



AWOnews



Produced by The Amateur Winemakers of Ontario

**A forum for the exchange of news and opinions on home
winemaking in Ontario**

September 1996 Newsletter No. 2 [part b](#)

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The Harvest Edition!

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven... A

time to sow, and a time to reap..."

Ecclesiastes ii

IN THIS ISSUE:

by Paul Dunseath



This second edition of AWOnews comes to you as we enter the 1996/97 winemaking season. In this issue you will find information on suppliers of fresh grapes, kindly provided by long-time supporters at the Ontario Grape Growers' Marketing Board; promotional products from the suppliers of fine grape concentrates we use; and suppliers of imported juices. AWOnews accepts no advertising and makes no recommendation about these products, although in our column "Product Review" we will give you our opinion (with which you may or may not agree) on any products sent for evaluation.

Suppliers to the hobby are invited to provide announcements of upcoming new products, subject to the foregoing. We reserve the right to edit for length, and would prefer a maximum of 50 words.

AWOnews is a publication of the Amateur Winemakers of Ontario. It is produced by volunteer effort, and the views expressed by authors of articles may not necessarily reflect the views of AWOnews, or of the Amateur Winemakers of Ontario. Responsibility for accuracy rests with the authors of articles or Letters to the Editor.

PRESIDENT'S NOTES

Greetings! At a meeting of the Executive held during the Convention in Waterloo, I was chosen as the President of AWO. Our organization faces several new issues over the next few years, and I am looking forward to working with our Executive and our members in meeting the challenges. I will have a column in each issue of AWOnews to share concerns with you, and I welcome your feedback on anything that I have discussed or that you feel should be raised.

Festival '96 I want to thank the clubs that organized the Waterloo Convention for putting on such a great show. I especially appreciated their willingness to try out new ideas. A special word of thanks also to our judges for their dedication

and patience in evaluating the wines submitted.

Upper Canada Vintners The Ontario Hydro Wine Makers Guild has changed its name to Upper Canada Vintners. The Hydro club has been active since the 1960s and achieved notable success at this past year's competition. However Hydro employees now account for fewer than half of the club's members, and they see no reason for continuing the link to Ontario Hydro.

Membership Dues Last year we levied a surcharge on membership dues to help build up our bank account. The surcharge was a one-shot deal, and the membership dues for this coming year will be the same as they were two years ago. Club reps will soon be receiving a mailing from our new Treasurer, Gordon Barnes.

January Seminar At every annual convention, there are seminars to help you learn more about winemaking and tasting. These have been valuable opportunities to get the benefit of other people's experience. I personally feel that we should have one or two such seminars at other times throughout the year and at various locations in the Province. We have therefore begun planning for a seminar in January, and you will get further details in the next issue of

AWOnews.

Gender Bias At the last Annual General Meeting, the issue of gender bias in some of our member clubs was raised. Our Executive has passed a resolution urging all member clubs not to practice any form of discrimination in deciding who they will admit as members. This includes discrimination based on gender, race, religion, ethnic origin, etc.

Where are we going? Several people have raised questions about whether AWO should continue as a club-based organization or switch to membership at large for individuals. I feel that there are wider questions to be asked. Should we be looking at links with other organizations, such as professional wineries or commercial publications? Should we still call ourselves amateurs? I am raising this is in order to stimulate a debate and a broad exchange of views from our members. I strongly encourage you to speak up and let us know how you feel. AWOnews is your newsletter and is available as a forum for your views.

John La Berge

PRODUCT REVIEW

LabelWare Computing Ltd of Calgary has announced a Windows-based software program called "wine LABEL" that allows users to create their own wine and beer labels using 50 clip-art images, pre-designed labels, or pre-designed templates. The product costs \$39.95 and the company can be contacted toll-free at 1-888-378-WINE.

Based on our evaluation of the demo copy supplied to us, we can confirm that it is a well-implemented WINDOWS product which is easy to use and has many well-done fonts and clip-art included. It's a very intuitive product, and the few instructions that come with it are more than most people will need. At the price it is an attractive package, although to make maximum advantage of it you will also need to buy "4th and Vine" pre-printed laser labels, a selection of which comes with the package. These are available at many winemakers' suppliers; the price is \$6.95 to \$7.95 a package (the price depending on the label design), for which the purchaser receives eight sheets of four labels each, making the final price between about 22¢ and 25¢ a label, which is a bit high for everyday use. It must be said, though, that these are really classy; highly artistic and nicely

rendered, for those special bottles that deserve the highest possible presentation.

Users can also produce their own labels, whether from scratch using the clip-art, or using predefined labels included with the package. Our experience however is that with 720K of memory in our own laser printer neither of these options will print (the printer gives an "out of memory" error), so obviously you need a well-endowed printer to use these parts of the program. The program also has an odd compulsion to switch the font size continually to 20 points, no matter what the user specifies and to fill the "text box" (the areas in which the user identifies the text to be applied to a label) with whatever size and relative dimension of text fits, no matter what size the user has specified. This can lead to bizarre results.

The program however is inexpensive, easy to use, and has an excellent on-screen presentation of the labels and of the results. If you have sufficient memory in your laser printer, and are prepared to put up with its occasional refusal to follow your instructions, it's a good and well-structured package.

