



The Stomper

The Free Monthly Winemaking Newsletter
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Winter Hours: 9:00 AM - 5:00 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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*You know Spring is on the way when your cat goes out on the deck with a glass of wine.
Photo by Monty Combs, Wilkesboro, NC*

Hot Tip

Too Sweet

Sometimes a wine turns out too sweet for your taste. Unfortunately the only cure for "sweetness" is to continue to ferment the wine longer or blend with a dry wine. Remember the latter may alter the flavor a bit.

Submit your hot winemaking tip here:
grapestompers.com/submit_ideas.aspx

Wine Kit News

Waterless Airlocks Steal the Show

By Brant Burgiss

While attending the Wineries Unlimited trade show last month in Richmond, VA, winemaker Don Mabe of Thistle Meadow Winery and I visited several vendors' booths to check out all their products and promotions. We tasted some great wines and saw a lot of neat (but expensive) winemaking equipment, but we also found some great, reasonably-priced innovative products that would have home winemakers grinning from ear to ear.

One of the products we fell in love with was a [waterless airlock/bung](#) invented and offered by an American manufacturer. There were lots of reasons we liked this winemaking gizmo better than the standard stopper/bung and water-filled airlock that we are so accustomed to:

- Unlike the standard plastic airlock, there's nothing to break or crack. How many times have you broken an airlock when removing it from the bung?
- Acts as a CO2 check valve. Automatically vents CO2 when your wine is fermenting, and keeps oxygen out just like you would expect.
- Easy to clean. Forget about trying to thread that airlock brush through the "S" curve in order to clean a typical airlock.
- Just boil in water to sanitize.
- Has a grab ring for easier removal from the carboy
- Made from FDA approved silicone (meets standard 21CFR11) that won't crack or chafe, mold or mildew. It's the only bung we know of that's approved for use by commercial wineries.
- Temperature range is -100 to +400 degrees Fahrenheit
- Has a Shore A Durometer Hardness of 40, so it holds tightly in the carboy's mouth
- Reasonably priced; pays for itself in no time!

Similar waterless fermenting bungs (larger sized, for barrels) have been used successfully by large California wineries for the last 3 seasons, so they are battle tested and bounce back for more abuse. Don and I liked them so much that we have converted all of the remaining carboys in our winery from the old style airlocks and bungs to this new waterless fermenting bung.

We now stock these waterless fermenting bungs – just ask for item [# 2284](#), or see it [online](#) now.

Wine Kit News

Vineco Drops Chianti Name

By Brant Burgiss

Effective immediately, Vineco will cease using the name 'Chianti style' on their wine kits. New legislation enforces that only wines made in the Chianti region of Italy may use the Chianti name. In accordance with this, Vineco will be relabeling all Chianti style kits as Sangiovese, the dominant varietal used in this style of wine.

Grapestompers kits changing are [VC0869 Legacy Chianti](#) now Legacy Sangiovese; [VC774 California Connoisseur Chianti](#) now California Connoisseur Sangiovese.

Tom's Cellar

10 Points to Ponder

By Tom Burgiss

Allow me to review the services we offer our customers at grapestompers:

- 1) We have over 19 years of experience in supplying wine making products
- 2) We have a 3,000 square foot warehouse which is fully stocked with wine-making equipment and climate controlled to protect your purchase
- 3) There are three ways to contact us: Via telephone: 800-233-1505; via fax: 413-803-9850; or by email: tom@grapestompers.com, all of which go directly to our main office with NO voice mail buttons to push and a real live person to answer the phone
- 4) Since we have made most of the wine we sell at our own winery (Thistle Meadow Winery), we can answer any questions you may have.
- 4A) OR you may wish to visit our winery's tasting room (no charge) to taste a wine made from a wine kit that you are considering buying! Sort of like "trying before buying"!!
- 5) Free wine labels for your homemade wines, if you desire (Pam is an expert in designing a label of which you will be most proud).
- 6) James, our warehouse manager, can give you an exact quote on shipping cost based upon weight and zip code. He can contact you with this info by EMAIL if you request, so you will know before your credit card is charged.
- 7) There are NO handling fees or hidden shipping costs
- 8) We solve your problems over the phone and relieve all the stress. Experience is our forte!
- 9) We can help guide your winemaking club with volume pricing. Have your club president contact us with personal information via the phone or email.
- 10) We can assist you in setting up your own commercial winery with cost estimates and sources to contact for all your supplies and services – So far we have helped start 18 wineries in NC and over 100 in the USA.

Now that's enough points to ponder! It is your turn to fire loose with the questions and comments.

