
THE STOMPER

The Monthly Winemaking Newsletter of grapestompers.com
September, 2001 Issue #14
<http://www.grapestompers.com> 1-800-233-1505

Welcome to the latest issue of "THE STOMPER", a newsletter of winemaking hints and other wine-related articles.

You are receiving this newsletter because you requested a subscription and have an interest in home winemaking. Unsubscribe instructions are at the end of this newsletter.

Feel free to pass along this newsletter to your winemaking friends; we only ask that it be sent in its entirety.

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^ Hot Tips are sprinkled throughout the newsletter

FEATURE ARTICLE: Show Us Your Stuff!
By Brant Burgess, Editor

Several of our customers have remarked that they would like to send us photos of their home winemaking exploits... and have asked if it would be possible to post them online.

Our response is: "Why, certainly!"

I remember how proud I was of my first batch of wine when I made it nearly three years ago. I still have a couple of photos somewhere that testify to my crazy escapades.

In fact, Monty and Brenda Combs of Wilkesboro, NC have done more than threaten to send us photos of their winemaking experiences: they've actually done it... and we've posted two of their pictures!

Now that the ball is rolling, we'd like to include your winemaking / wine enjoying pictures online as well.

Find out how to contribute your winemaking pictures by going to the newest page on our web site:

http://www.grapestompers.com/customers/wine_photos.htm

We hope you'll want to contribute your photos and help this page grow. It'll be proof positive that winemaking is one of the best hobbies around!

Here's to you... and Happy Winemaking!

You can write to Brant at webmaster@grapestompers.com

NEW PRODUCTS

Here is a list of products recently added to our catalog:

- Item # 2320 grapestompers.com cork, #9 X 1.75" \$0.12

The new grapestompers.com signature cork is similar in construction to the famed Altec cork... at less than half the price! Check out workmanship - see a large detailed picture by going to the supplies and equipment page in our online catalog and clicking on the image of the new grapestompers.com cork.

BONNIE'S BIN: I Wasn't Finished with August Yet!
By Bonnie Brown, Manager

Well, is it September already? I hear that some of you are concerned that you are lost in our files because you didn't get the STOMPER yet. Give us time and we will arrive. It's been kind of hectic around the Bodega lately. Lots of things are happening. The latest being today. It was the first day back, for me, after a rainy Labor Day weekend. Tom is off again for a few days. Will we EVER return to normal? Or IS this normal???? Oh, NO. please tell me it is not so!

Anyway lots of orders, customers arriving, customers due in to bottle some wine and our incoming order arrives at the same time! The semi came in the driveway blasting his horn as usual so I can get out there and have the loading dock cleared and ready. But before he can back in I have to move the wheelbarrow that is full of water and sitting smack dab in the way. Golly, I even think that wheelbarrow belongs to me! Used that one a few times over the years.

My husband is building grapestomper's new warehouse and didn't know that we do have to use that space! Hahaha... He is going to be SO mad when he reads this! Oh well!

Also, along with the wheelbarrow I have to move a couple dozen 2x4's of various lengths he has so nicely gotten out the way, HIS WAY!! Again not knowing that we do have to use that space... There was plenty of help unloading though. My husband walked up from the Dance Barn where he was fixin' on something for Tom. The customers stopped the shopping and pitched in. In no time, all the "stuff" was inside! Whew! That is a nasty job on a hot day and it was so nice to have all the help. Thank you all, it was much appreciated! But I now know why they helped: they wanted to get on with the shopping and didn't want to hang around waitin' on me to get it all inside. Would you believe it is all still sitting in the main room of the Bodega and I have not even checked the invoice! The rest of the day went pretty much the same way. BUSY! This was not even a Monday! Thank God for humor, husbands and good customers!

We got the wine bottled, customers all taken care of, phones answered and questions taken care of. As for the orders, well, we'll tackle them next! Sure hope yours is not one of them. Hang in there. If it is not one thing this summer it is MORE than one thing! Being busy is a lot of fun but it makes the days go too fast! But we'll be there tomorrow to give it another go 'round! Life is never boring around the Bodega and I have never had so much fun either!