GRAPE EXPECTATIONS

The Ontario Grape Growers' Marketing Board has announced the availability of grapes and juice for home winemakers in Southwestern Ontario. To conserve space, and since obviously the availability of certain varieties will vary during the season, we will simply list the supplier and the telephone number, as well as a general indication of speciality where specified. Please call to confirm which varieties are available, and the expected dates of harvest.

NIAGARA REGION

Atherton Vineyards, 1416 Ridge Road West (top of the Escarpment and Fifty Road), Stony Creek. (905) 643-2043 Fax: (905) 643-6520. Primarily hybrids, plus Concord.

De Sousa Wine Cellars, 3753 Quarry Road, Beamsville. (905) 563-7269 Fax: (416) 603-3372. Both hybrids and viniferas.

French Oak Vineyards, 4281 Mountainview Road, Beamsville. (905) 563-1698 Fax: (905) 388-6271 and (905) 563-0197. Riesling, including late harvest and Icewine.

Funk Winemaking Supplies, 3983 13th Street, Jordan Station. (905) 562-5900.

**Tom Ingham, RR#2, Turner Road, Welland. (905) 892-5218. Concord and
Niagara.**

**D & D Lailey, 15940 Niagara Parkway, NOTL. (905) 468-7027 Fax: (905)
468-0509. "All grapes that grow in Niagara". The Laileys also operate a
Bed-and-Breakfast for those who travel for grapes.**

**Lakeview Cellars Estate Winery, 4037 Cherry Avenue, Vineland. (905) 562-5685
Fax: (905) 562-5685. White Viniferas and Vidal.**

**Stoney Ridge Cellars, 1468 #8 Highway, Winona. (905) 643-4508 or (905)
643-1015. A range of Viniferas and Hybrids, both red and white.**

**Watson's Wine Supplies, 1389 Line 2, NOTL. (905) 468-3314. Many varietals,
both red and white, as well as a range of wine supplies for the home winemaker.**

**Arlene Whitfield-Turek, RR#2, 29 Line 2, NOTL. (905) 685-6359. A broad range
of both viniferas and hybrids.**

**Willow Heights Estate Winery. 4679 Cherry Ave. and South Service Road,
Beamsville. (905) 562-4945. White hybrids.**

**Wiley Bros - 100% Juices. 1175-8th Ave. South, St. Catherines. (905) 882-0877
or (905) 684-5236 and 1-800-450-7099. Fax: (905) 984-6357. A range of vinifera,
hybrid and labrusca juices.**

Joe Zimmerman, 3648-11th Street South, RR#1, St. Catherines. (905) 562-4039.

Both vinifera and hybrids. Bring your own containers.

SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO

D'Angelo Vineyards, 5141 Concession #5, RR#4, Amherstburg. (519) 736-7959

Fax: (519) 736-1912. Red and White hybrids.

LeBlanc Estate Winery, 4716-4th Concession, RR#2, Harrow. (519) 738-9228

Fax: (519) 738-2609. White Viniferas and Hybrids.

OAKVILLE, WOODBRIDGE, TORONTO

Culotta Wines Ltd. 1185 North Service Road, Oakville. (416) 844-7912 Fax:

(416) 844-2228. White Viniferas and Hybrids.

Darrigos, 90 Caledonia Park Road, Toronto. (416) 656-2201 Fax: (416) 656-9790.

Red Viniferas and Hybrids.

**Fruitland Juices/Vinoteca, 61 Caster Ave., Woodbridge. (905) 856-5700 Fax:
(905) 856-8208. White and Red Viniferas.**

WINE.ART PROJECTS

WINE.ART is another long-time supporter of the hobby. This year they are again offering their "Project Holiday Wine" just in time for the Christmas/Hanukkah season. The offerings this year are:

"Festive Red Burgundy", a blend of Pinot Noir and Merlot from Chile.

Availability is September 13 to October 11.

"Celebration Chablis", from South Australia, with a lemony bouquet.

Availability: October 11 to November 15.

Both are 23 litre kits and cost about \$1.67 a bottle.

FERMENTATIONS

Fermentations, a brew-on premise in Toronto has announced special pricing for AWO club members. All white wine kits are \$40.00, and all red wine kits \$42.00. Fermentations also carries juices from Festa and Kamil and offer further discounts for bulk purchases by clubs. Peter Brehms' California juices and grapes are available in five gallon, 31 gallon and 44 gallon quantities. These must be pre-ordered to ensure availability. Contact Fermentations at (416)-778-9000.

THE 1996 COMPETITION

At about the time you are reading this, the first edition of the newly-privatized "Better Winemaking" will be off the presses. The folks at "Better Winemaking" put in a considerable effort to cover the weekend's programme so we will not duplicate their reporting here. However we would be remiss if we did not offer congratulations to the winners in the competition. Enzo Fatica, of Bytown Master Winemakers, walked away with "Best Wine in Show" as well as "Best White Wine in Show" with a 1994 Chardonnay, made from a blend of Carneros and Edna Valley Chardonnays; Paul Nemy of Niagara Vine-to-Wine Circle had

the "Best Red Wine in Show" with a Lenko Vineyards 1992 Cabernet Sauvignon; and Drew Horlacher of Wentworth West Zymologists took the "Best Brew in Show" award using Extract plus grain. Paul Nemy, with 4 Gold Medals, 2 Silvers and 2 Bronzes (WOW!) is also our new "Grand Champion of Ontario" winemaker. Well done, Paul, and well done Lenko Vineyards!

