailgates series – Mileta Vista Winery, St. Paul, Nebraska.

**July 25, 2018, 5:00 pm, Wednesday** Session number 3 in the Serial Tailgates – James Arthur Vineyards, Raymond Nebraska

**July 30-Aug 2, 2018** VitiNord 2018 in Sweden and Denmark. Details And Registration: <http://www.vitinord2018.org/>

**September 22, 2018 Fall Viticulture Workshop** Up-dates on the Trunk Disease challenges, the progress of the 2018 vintage and other timely topics will be featured, with further details to be noted in future issues of the Nebraska VineLines and on the University of Nebraska Viticulture web site <http://viticulture.unl.edu>.

**November 4-6**, Vindemia, Nebraska City, NE (details later).



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