Can't you almost see this made into a comic book? It's almost like the "ER" of winemaking. "What do I do - I am

going away, but my grapes are ripe?" Does this sound like home? Yup, just freeze 'em and go have fun. That is the best thing about winemaking - you can freeze the juice or fruits and make it when YOU have the time. Don't let the wine rule you, YOU rule the wine.

And here I was, not sure what I could write about this time...

With that, I am going to go get some rest. See y'all next time. Keep on making wine, ya hear?

'Tis a wonderful day in the mountains. . .

Life is too short... to drink bad wine... so make your own!

You can write to Bonnie at bonnie@grapestompers.com

THIS MONTH'S SPECIALS

grapestompers' specials for the month of September 2001 are:

Save 10% on FOUR different Wine Kits

AND

Save over 14% on our popular Portuguese Hand Corker

AND

Save over 17% on Montrachet Wine Yeast

AND

Save over 17% on our most popular Wine Recipe Book

AND

Save over \$70 on the purchase of a
Complete Winemaking Starter Kit
which includes a RED or WHITE Concentrate
(see wine kit selection below)

Item #	Description	Regular Price	SPECIAL Price
3234	CC Gewurtztraminer Wine Kit	70.68	63.61
3230	CC Chamblaise (Chablis)	58.85	52.97
3134	CC Pinot Noir Wine Kit	77.00	69.30
3277	Grand Cru Zinfandel Blush	46.75	42.08
2801	Wine Recipe Handbook	3.03	2.49
2262	Portuguese Hand Corker	15.13	12.95
2701	Montrachet Wine Yeast	0.34	0.28
3200	Complete White Starter Kit	246.68	175.00
3100	Complete Red Starter Kit	259.79	185.00

Here's what you get with the COMPLETE Starter Kit:

If choosing the Complete WHITE Kit, your choice of either:
Fume Blanc, Piesporter, or Chenin Blanc VDV concentrate

If choosing the Complete RED Kit, your choice of either:
Valpolicella, Shiraz, or Cabernet/Merlot VDV concentrate

PLUS ALL THESE GOODIES:

Tom's Winemaking Video	Bottle Riser
Fermenter Bucket with Lid	Three-Piece Airlock

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6-Gallon Glass Carboy	Carboy Brush
Bung (stopper)	Bottle Filler
Five feet of vinyl tubing	B-Brite Sanitizer
Portuguese Hand Corker	FermTech AutoSiphon
2 Cases of 750-ml Bottles	Spoon or Paddle (our choice)
Bottle Washer Adapter	Brass Bottle Washer
Bottle Drainer, 45 station	

AND YOU GET THE FOLLOWING ITEMS FREE (\$16.59 value):

- Free Wine Labels (text of your choice)
- Free \$5 coupon towards your next concentrate purchase
- Free Corks (30 corks, enough for one batch)

Just think: This complete kit offers EVERYTHING a brand-new hobbyist would need to begin making his own wine. All you need to decide is which wine kit you want!

And don't forget... you can always return your winemaking video and receive a credit for \$19.95 on your next purchase... that's like getting the video for free! All we ask is that you return it in good condition.

This is the best deal we've ever offered on a complete kit, so don't miss out... order one for yourself or a friend today. Ask for RED Complete Kit # 3100 or WHITE Kit # 3200 and be sure to let us know which wine concentrate you want.

NEW! Now you can "personalize" your Complete Kit - Let's say you don't need or want some of the items that normally come with the Complete Kit... just give us a call at 1-800-233-1505 and let us know which items you don't need, and we will adjust the price of the equipment kit accordingly. Likewise, if you'd like a different wine kit, just let us know and we can adjust the price.

TOM'S CELLAR: Fourth Annual Wine Tasting Event
by Tom Burgiss, Owner

grapestompers.com, in conjunction with the Alleghany County Arts Council, cordially invites you to join us in Laurel Springs, NC on Sunday, October 7, 2001 at 2:00 PM for our fourth annual Wine Tasting Festival at the Burgiss Barn.

We're looking forward to seeing you, and hope you will enjoy the wine tasting, food, and live music. Admission is free, but you must BYOG (bring your own wine glass).