We invite you to attend our Home Winemaker Showcase and participate in the serving of your wine. This year we are moving it to Saturday, June 21 in hopes that it will not conflict with anyone's vacation plans on Memorial Day weekend. Watch the grapestompers website in the coming months for registration forms!

Oh, one other thing – during the month of April, grapestompers has a free gift for you – Surprise! (We will see who reads "Tom's Cellar") So... with a minimum \$100 purchase of wine supplies, concentrates or gift shop items OR with every concentrate purchase – we will include a free gift for you to enjoy – just to say thank you for being a grapestompers customer. The free gift will be offered while supplies last.

Happy Easter to You and Yours!
Tom



Grapestompers and TMW Summer Hours

By Pam Wyatt

During the winter months here at grapestompers the weather can get quite "complicated" so in November we began closing the same hours as Thistle Meadow Winery, **4 pm** to keep our customers and employees from being out after dark in the snow and bad weather.

The calendar now says "Spring" so we have gone back to regular operating hours of **9 am-5 pm Monday-Friday, beginning April 1. Thistle Meadow Winery is now operating on the Summer schedule as well, 12 pm-5 pm Monday-Saturday and 2 pm-4 pm on Sundays.**



Customer Feedback

Thanks for all the assistance from grapestompers regarding the clearing of my wine.

Gary Mazzarion
Longmeadow, MA

Thanks for posting tips on rehydrating wine yeast.

Mark Taylor
Escondido, CA

Kathy and I want to thank you, albeit belatedly, for your thoughtfulness in sending us an advance copy of last month's issue of the Stomper, which included the photo and info regarding our wine tasting party. Your personal note of congratulations was a nice touch!

We really enjoy our new hobby and the great service you provide.

Rick Music
Nicholasville, KY

This order for [Liebfraumilch](#) and [Montepulciano](#) will complete my 112th batch of wine since 11/29/2005. One kit for me and one for my son-in-law, Gary Evans. Since then we both have made purchases from your company.

Tom Myles
McCormick, SC

"Wine is like music—you may not know what is good, but you know what you like."

Justin Meyer
American Winemaker

New Products

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

ITEM #	DESCRIPTION
2284	Fermenting Stopper, \$4.99
5791	Dog Beverage Napkins, \$5.00
5792	Wine Stalker Napkins, \$5.00
5790	Classique Wine Decanter, \$26.00
5788	Corky Dog Cork Cage, \$32.00

We have limited quantities in stock of 2014 Vineco Limited Releases below:

VC4972 Riesling Gewurztraminer, Chardonnay, 18L \$104.00 (3)

VC4973 Shiraz Grenache, 18L \$129.00 (1)

VC4975 Tempranillo, Garnacha, 18L \$114.00 (2)

CF3193 Chocolate Strawberry Port, 12L \$89.00 (1)

First Come, First Served

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

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

Corky's Corner

Winemaking Definition

Attenuation:

Attenuation is the percentage of sugars that yeast consumes during fermentation. This is thought about very rarely in winemaking but is vitally important in brewing.



Hot Tip

Boiling Troubles

Boiling corks is unnecessary and also bad for the corks. Most have a silicone coating making them slide easily into the bottles. When you boil, it removes this coating and also causes the corks to get brittle and dry out. If you feel you must do something to your corks before bottling, submerge for 2-3 minutes in a potassium metabisulfite solution. This will kill any germs that may be there.

Have a winemaking tip to submit?

