

Issue #151 February, 2013  
<http://www.grapestompers.com> 1-800-233-1505  
 Winter Hours: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM Eastern Monday - Friday

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 it. Instructions to cancel are at the end of this newsletter. Feel welcome to pass along this newsletter to your winemaking friends; we only ask that it be sent in its entirety. HOT TIPS are sprinkled throughout the newsletter, and if you look carefully, you may even find a HIDDEN SPECIAL!

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*Raspberry White Zinfandel is the perfect Valentine wine.....it goes great with a big box of chocolates!*

## Hot Tip

**Is It "Working"?**  
 If you have a wine that is not bubbling away like normal, it still may be fermenting just fine. The way to tell is to check the specific gravity. If it is dropping, the wine is working sneakily without you noticing!  
 Submit your hot winemaking tip here:  
[www.grapestompers.com/submit\\_ideas.aspx](http://www.grapestompers.com/submit_ideas.aspx)

## Wine Kit News

By Brant Burgiss

Vineco will soon be changing their clearing regime for all their **4 week kits**. The change involves replacing the current clearing agent with Chitosan and Kieselsool clarifiers. As a result, new kit instructions have been prepared for the affected kits. Please see the related information below.  
 The change in clearing agents will take effect for the following brands of kits manufactured after February 1: Niagara Mist, KenRidge Classic, California Connoisseur, and European Select. The Cheeky Monkey brand of kits will see the change on kits produced after mid-March 2013 or so.

**Commercial wineries, please take note:** Remember that Chitosan and Kieselsool may not be used as clarifying agents in finished wine sold to the public, since they are not yet approved by the TTB. Please continue to use only approved clarifiers (such as Isinglass) to clear your commercial wines made from wine kits.

The clearing update and new kit instructions have raised some questions regarding topics such as topping up, oxidation, the ability to age, and the final yield. The manufacturer has offered the following advice about these kits:

1. Our winemakers strongly recommend that you should NOT top up your kit at any stage. This has been made very clear in the new instructions.
2. Oxidation is not a problem when making wine in 4 to 6 weeks. The CO2 protects it, along with the use of a solid bung.
3. With a solid bung, the only concern is the surface area of the liquid.
4. With our new two-stage clearing regime, there will be less wine loss. The sediment will not be as fluffy. With less volume loss, the air space is smaller; thus air volume above the liquid is less.
5. Aging ability is quite variable. Winemaking parameters that affect aging ability which are beyond our control are the following:
  - a. Over degassing, which will incorporate oxygen, which decreases the effectiveness of preservatives
  - b. Solid bung vs. fermentation lock: a solid bung will protect the wine from air exchange more effectively than a fermentation lock. A fermentation lock only works if the pressure is the same between the two areas. If a vacuum is drawn due to differential air pressure, air is drawn through the fermentation lock.
  - c. Length of time left in carboy after recommended time frame.
6. Regarding yield: If you follow the instructions, you will not yield 23 liters. We have been in the process of updating copy to say a kit makes "approx. 30 X 750 ml bottle" vs. "23L". If you were to top up the carboy, you would be diluting the wine to 23.8L, from the racked off volume of 22.5L. This additional water dilutes out potential alcohol from 12% to 11.3%, along with the flavors, balance, and body.

**See page 4 for links to new 4-week kit instructions.**

## Let's Talk About the Weather

For the past couple of years in the Blue Ridge Mountains our winters have been fairly mild; however, in the past 10 days or so winter has delivered a "blow" to us here at grapestompers! So if you have been trying to contact us and no correspondence has come back your way, please know that we have been stymied by no electricity, which translates into no heat, no water, no communications, no deliveries (either coming or going), no gasoline for vehicles (pumps were out) and no refrigeration!

But now we do have electricity and because of that fact, please correspond to us via email ([tom@grapestompers.com](mailto:tom@grapestompers.com)). At least we can try to answer your needs... hopefully, we can continue to give you the stellar service which you deserve. Our order history can serve to help you remember a wine kit that you ordered years ago and we can supply that information to you. It also serves us in tracking down numbers (both UPS & FedEx) for you! On some occasions we have cleared out the fact that possibly the order never reached us and you in turn were confused as to which supplier you used. This has happened on a couple of occasions. Computer records are kept here at [grapestompers.com](http://grapestompers.com) and because of that, we can use that information as a background to familiarize us with your history.

Since all of my staff has to travel a distance to arrive here at work, and for their safety, I have requested them to stay at home if the weather is bad and the roads are slick. That will be a reason for not reaching us on some of those impossible days! Thanks for understanding and I hope, if at all possible, we will be here 9am-4pm EST Monday - Friday (during winter months) for you!

### GOOD NEWS ABOUT COLD WEATHER

By considering a white wine to start in the winter, you have chosen a good route. The weather is cooler which translates into a better quality wine. The cooler and slower the fermentation, the better your white wines!