Our musical guests will be Wayne Henderson and Helen White from Virginia. Wayne is the best flat-picking guitar player in the Southeast, and has appeared in Carnegie Hall. He's cut numerous CD's and makes his own instruments; it's no wonder he's the most sought-after guitar player around. Helen plays a great fiddle, and together this duo will have you tapping your feet before you can shout "bluegrass"!

If you plan to come, please RSVP by calling 800-233-1505 or sending an e-mail to tom@grapestompers.com. Let us know how many are in your party, so we'll be sure to have enough wine and food for everyone.

-----HOT TIP-----
A good source for bottles is an espresso bar. The labels come off easily and they are all the same, just like wine bottles with screw caps.

Get your espresso bar to save them for you.

Our thanks to Bill Dewar from Grangeville,

ID for this tip.

Have a tip you'd like to submit?
Send it to tips@grapestompers.com

-----HOT TIP-----

To allow the staff of grapestompers a chance to mingle and chat with fellow vintners, the retail store will not be open for direct sales that day. However, if you place an online order before September 24, we'll get your wine-making supplies together and have them ready for pickup at the wine tasting.

It's a great way to save on shipping costs!

If you'd like to arrange this pickup service on the day of the wine tasting, just let us know you want a 'Wine Tasting Pickup' when filling out the comments section on the online order form.

Should you desire to order anything while you're at the wine tasting, blank order forms will be available. We will pack and ship these items as soon as possible in the week following the wine tasting.

We appreciate your understanding and support, and look forward to seeing you on the Laurel Springs mountaintop soon!

You can write to Tom at tom@grapestompers.com

FROM OUR CUSTOMERS

As you might imagine, our office receives quite a bit of correspondence - mostly through e-mail - here are some comments we've recently received:

Hello,
I just received my first order from grapestompers.com.

I must say I was very impressed with the service, the products and the staff recommendations. You will be hearing from me again.

-- Phil Smith
Oklahoma City, OK

Bonnie,
You guys are great!!! Everything arrived right on time. You not only did a super job with shipping my order, but the labels are just great also (as usual). You really have an awesome memory.

That's why I enjoy shopping here, not only the price, but the friendly fast service.

Thanks again,

-- Rick Schroeder
Antwerp, OH

Thanks! I just made my first batch of wine, and I wanted to let you know that the video is an incredible help.

Have a great day!

-- Suzanne Gava
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GUEST COLUMN - The Use of Sulphur Dioxide in Winemaking
by Charles Plant, Vancouver, BC
PART TWO of TWO

TESTING FOR FREE SO₂

The test procedure that follows works well only for white or rosé wines. Some of the colouring matter in red wines reacts to the test chemicals in the same way as SO₂ making the results pretty well meaningless.

It should be noted that SO₂ testing kits may be available at your local winemaking supply shop. Since they will contain all the necessary ingredients, instructions and measuring vessels, you will save yourself substantial effort by buying one. What follows assumes you wish to put together your own kit.

You will need the following chemicals, which you might need some help with. The chemistry teacher at your local high school might be receptive to a contribution to his or her science department's petty cash fund.

0.02 molar iodine solution:

Accurately weigh out 2.54 grams of iodine. Roughly weigh 5 grams of potassium iodide. Add a few millilitres of distilled water, barely enough to cover the chemicals, and agitate until the iodine is completely dissolved. This may take a bit of time. Finally, add enough distilled water to make an accurately measured 1.00 litres of solution.

Dilute sulphuric acid:

Add about 250 millilitres of concentrated sulphuric acid to about 750 millilitres of water. Unless you have previous experience handling sulphuric acid, don't even think of doing this dilution yourself.

Starch solution:

Add about 1 gram of starch to about 100 millilitres of water. Stir and bring to a boil then cool.

To do the test:

First fill a clean dry 6 or 10 mL syringe with the iodine solution. Next, accurately measure out 50 mL of the wine to be tested. Add 1 mL or so of starch solution and about 10 mL of dilute sulphuric acid.