grapestompers.com/submit_ideas.aspx

Monthly Specials

Specials for April, 2014

Item #	Description	Reg. Price	Special Price
3131	CC Sangiovese Merlot, 15L (Exp. 1/14, 1 Av.)	\$127.40	\$89.18
3234	CC Gewurztraminer, 15L (Exp. 4/14, 1 Avail.)	\$131.70	\$92.19
3248	CC Riesling Auslese, 15L (Exp. 3/14, 1 Avail.)	\$139.00	\$95.39
3132	CC Valpolicella, 15L (Exp. 3/14, 2 Avail.)	\$129.50	\$90.65
3134	CC Pinot Noir, 15L (Exp. 1/14, 1 Available)	\$127.30	\$89.11
3150	GC Cabernet Sauvignon, 10L (Exp 4/14, 1 Av)	\$99.40	\$69.58
3246	CCH Italian Pinot Grigio, 15L	\$137.00	\$109.60
3175	CSP Old Vine Zinfandel, 16L	\$145.90	\$116.72
3275	GC Gewurztraminer, 10L	\$82.20	\$65.76
3160	GC Bergamais, 10L	\$90.20	\$72.16
3188	OB Blushing Black Currant, 6.8L	\$75.78	\$60.62
3251	OB Kiwi Melon Magic, 6.8L	\$77.30	\$61.84
3262	OB Banana Pineapple Paradise, 6.8L	\$77.30	\$61.84
VC0368	NM Green Apple Sauvignon Blanc, 7.5L	\$69.41	\$55.53
VC0869	Legacy Sangiovese, 16L (formerly Chianti)	\$115.92	\$92.74
VC0868	Legacy Chardonnay, 16L	\$115.06	\$92.05
CF3549	Italian Barbera, 18L with crushed grape pack	\$151.84	\$121.47
CF3497	Classique Chardonnay, 7.5L (3 Available)	\$64.25	\$51.40
CF3509	Classique Valpolicella, 7.5L (2 Available)	\$67.73	\$54.18
2742	Potassium Sorbate, 1.5 oz.	\$2.20	\$1.76
2730	Acid Blend, 3 oz.	\$2.31	\$1.85
2721	B-Brite Cleaner, 8 oz.	\$2.70	\$2.16
2707	Lalvin EC-1118 Yeast Packet	\$1.00	\$0.80
2710	Lalvin D-47 Yeast Packet	\$1.00	\$0.80
2701	Red Star Montrachet Yeast Packet	\$0.56	\$0.45
2704	Red Star Cotes Des Blancs Yeast Packet	\$0.56	\$0.45
2801	Wine Recipe Handbook	\$3.95	\$3.16
2243	Plastic Spoon, 18"	\$3.43	\$2.74
2662	Funnel, 5" without strainer	\$1.86	\$1.49
2262	Portuguese Hand Corker	\$23.43	\$18.74
2265	FermTech Blast Bottle Washer	\$12.25	\$9.80
2438M	PVC Capsule, Purple with Gold Glass	\$0.14	\$0.10
2597A	Refractometer, 32 Brix with ATC	\$49.95	\$39.96
3200	Complete Wine Kit - White	\$297.16	\$236.99
3100	Complete Wine Kit—Red	\$303.33	\$245.99

Customer Corner

The following tip on wine clearing was sent to us by **Richard Lauhead** of **Vadnais Heights, MN**. Thanks Richard for this neat tip! You will receive a 10% discount off regular retail prices on your next order at grapestompers for sharing this with us.

“You can use a red laser pointer to check on the progress and quality of clearing of your wine. If you point the laser horizontally through your carboy, you should see a sharp red point of light on a white piece of paper held on the other side of the carboy if the wine is clear. You can move the laser up and down the carboy to see to what level the wine has cleared. Also you can point the laser down from the top of the carboy and you will see a level where the light starts to diffuse. That is how far down the wine has cleared.”

Here’s a couple of things that make me laugh.

One can’t just sit and drink wine all day.....unless you start early in the morning.

Drinking wine won’t solve your problems.....but neither will drinking milk or water.

Love the newsletter.

Bob Blanchard
Randleman, NC

Bob you will also receive a 10% discount off regular prices on your next order.

Important Announcement Vineco Releases New Kit

Great news... A new Niagara Mist flavor has just been released by Vineco. Known as “**Orchard Crisp Riesling**”, these four week 7.5L kits offer peach, apple, and pear flavors blended with Riesling.

In our warehouse now, ready to ship. Stock code #VC5104 only \$70.80.

The Stomper List Maintenance: How to Subscribe or Unsubscribe

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Wine Drops

Wine Drops is a catch-all for various tidbits that we find interesting. This month we have information on weird wine smells and interesting info on standing vs. seated while tasting wine. Also we want to give you a chance to tell us what you would like to see next month.

What is the weirdest scent you have ever detected in a bottle of wine? According to an article at bottlenotes.com, there are some pretty strange ones. You may detect peach yogurt in California Zinfandel! This is caused by the intense fruit flavor of the zin mixing with the oak. Go to the Bottlenotes link above to read about some other unusual sniffs and some not so pleasant ones.

Make plans now to attend the 6th Annual Home Winemaker Showcase here in beautiful Laurel Springs, NC. Please remember the date has been changed this year to **Saturday, June 21st**, the first day of Summer!

Here at Thistle Meadow Winery we have often asked ourselves the question, “Is it better for customers to stand and taste wine or be seated?” According to a recent article linked from [Wine Business.com](http://WineBusiness.com), there are pros and cons either way. Guess we will keep asking ourselves the same question!

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.

Ready for an amazing deal? Then check out our Hidden Special for the month of April. We are offering our bottle drainer #2254A—that holds 45 wine bottles for only \$19! Regular price of this item is \$29.90 so this is a \$10 savings just for you. Just mention the Hidden Special when ordering.

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.