



The Stomper

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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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Important Announcement

Rain is Good for Grapevines... But Only to a Point

By Katie Winnick

I hope that with summer beginning, this rain will soon come to an end! With how much rain we've had here in the NC mountains, that can lead to many problems for your grapevines. Grapevines normally do well in the summer with little tending. Dry rocky soil with good drainage is great. That doesn't make sense, right? Normally you want good enriched soil to plant any type of fruit so it can grow well. But in the case of grapevines, you want the roots to be strong and sturdy, not shallow. To get strong sturdy roots, you want the roots to go search for the nutrients and water it needs, creating deeper and more spread out roots. If you give vines all the water and nutrients they need, then the roots won't spread as deep and far.

When your vines are used to searching for the water they need, then are suddenly handed an excessive amount, the grapes will grow big and fat. This seems fine until you consider that like any fruit you pump with water, the pulp will be watery and have little flavor. We've all seen strawberries at the grocery store that look big, fat, and juicy so you buy them. But when you start eating them, you notice they don't taste as flavorful as the smaller berries. It's the same concept with grapes, only sometimes they can grow until they burst, which is far worse than having a grape taste like water.

Unlike normal flowering fruit that have a pretty colorful blossom, grape blossoms have tiny buds that are exposed and don't have any type of petal. When rain does come during this time it can disturb the pollination process by washing pollen away, leaving hardly any way to pollinate, if not washing away some of the buds. Not only can rain destroy these fragile blossoms, but high winds and frost can too.



Enjoy a glass of wine with Dad on Father's Day!

Hot Tip

Kit Size Matters

In the world of wine kits, size really does matter. Consider a kit used to make a typical table wine, like Pinot Grigio or Cabernet Sauvignon. Depending on the brand purchased, a 7.5L wine kit would contain 100% grape juice concentrate, while a larger format kit of 16L would contain a bit of concentrate plus fresh varietal grape juice. That makes a big difference in alcohol, body, tannins, and aroma... well worth it!

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



Close up photo of a fragile grape blossom.

When rain or other weather conditions damage the buds, then what happens later when the grapes start growing is a condition known as [millerandage](#) (shot berries), where there are small immature seedless berries in a cluster along with some normal berries. This obviously causes a problem with yield. Berries that are seedless will never make good wine grapes because they won't mature correctly.

Tom's Cellar

Use a Sweet Reserve to Add Flavor and Sweetness to Wine

By Brant Burgiss

If you are a home winemaker and a fan of off-dry, semi-sweet, or dessert wines, you are probably familiar with the term “sweet reserve”.

For the uninitiated, a sweet reserve is a sweetening solution containing sugar in one form or another that is added to a stabilized wine to add sweetness and possibly more flavor to a wine. It could be as simple as adding liquid invert sugar, or it could include the addition of fresh unfermented fruit juice.

Wine kit manufacturers typically provide sweet reserves for those kits which benefit from a sweeter taste. The kits may range from a [Liebfraumilch](#), a [Gewürztraminer](#), or a [Riesling](#) to a fruit flavored or a port style wine. In these cases, the winemaker typically adds the little bottle or pouch of sweetener that comes with the kit once fermentation has completed and the wine has been stabilized.

But if you make homemade wine from scratch, how do you go about making and adding a sweet reserve?

The simplest way to safely sweeten* a wine is to add [wine conditioner](#). This is a pre-made product that contains various sugars in a supersaturated solution, along with yeast inhibitors. Wine conditioner lets you sweeten to your heart's content (**warning: a little bit goes a long way, so we recommend doing bench trials before committing a quantity to the entire batch**) without the fear that your corks or bottles may blow due to refermentation issues.

**When I say “safely sweeten”, I mean the specific manner in which winemakers add sugar while at the same time adding a bit of yeast inhibitors ([potassium metabisulfite](#), also known as *KMS*, and [potassium sorbate](#)).*

The only issue that I have with wine conditioner is that it only adds sweetness to the wine. It does not add any fresh fruit flavor.

I remember the first time I made a homemade strawberry wine from fresh strawberries. I finished the batch to dryness, then back sweetened to give me the desired sweetness. It tasted fine, but what I really wanted was for the wine to have more fresh fruit (strawberry) flavor in addition to the sweetness.