Immediately start adding iodine solution to the sample, swirling it as you go. You will note a purple-black patch which disappears as you swirl. As soon as the purple colour persists, stop adding iodine, and note how many mL you've used. Multiply this by 12.8 to give you the number of ppm of free SO₂ in the wine.

TESTING FOR TOTAL SO₂

You will need some 10% sodium hydroxide solution in addition to the chemicals required for the free SO₂ test. To make this up, add enough water to 10 g of solid sodium hydroxide to bring the volume up to 100 mL. Great accuracy here isn't necessary. Mix thoroughly.

To do the test:

Accurately measure 20 mL of wine and put it in a narrow necked container such as an Erlenmeyer flask. Add roughly 25 mL of 10% sodium hydroxide solution. Immediately cover the container and allow to sit for 15 minutes. Fill a clean dry 6 or 10 mL syringe with 0.02 molar iodine solution. At

the end of the 15 minutes, add 10 mL dilute sulphuric acid along with about 1 mL of starch solution to the sample and immediately start adding iodine solution. Stop when the purple colour persists. Note the volume of iodine solution used in mL, and multiply by 32. This is your total SO₂ in ppm.

STABILITY OF CHEMICALS

The dilute sulphuric acid and 10% sodium hydroxide solutions are very stable and will last for years. The sodium hydroxide should be stored in high density plastic in preference to glass. The starch solution will get mouldy. It should be replaced as soon as the slightest bit of discoloration occurs. Iodine is highly volatile. The iodine solution should be in as small a glass container as is convenient, and kept tightly closed and in a cool place. An alternative method of managing the iodine is to make up a 0.20 molar stock solution (10 times working strength). From time to time make up as much working strength (0.02 molar) solution as you will need for a month or so by diluting one volume of the 0.20 molar stock solution with 9 times that volume of distilled water.

ADDING SO₂ AT RACKING

When racking red wines, depending on pH, the addition of from 20 to 30 ppm SO₂ each time should do the trick nicely. For the first couple of rackings, when the total SO₂ added since the beginning is less than 50 ppm or so, about half of what you add immediately gets bound, leaving half as free. After your total additions over the life of the wine add up to around 60 ppm or more, most of any additional SO₂ you add remains as free.

Be sure to pour the SO₂ solution into the bottom of the receiving container first and then rack the wine. This way the SO₂ is around all the time to suck up unwanted oxygen.

If you have started a malolactic ferment as well and you are not certain it has completed, you could go with less SO₂ at racking – maybe 15 ppm, maybe only 10. In this case, your pH is likely to be pretty low anyway and as we're going to see later, that makes the SO₂ much more effective.

You are, of course, keeping a good record of your SO₂ additions, aren't you? A reasonable rule of thumb for red wines is to keep the total addition of SO₂ from crush to bottling at less than 150 ppm.

With white or rosé wines, test before racking, and add enough SO₂ to bring the free up to 20 or 30 ppm.

Once again, if there is a malolactic ferment involved and/or you are going to do a bottle ferment later, for champagne method sparkling wine, you want to keep the SO₂ down. Since under these conditions, the pH is going to be low, you are probably okay adding only 10 ppm or so.

A reminder about racking techniques is in order here. Always make sure your syphon tube is down to the bottom of the receiving container. Don't splash the wine. If you're trying to get away with minimal SO₂ and you have a carbon dioxide cylinder, purge the receiving container of air with CO₂ before adding SO₂ and racking.

-----HOT TIP-----

When racking or bottling, I use a baking pan with a 1/2 inch lip around the edge to catch the spills.

Our thanks to Robert Klaus from Houston,
TX for this tip.

Have a tip you'd like to submit?
Send it to tips@grapestompers.com
-----HOT TIP-----

S02 AND pH

I have made several references to the connection between the effectiveness of S02 and pH. It is about time to explain how this works.

What is really protecting your wine is molecular S02.