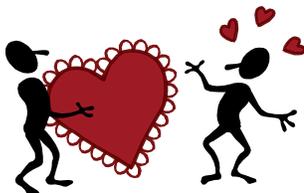
If you notice, here at [grapestompers.com](http://grapestompers.com) our many "specials" on white wines are posted in the winter for a reason! That way when summer does arrive, you have wine to enjoy!

Which brings up a point about fermentation time(s). If you make wines in a warmer environment, the fermentation tends to go faster. Recently we've been receiving phone calls where the caller states "my wine is not fermenting!" Needless to say, if you take a current specific gravity reading and find the S.G. is down to 0.999 or lower, it simply indicates the wine HAS ALREADY fermented – quite possibly because you had your must in a HIGHER temperature environment. This occurs because during the winter you brought the batch inside to make it in your warmer atmosphere. Hopefully this will help you understand why fermentation can take place in as few as 4 days!

Now another advantage of cold weather is the clearing of the wines...If your wine has trouble clearing, then simply put the carboy in a cooler place (from 40 to 52 degrees F) for 12-24 hours... you will compact the lees and it clears faster! Be sure you follow the "fining" instructions on the package!

So check out our specials each month for great buys on concentrates and don't forget about your Valentine!

Later, Tom



### Customer Feedback

Tom, I really appreciate your newsletter and customer service. Happy New Year; keep up the good work!

Ron Sommerville  
Columbia, MD

I like your website!

Pete Nunley  
Fayetteville, NC

Tom, Good to meet you on our recent visit to Thistle Meadow and Grapestompers and thanks for the talk and information. I'll be back, probably with friends.

Doug Smith  
Raleigh, NC

I am friends with Brenda and Monty Combs of Wilkesboro, NC. I just love the wine that Monty makes and would like to learn how to make my own. Please add my email address to your distribution list for the newsletter.

Gayle Culbreth

I am shipping another kit to my dad in Bloomer, WI—he is a busy winemaker!

Lisa Zwiefelhofer  
Hudson, WI

Thanks! My order was waiting on me when I got home.

Chuck Hanner  
Asheboro, NC

Thank you. I love your newsletter!

Brenda Boe  
Deer Park, WI

## New Products

Here is a list of new products we've recently added to our online catalog:

ITEM #	DESCRIPTION
5715	Screw Bottle Stoppers, \$4.00
5716	Gas Pump Dispenser, \$25.00
5717	Gas Pump Dispenser, \$25.00
2100	Cobalt Blue Bottles, Used, \$7.50
5701	VC Grapes Lip Balm, \$5.00

[See all these new products online now.](#)

You have found the Hidden Special for the month of February and it is our Buno Vino Mini Jet Filter #2111. This filter normally sells for \$193.00 and this month you can have it for only \$163.00 IF you mention the Hidden Special in the comments section of your online order. This is a \$30 savings and just in time for your Special Valentine!

*If you have a suggestion for a new product, please call us at 1-800-233-1505.*

### Corky's Corner

## Winemaking Definition

### Acid Blend

Acid Blend is used in wines to help balance the three main acids in a wine. By balancing the acidity, it makes it easier for the yeast to ferment properly. Acid blend is made up of 50% Malic Acid, 40% Citric Acid, and 10% Tartaric Acid.



### Stir, Stir and Stir Some More

De-gassing your wine is the most important stage of the home winemaking process. In order to prevent a fizzy wine, it is very important to vigorously stir the wine to drive off any CO2 that is in the wine. Excessive CO2 not only causes a fizzy wine, it can also prevent the fining agents from effectively clearing the wine. We strongly recommend a [Fizz-X](#) that attaches to a power drill to stir and de-gas the wine.

Have a winemaking tip to submit? Go to:

[grapestompers.com/submit\\_ideas.aspx](http://grapestompers.com/submit_ideas.aspx)