So I did a bit of research (online, as well as through my winemaking buddies) to come up with a way to make my own fruit flavored sweet reserve. Want to know the secret?

Here's what you do:

As you are preparing your fruit for fermentation, set aside a small quantity of fresh juice in a glass vessel to be used as the sweet reserve. For a typical 6 gallon batch of wine, you only need to set aside about a pint of juice or so.

Strain the fresh juice with cheesecloth (or something similar) to prevent any fruit solids from being in the sweet reserve. Add some [pectic enzyme](#) (2 or 3 drops should suffice), stir well, cover and place the juice in the refrigerator for a day or two.

As the pectic enzyme does its job, some solids will precipitate out of solution and fall to the bottom of the vessel. If you used a glass container to store the juice, you'll readily see the sediment form at the bottom.

Using a sanitized turkey baster, remove all the “clear” juice from the vessel, being careful not to disturb the sediment below. Put the clarified juice in a con-

(Continued on page 4)



Customer Feedback

We love to hear your feedback! Let us know what you like about our products or service, and we may post your comments here soon.

Brant Burgiss
Manager

CELEBRATING OUR 20th YEAR

From the archives:

I just wanted to tell you guys that I think you're terrific – My kit arrived fine and in record time. I'll let you know how my first wine comes out.

Leslie Bocker
Centereach, NY

Thanks for looking for our monthly hidden special. During the month of June 2018, we're offering 30 free PVC capsules with each wine kit purchase. They are item #2435D, which is a green capsule with gold stripes. Be sure to mention this hidden special when ordering so you can get the deal!

Thanks for your prompt service.

Phillip Winslow
Grifton, NC

As a first time wine maker I happened on your page, gosh wish I'd been here first. Will be very helpful for rest of process and future endeavors.

Lisa Cassidy
Westerly, RI

We've been in business since 1998, always striving to bring you the best in winemaking products and customer service. Thank you for your business!

New Products

Here is a list of some new winemaking products that were recently added to the grapestompers web site:

ITEM #	DESCRIPTION	
CL25A	PBW (Powdered Brewer's Wash), 1 lb. jar	\$9.89
FIN65	Reduless, 3 gram packet Treats H2S problems	\$2.29

Extra Passport and RQ Wine Kits Now Available

PP6844	French Grenache	\$147.37
PP6848	CA Two Roads Red w/CGP (blend Cab/Zin/Petit Syrah)	\$167.00
2018RQ1	Shiraz / Viognier	\$165.99

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

Corky's Corner

Winemaking Definition

Stuck Fermentation

An undesirable condition where fermentation fails to begin, or has stopped before all the sugar has been converted to alcohol and CO2.



Rainy Day Tip

With all the recent rain we've been having in North Carolina, it doesn't hurt to remind everyone about the potential problem of mold in the winery.

Mold can ruin your wine. And, once established, mold is very difficult to eradicate.

Prevent mold - Keep your winery's air dry by utilizing a dehumidifier, or at least a fan to keep moist air from landing on your winemaking equipment.

Have a winemaking tip to submit?

