



# Nebraska VineLines

UNIVERSITY OF  
**Nebraska**  
Lincoln | EXTENSION

**University of Nebraska Viticulture Program**

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## **END-OF-YEAR WRAP-UP AND HOLIDAY GREETINGS**

2018 was sure a real up-and-down year for Nebraska and Midwest grape growers, and the wine industry as a whole. Some growers experienced crop loss to hail and some to herbicide drift (although it doesn't appear that the damage was as frequent as in previous years), while other growers experienced good to excellent yields and grape quality. Except for the aforementioned hail events, the weather was for the most part conducive to good vine growth and to good ripening conditions. As a result, I can hardly wait to sample some great 2018 vintage Nebraska wines!

### **Seasons Greetings**

The University of Nebraska Viticulture Program (UNVP) wishes you and those dear to you an opportunity to relax and recharge as we enter the Holiday Season and offer our Best Wishes for a great year and vintage in 2019! Sit back in your easy chair and celebrate with some great Nebraska wines! Paul, Steve, Ben, Mustafa, and Diane

**Field Days and Workshops.** We held "[Serial Tail Gates](#)" at two vineyards (Thanks, Josh and Jim at James Arthur Vineyards and Mick at Miletta Vista Winery for hosting and providing "teachable moments"! ). These tail gates were well-attended and much appreciated by the participants. "It was fun to see the results of our pruning efforts and to observe the progression of vines that we pruned as we followed them from pruning in February to fruit set in June and veraison in late July."

Smart Viticulture Workshop - We were fortunate to be able to take advantage of the availability of Dr. Richard Smart, a. k. a., "The Flying Vine Doctor" to headline a workshop held at Soaring Wings Vineyards (Thanks Jim and Sharon Shaw). Dr. Smart followed discussions by UNVP staff on Crop Estimation and Harvest Prediction with observations regarding the world-wide threat of Trunk Diseases and then provided Hands-on" field experience for the participants to enable them to see what these diseases look like. Jim Shaw donated a few vines to be sacrificed to illustrate Dr. Smart's points. (See the attached PowerPoint article related to the UNVP trunk disease assessments from the research planting at Nebraska City-provided in multiple versions, ppsxshould work if you do not have PowerPoint).

Trunk Disease Workshop –Commercial grape growers learned about specific causes of early vine decline and death, including *Eutypa* spp., *Botryosphaeria* spp. and related fungal trunk and cordon pathogens. Relating disease incidence to winter injury was part of field observations for growers from Nebraska, South Dakota and Kansas. It is becoming apparent that these trunk disease organisms are part of a complex of issues relating to early vine decline and death, that often in the past had been chalked up to winter injury or "old age". It is clear that this will be an ongoing issue that needs to be monitored and investigated further in the future.

**Chinese Grape and Wine Industry.** I had the wonderful opportunity to present a Keynote lecture at the Second World Beverage Conference

in Xi'an, China in October. Since the Organizing Committee was paying all of my costs - travel, accommodation, meals, registration, etc., I couldn't turn down the chance to participate in the conference and to learn more about the Chinese grape and wine industry. China has been the "sleeping giant" of the wine world and is poised to become the largest producer of grapes and wine in the world, possibly in the near future. It is second only to Spain in terms of acres under vine (followed by France and Italy). Currently many of China's vineyards are newly planted, but when their young vines reach full potential, they are poised to catch up to the European countries that are the current leaders in wine production (Italy, France and Spain). The United States is fourth in wine production, still ahead of Australia and Argentina, but China is next, in fact exceeding South Africa and Chile!

As with so many other categories of production of goods (clothing, steel, to name a few), China can throw enormous resources at a problem or issue, and so it has been the case with the grape and wine industry. Of course one of their greatest resources is their huge population, so labor isn't an issue. Furthermore, that large population has

discovered a thirst for fine wines, so the European industry has begun investing heavily in vineyards and wineries, serving both as advisors and investors. China is now being recognized as a major market, with the Australian industry capitalizing on their proximity to China to capture a significant share of the Chinese market. I had the opportunity to visit the College of Enology at the Northwest Agriculture and Forestry University and their new building is huge and "state of the art", with teaching laboratories, pilot plant wineries and cellars capable of storing huge quantities of wine. They had no problem with me taking pictures, so I was able to make a visual record of their facilities. I also had the chance to participate in a wine tasting event (arranged just for me and two Australian researchers) and although many Chinese wines are not up to the highest of world standards in terms of quality, I did taste some excellent wines, a taste of the future? Stay tuned!

CHEERS AND MERRY CHRISTMAS, HAPPY CHANUKAH, KWANZAA GREETINGS, AND WHATEVER HOLIDAY YOU MAY CELEBRATE!

- MAY YOU LOOK FORWARD TO A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR!

### Reminder Calendar:

**1-(4-5)**, Kansas Grape Growers & Winemakers Association at the [Doubletree by Hilton – Lawrence, KS](#). Details later: <https://www.kansasgrapesandwines.com/>

**1-(10-12)**, Great Plains Growers Conference - Missouri Western State University in St. Joseph, MO. <http://www.greatplainsgrowersconference.org/>

**1-(29-31)**, Unified Grape & Wine Symposium at the Sacramento Convention Center. Online registration begins Oct. 23, 2018 here: <https://www.unifiedsymposium.org/>

**2-(17-18)**, [Iowa Wine Growers Association Annual Conference](#) at the [FFA Enrichment Center](#) located on the DMACC Campus – Ankeny, IA.

**2-23**, Minnesota Grape Grower Association Cold Climate Conference – Details Later

**3-(6-8)**, Show Me Grape and Wine Conference and Symposium, Hampton Inn & Suites at the University of MO, Columbia, MO. Details later here: <http://gwi.missouri.edu/>

**3-(19-21)**, Eastern Winery Exposition – Syracuse, NY. Details here: <https://easternwineryexposition.com/>



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