### Monthly Specials

## Specials for February, 2013

Item #	Description	Reg. Price	Special Price
3143	CC Rosso Grande, 15L (Exp. 1/13, 1 Avail.)	\$128.75	\$90.13
3236	CC Sauvignon Blanc, 15L (Exp. 1/13, 1 Av.)	\$119.13	\$83.39
VC0885	Legacy White Zinfandel, 16L (Ex. 8/12 1 Av.)	\$109.57	\$76.70
VC809	Cabernet Sauvignon, 7.5L	\$83.63	\$58.54
VC820	Sauvignon Blanc, 7.5L (Only 4 Available)	\$77.62	\$54.33
VC814	Merlot, 7.5L (Only 4 Available)	\$83.63	\$58.54
VC0303	CM Riesling, 10L (Exp. 3/13, 1 Available)	\$90.40	\$63.28
3191	OB Cranapple Chard., 7.2L (Only 1 Available)	\$78.33	\$54.83
3129	CC Cabernet Sauvignon, 15L	\$126.83	\$101.46
3234	CC Gewurztraminer, 15L	\$122.98	\$98.38
3231	CC Chardonnay, 15L	\$119.13	\$95.30
3255	CSP Pinot Grigio, 16L	\$132.60	\$106.08
3248	CCH Riesling Auslese, 15L	\$128.75	\$103.00
3147	CCH Cabernet, Syrah, Zinfandel, 15L	\$141.90	\$113.52
3121	VDV Shiraz, 9L	\$83.17	\$66.54
3114	VDV Bergamais, 9L	\$74.52	\$59.62
3222	VDV Johannisberg Riesling, 9L	\$71.06	\$56.85
3107	Premium Port, 11.5L	\$100.96	\$80.77
3188	OB Black Currant White Merlot, 7.2L	\$72.12	\$55.70
3204	OB Pomegranate Wildberry Zinfandel, 7.2L	\$72.60	\$58.08
3262	OB Banana Pineapple Viognier, 7.2L	\$74.02	\$59.22
VC0367	NM Tropical Fruit Riesling, 7.5L	\$69.41	\$55.53
VC0361	NM Peach Chardonnay, 7.5L	\$69.41	\$55.53
VC0372	NM Blueberry Pomegranate White Merlot 7.5L	\$69.41	\$55.53
VC0872	Legacy Merlot, 16L	\$124.86	\$99.89
VC0880	Legacy Sauvignon Blanc, 16L	\$115.06	\$92.05
CF3497	Classique Chardonnay, 7.5L	\$66.88	\$53.50
CF3509	Classique Valpolicella, 7.5L	\$67.73	\$54.18
CF3516	Chardonnay, 16L	\$104.49	\$83.59
CF3551	Yakima Valley Merlot, 18L w/crushed grapes	\$141.41	\$113.13
2730	Acid Blend, 3 oz.	\$2.31	\$1.85
2732	Potassium Metabisulfite, 4 oz.	\$2.12	\$1.70
2243	18" Plastic Spoon	\$3.27	\$2.62
2605	Carboy Brush	\$6.06	\$4.85
3100	Complete Wine Kit - Red	\$303.33	\$245.99
3200	Complete Wine Kit - White	\$297.16	\$236.99

## New Vineco Kit Instructions - 4 Week Kits

By Brant Burgiss

On page 1 we mentioned the change in the clearing regimen for the 4 week wine kits made by Vineco. Below are links to the new kit instructions (PDF).

Niagara Mist instructions:

<http://www.purpletoes.com/pdf/NiagaraMist-new-instructions-2013.pdf>

Other 4-week kits made by Vineco:

<http://www.purpletoes.com/pdf/4-week-instructions-2013.pdf>

(this covers Cheeky Monkey, KenRidge Classic, California Connoisseur, and European Select kits)

## Wine, Beer and Colds

By Pam Wyatt

Hanging out with friends and family this time of year can be a roll of the dice, as the nation continues to battle influenza and, of course, the common cold. And while such pathogens won't survive in wine and beer, sharing glassware or bar food with sniffly friends could easily lead to infection (tip: don't share; wash your hands constantly). And don't let the fear of flu keep you from enjoying a good wine or beer. According to recent studies, moderate consumption can actually be **good** for the health of adults.

According to AFP (*Agence France-Presse*), results of recent medical tests in Japan show that ingesting large amounts of **humulone**, the key ingredient in **hops** (which give beer aroma and bitterness), might help fend off a form of seasonal sickness in adults, especially respiratory viruses. So drink up, in moderation, of course.



*The Stomper*

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Past issues of the Stomper can be found at this page on our web site:

<http://www.grapestompers.com/newsletter.aspx>

*Boring stuff for lawyers: Content is gathered from sources considered to be reliable, but the accuracy of this info cannot be guaranteed. Opinions expressed by guest columnists and customer letters are those of the authors and not necessarily those of grapestompers.com.*

## Wine Drops

*Wine Drops is a catch-all for various tidbits that we find interesting. This month we have info some wine competitions that you may be interested in entering and give you a chance to tell us what you would like to see next month.*

Entry deadline for the National Wine Competition is February 28, 2013. Focus of this competition is to recognize excellence in winemaking throughout the United States. For more information or to get an entry form visit <https://enofileonline.com/CompInfo.aspx?competitionID=69>

Winemaker Magazine recently announced its 2013 International Amateur Wine Competition with deadline for entries of March 15, 2013.

Any home winemaker can enter their wines to compete for gold, silver and bronze medals in 50 categories. The medals are awarded by a panel of experienced wine judges.

For more information or to enter visit [www.winemakermag.com](http://www.winemakermag.com) or email [competition@winemakermag.com](mailto:competition@winemakermag.com).

How many bubbles are in one bottle of sparkling wine? According to The California Wine Institute—about 44 million! A bottle of champagne sports 49 million. Bet that really gets your "juices" flowing!

### WineMaker Magazine

[Get a free trial issue](#) to WineMaker Magazine, the leading magazine and reference guide for the hobby of home winemaking.

You'll be amazed at all the winemaking articles, including hints, recipes, stories, new products, and much, much more. Start your risk-free subscription today.

### Your Turn!

Have some input as to what you'd like to see in a future issue of *The Stomper*?

We'd love to hear your idea! Just call us at 800-233-1505 or complete and [submit our contact form](#) to let us know.



Happy Valentines Day!