grapestompers.com/submit_ideas.aspx

Monthly Specials

Specials for June 2018

Item #	Description	Reg. Price	Special Price
VC770	California Connoisseur California Red, 7.5L (2 available, expired April 9, 2018)	\$62.47	\$43.73
VC6788	NM Melon Berry Merlot, 7.5L (2 available, expired May 15 and June 26, 2018)	\$72.28	\$50.60
VC821	European Select Soave, 7.5L (1 available, expiring June 4, 2018)	\$66.50	\$46.55
VC0370	NM Wildberry White Zinfandel, 7.5L (2 available, expired May 29, 2018)	\$72.28	\$50.60
VC778	California Connoisseur Liebfraumilch, 7.5L	\$65.96	\$52.77
VC769	California Connoisseur Cabernet Sauv., 7.5L	\$72.98	\$58.38
VC0870	Legacy Gewürztraminer, 16L	\$116.84	\$93.47
VC0866	Legacy Cabernet Sauvignon, 16L	\$125.54	\$100.43
3256	Cru Select German Riesling Traminer, 16L	\$132.76	\$106.21
3116E	Grand Cru Sangiovese Merlot, 10L	\$87.15	\$69.72
3269	Grand Cru Pinot Blanc, 10L	\$76.62	\$61.30
VC0362	NM Strawberry White Zinfandel, 7.5L	\$72.28	\$57.82
3257	Orchard Breezin' Wild Watermelon, 5.4L	\$72.49	\$57.99
CF3551	Showcase Yakima Valley Merlot, 18L w/CGP	\$164.21	\$131.37
CF5328	Showcase Yakima Valley Viognier, 18L	\$176.84	\$141.47
2103	Wine bottles, Bordeaux, 24 x 375 ml, green	\$32.29	\$25.83
2224E	Mini Auto Siphon, 3/8" x 13" tall (fits gal. jugs)	\$9.79	\$7.83
2223	Airlock, Double Bubble	\$0.88	\$0.70
2284	#7 Waterless Airlock / Silicone Bung, 5 hole vent	\$4.99	\$3.99
2605	Carboy Brush	\$6.99	\$5.59
2600A	Test Jar, plastic, 14" tall with base (1-1/8" diam)	\$4.79	\$3.83
2714	Citric Acid, 3 oz.	\$1.99	\$1.59
2722	pH Test Strips, vial of 100	\$6.99	\$5.59
4800A	Star San sanitizing concentrate, 4 oz.	\$5.65	\$4.52
2906	Private Preserve - gaseous wine preserver	\$10.99	\$8.79
2520	French Oak Cubes, light toast, 3 oz.	\$4.99	\$3.99
2709	Wine Yeast, Lalvin K1-V1116, 5 g.	\$1.00	\$0.80
2406	PVC Capsules, Green w/gold stripes, each (heat shrinkable)	\$0.14	\$0.10
2322	Corks, Agglomerated #9 x 1.5" (38 mm)	\$0.12	\$0.10
3200	Complete Wine Kit - White (includes 1st kit!)	\$323.39	\$236.99
3100	Complete Wine Kit - Red (includes 1st kit!)	\$339.71	\$245.99

Creating / Adding a Sweet Reserve

Continued from page 2

tainer that can be closed tightly and put it in the freezer until you are ready to use it.

Meanwhile, of course, you've been fermenting the bulk of the juice into wine. Once fermentation is complete, stabilize the batch with proper doses of KMS (either [Campden tablets](#) or potassium metabisulfite powder) and potassium sorbate.

Thaw and add the sweet reserve to the wine according to your taste or target residual sugar level. If after adding all the sweet reserve you find that the wine is still not sweet enough, you can easily add some wine conditioner to reach the desired sweetness. All that's left to do at this point is fine / clarify the wine per usual.

I honestly believe this method of adding sweet reserve made from fresh unfermented juice is superior to adding wine conditioner alone, since it not only adds sweetness, but flavor and aroma too.

We hope you enjoyed this article. Let us know what you'd like to learn next!

Cheers,
Brant

PS: one more item of interest:

SCRATCH 'N DENT SALE

We have one 6 US gallon plastic (PET) carboy on our shelves that arrived with two small dents in it. There's no leakage or cracks, it's just got a couple of dings in it. We're offering this particular scratch 'n dent carboy for only \$17.50, a discount of \$7.00. Ask for item # [2201A](#), and mention in the order comments section that you want the slightly dinged carboy.

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Wine Drops

Wine Drops is a catch-all for various tidbits that we find interesting. This month we have information about Tom's current situation. Also we want to give you a chance to tell us what you would like to see next month.

Update on Crazy Tom

Many of you have met and/or spoken with grapestompers founder / owner Tom Burgiss over the years, so we thought we would bring you up to date on his whereabouts and his condition.

After a couple of medical issues that required hospitalization and rehab, Tom has officially retired (at the grand age of 87) and is currently residing in a nearby assisted care facility.

His health has improved greatly in the past couple of months, and he is now up and about, spreading rumors and telling tall tales like before. Opinionated as ever, ornery and cantankerous, he is still the same person we have come to love and respect.

If you would like to drop him a card or go visit him, please give us a shout and we will gladly share his contact information.

Happy Father's Day!

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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](#).