



# Nebraska VineLines

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

**University of Nebraska Viticulture Program**

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## **WINTER VINEYARD CHORES – IT'S TIME TO GET READY FOR SPRING!**

The vines are “sleeping”, so we can take a nap too, right? **WRONG!** There's lots to do to be ready for spring, for when the vines “wake up”! Consider the following:

- 1) Evaluate the past season, its successes, problems and challenges. Did some of the management approaches you employed lead to better quality fruit? Were the wines produced as good (better?) as those produced in prior years? What problems occurred? Were they ones that you can fix? Granted, that when Mother Nature throws you a “curveball” (hail, for example), there may not be much you can do, but nutrition, canopy management, vineyard floor management, disease management, other pest problems, are all challenges that you can combat with correct management practices. Plan to put remedial measures into place in advance of the growing season. Plan for success!
- 2) Evaluate winter (fall?) injury. Bring some canes into your home, lab or other room temperature location. The next day slice the buds with a razor or other sharp blade to observe primary bud injury. If serious primary bud damage has occurred, it will be necessary to adjust pruning and leave more bud positions for the coming season (see note below about Pruning Workshops planned).
- 3) Pruning. Plan to begin pruning, if not already initiated. Granted, if labor or other issues require pruning to begin sooner, be sure to prune the hardiest cultivars before those that are susceptible to spring damage. For example, Saint Croix and the Frontenacs should be pruned before Traminette or Chambourcin. By so doing, you can evaluate degree of bud damage and adjust number of bud positions to leave for the more easily damaged cultivars. You may wish to consider “long pruning” or “rough” pruning for the initial pruning, then determine the extent of injury if any, and conduct the final pruning at a later date, perhaps at or near bud break to be sure that enough buds have been left for your target yield.
- 4) Check trellis conditions. Repair broken posts, wires. Be sure drip irrigation systems, if used, are ready to use.
- 5) If changing training systems (e.g., VSP to High Wire), it may be timely to adjust the wire placement, especially if changing to GDC, Smart-Dyson or other split canopy systems.
- 6) Service any equipment needed. Be prepared! Once growth occurs, there will be many demands on equipment and personnel. If dormant sprays for Anthracnose, for example, or use of Amigo oil for bud burst delay, equipment readiness will be paramount. As an aside, much of the viticulture world has settled on use of the term bud “burst” instead of bud “break”; either way, be ready for what could be an early spring (no, I'm not a weather forecaster, but it seems after this long winter that we deserve an early spring, of course with no late frosts!).
- 7) Be sure that your vine orders are up to date. It probably is too late to add major purchases, but checking with nurseries for available planting stock for expansion and/or replacements may be useful. Generally speaking, one should plan

a year in advance in order to get the cultivars and quantities needed, especially if large quantities or newer cultivars are required. Consider your 2020 order now and give the nurseries a “heads-up”.

- 8) Continue to educate yourself. Attend workshops, conferences, talk to fellow growers and winery folks and learn from them as well as sharing your own experiences to help each other out and make the Nebraska grape and wine industry even better. When you can't get out, settle down by the fire with a great glass of Nebraska wine and read a good book on grapes and wines, or perhaps check the internet for other resources, such as web pages and postings from other Universities and researchers.

### **PRUNING FOR OPTIMUM CROPPING**

**WORKSHOP- March 11, 2019**, location to be determined

Workshops are planned to provide growers with information and hands-on activities for determining the best pruning practices for recovery from winter injury and for recovery from trunk disease damage to trunks or cordons. This workshop will also address Early Growing Season Management issues, Disease Management, and Crop Estimation.

**Save the date:** Location, time of day and other details will be posted on the University of Nebraska Viticulture Program (UNVP) web site <http://viticulture.unl.edu> and additional workshops will be announced in the Nebraska VineLines and on the web site.

### **WINTER INJURY REPORT**

The following cultivars have been evaluated in the Lincoln area for bud damage. Percents are given for primary bud survival, for example 80% means that 80% of the buds examined were green and alive and 20% were brown and dead.

Delaware – 100%  
Edelweiss – 97%  
Frontenac - 96%  
La Crescent – 88%  
Leon Millot – 83%  
Marquette – 87%

If you have injury in your vineyards and wish to report it, send your information to Paul Read ([pread@unl.edu](mailto:pread@unl.edu)); or report by phone: 402-472-5136) and we will post the information on the UNVP website.

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## **Reminder Calendar:**

**February 23, 2019**, Minnesota Grape Growers Assn. Cold Climate Conference “As They Sleep We Grow”  
UMN Landscape Arboretum Chaska, MN 55318.. Details later. <https://www.mngrapes.org/>  
**2-(24-26), 2019**, Illinois Grape Growers & Vintners Association at Walkers’ Bluff, Cartersville, IL. Details: <https://illinoiswine.com/events-page/annual-conference/>  
**2-27 to 3-1, 2019**, Beverage – Enology – Viticulture New York (BEV NY) at RIT Conference Center – Henrietta, NY. <http://www.bevny.org/register>  
**3-(6-8), 2019**, Show Me Grape and Wine Conference and Symposium, Hampton Inn & Suites at the University of MO, Columbia, MO. Details: <http://gwi.missouri.edu/conference/>  
**3-(12-14), 2019**, Mead Con, the American Mead Makers Association (AMMA) at the Omni Interlocken in Bloomfield, CO. Details: <http://meadcon.net/>  
**3-(15-16), 2019**, Midwest Aronia Berry Conference – Des Moines, IA. Details later <https://midwestaronia.org/annual-conference/>  
**3-(19-21), 2019**, Eastern Winery Exposition – Syracuse, NY. Details here: <https://easternwineryexposition.com/>  
**3-23, 2019, 9am – 1 pm**, VSP to High Cordon, Designing a Spray Program & Cellar Tour at Chankaska Winery – Kasota, MN. Southern MN Wine Grower Alliance / UMN Extension Field Day. Details: [www.southernminnesotawinegroweralliance.com](http://www.southernminnesotawinegroweralliance.com)  
**3-30, 2019**, Recipe to Reality seminar, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Registration deadline 3-15-2019, Contact Jill Gifford at 402-472-2819, [jgifford1@unl.edu](mailto:jgifford1@unl.edu)  
**7-(7-12), 2019**, International Conference on Grapevine Trunk Disease at Penticton, British Columbia, Canada. Complete details: <http://iwgtd2019.ca/>  
**2020 Events**

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