When you add S02, depending on circumstances, some of it immediately becomes bound. What remains is called "free" and is in two parts. The larger, and relatively ineffective free part is "bisulphite" (HS03-). The smaller part of the free is the active molecular S02. The amount of molecular S02 in your wine depends both on the level of free S02 present as well as pH. For instance at pH 3.2 the amount of free S02 for 0.8 ppm molecular S02 is 22 ppm. At pH 3.5, you will need 43 ppm free – essentially double. In most situations, 0.8 ppm molecular S02 during bulk storage and at bottling will provide you with adequate protection from oxidation and bacterial action. This includes prevention of ML bacteria as well – important if you've blended ML affected wine with non-ML affected and require stability. It is important to remember that the amount of free S02 in the wine depends on three things: how much you added, how much was present before the addition and how much of your addition promptly becomes bound. In the case of whites and rosés, the best thing to do is a free S02 check. In the case of reds, you need to do some good estimating, based on previous S02 additions as mentioned elsewhere in the article.

The level at which molecular S02 can be detected by the human senses is about 2.0 ppm. This is also the level which is needed for maximum protection of your wine. This is particularly true in the case of sweet, and most notably, botrytised wines.

USING POTASSIUM SORBATE

Sometimes one wishes to finish a wine with some residual sugar left – Riesling, Gewürztraminer, Muscat Canelli and Chenin Blanc are among the grapes that lend themselves particularly well to this. In order to prevent renewed fermentation after ferment has been stopped, 200 to 250 ppm potassium sorbate is often used. The effectiveness of potassium sorbate is pH dependent. To get close to the same effectiveness from a given dose of potassium sorbate would require around 55 ppm of free S02 at pH 3.6 as opposed to only 28 ppm at pH 3.3.

It is essential when using sorbate to have effective S02 levels high enough to prevent a malolactic ferment from happening. If ML occurs in the presence of sorbate, a peculiarly revolting geranium-like smell is produced for which, alas, there is no remedy. The wine is a goner.

BOTTLE RINSING WITH S02

I often find it useful to use an S02 bottle rinse when I am bottling. The rinse solution is 50 mL of 10% potassium metabisulphite solution made up with water, to about 750 mL in a wine bottle. I have tested the effect of this several ways, and consistently find that after rinsing, and draining the bottles for about a minute, the free S02

added is close to 8 ppm. Curiously, this is true for both 750 mL and 375 mL bottles. This is a useful way of adding a touch of SO2 at bottling time, particularly if the carboy you're bottling has a bit of sediment and you don't wish to stir it, or subject it to one more racking.

The use of SO2 started with the Romans, and I'm sure there isn't a self respecting winery in the world today that gets away without it.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR - Charles Plant has been making wines since 1966, when he crushed his first grapes (Zinfandels) from California. Since that time, he has experimented with just about every kind of basic winemaking ingredient known, and virtually every style of wine. He now works pretty much exclusively with grapes, fresh or frozen, from the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia; from Washington, Oregon and California - including Napa and Sonoma Valleys.

He joined the Vancouver Amateur Winemakers Association in 1967, and helped found The British Columbia Amateur Winemakers Association in 1972. He is a past President of The Amateur Winemakers of Canada.

Over the years he has enjoyed some success in competition in these and other organizations. Lastly, he helps with the production of "The Grapevine", a newsletter serving the amateur winemaking hobby in B.C.

You can contact Charles at cplant@dowco.com

Be sure to check out the home page of the British Columbia Amateur Winemakers Association at:
<http://members.home.net/bcawa/>

How To Be A Guest Columnist For STOMPERS Newsletter

If you'd like to be our next guest columnist, simply send your three- or four-paragraph article to articles@grapestompers.com. If your article is selected for use in a future STOMPER newsletter, you'll receive the attention of thousands, a coupon good for a discount on your next grapestompers.com order, as well as our heartfelt thanks. So what are you waiting for??

CORKY'S WINEMAKING DEFINITION

Corked

- An expression meaning the wine has gone bad. Implies an unpleasant, musty, moldy smell imparted by a flawed cork.

Look for other wine-related definitions by clicking on the 'Glossary' button from our home page at <http://www.grapestompers.com>

NEXT MONTH'S HIGHLIGHTS

- More Winemaking Stories from Tom's Cellar
 - Another Surprise from Brant
 - More Specials
 - The next article from Bonnie's Bin
 - Our Next Guest Column
 - More Customer Testimonials
 - New Winemaking Products
-

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