Congratulations as well to our new Champion Brewer, Drew Horlacher of Wentworth West Zymologists (don't you love that name?).

The Champion Club was, once more, Ontario Hydro (now renamed Upper Canada Vintners).

For the statistics-minded, Chief Steward Gary Maldaver reports that the competition judges examined 528 wines and beers, with each one being tasted by at least two judges. Twenty-eight were rated as Gold medal standard, 50 as Silver, and 97 as Bronze.

Congratulations to all winners, and indeed all entrants.

WINEMAKERS IN THE NEWS

Praise is also due to John Marynissen, a former award-winning amateur winemaker who now, of course, manages Marynissen Estates. John is an innovative and talented winemaker, and it is deeply gratifying to learn that his vineyard has been named supplier to the Provincial Legislature of white wine for the 1996 session with his Vidal. Priced at only \$8.50 per bottle, it was described by the Chairman of the Selection Committee as "...packed with the right flavours. Just a beautiful big wine". Good on you, John.

AWC RESULTS

The Amateur Winemakers of Canada results have been announced and our new "Grand Champion of Canada" is Charles Plant of the Vancouver Amateur Winemakers Association. Warmest congratulations to Charles, who has been a fixture of the hobby, and a tireless worker, for many years. The Grand Champion Brewmaker is Jack Kouwenhoven, of the Chilliwack (BC) Zymurgy Club; Best Wine in Show was made by Robert Hirzer, Chateau "B" Team, also

of BC, with a Red Table wine , Best Brew in Show by Ron Svrcek, Wine Rackers of Lethbridge, Alberta, and Wine.Art White by Garry Croucher, Scarborough Winemakers. Arland Benn of Ottawa Valley took a second in the Wine.Art white contest. Among the highest-scoring Ontario entrants where Paul Nemy, Arland Benn, Dan Ostler, Mark Atkinson, Bill Clement, Martin Nygard, Terry Rayner, Ted Howchin, and Garry Croucher.

AWC RESULTS

This year for the first time the commercial "Intervin" organization opened an "amateur" competition. Chairman Andrew Sharp later commented that "amateur winemakers are becoming very sophisticated and very good... I can honestly say that there are few wines... to which I would say NO when offered a glass". Among the awards to Ontarians were Silver medals (the bracketed figures indicate the number of that medal) to Dominic Ierullo (2), Gary Koestler, Don Panagapka (2), and George Pikor; and Bronze medals to Peter Bennel (2), Peter Gatto, Bob Gibbon, Marv Kriluck (2), Graham Murphy and Richard



Pullin, Paul Nemy (2), Sebastian Novello (3), Peter Pigeon (2), Marcel Sarazin, Don Simper (3), Len Sylvester, Jerry Trochta, John Tummon, Max Waddington, and Ken Wolter/Kip Haddock/Peter Wilson. Following tough tests, AWO judges Peter Pigeon, Rodney Nicholson and Ludvik Furbacher have also been qualified as InterVin Judges. A lot of those names are very familiar to those of us in AWO. I would suggest that our judges have already set the standard!

THE STORY OF CIDER

Feature Article

By Paul Dunseath ©1992, 1996

For all of its many benefits, both to our health and peace of mind, wine has at least one major deficiency: the same alcohol which preserves it and gives wine its balance and life in a glass makes it impractical to drink in large quantities on hot summer days. To be sure, "summer coolers" or mixes of wine and ginger ale or fruit juice, are enjoyed by many people, but these drinks are both wasteful of wine and relatively expensive. A foaming glass of cold cider is both cheaper and, to our mind, more satisfying.

History records that there were extensive vineyards in Britain until the 12th century when Gascony in France was acquired as part of the dowry in the marriage of Eleanor of Aquitaine to Henry II. At that time the ordinary wine of Bordeaux, known as "clairette", enjoyed an excellent reputation and good quality. Tariff-free imports of clairette virtually wiped out the small domestic English wine industry, and few remnants of it remain today. Clairette, of course, has come down to us as the generic British term "Claret", and both its reputation and its quality remain superior.

Not all the British wine producers were troubled by the influx of Bordeaux wines, since many of them were also cider producers. (The Domesday Book regarded cider orchards as being vineyards). The beverage that many people regard as being in effect the "vin ordinaire" of Britain, cider, was unchallenged, and is produced to this day over a large area of Southern England (particularly Somerset, Devon, Sussex and Kent). It is also, of course, produced in Normandy, in California, in Virginia, and here at home in British Columbia and Quebec.

Cider has an alcoholic content of 5 to 6%, which puts it in the same range as beer, and is a product which ferments out and matures rapidly. While wine

yeasts can be used to produce a reasonable cider, the best results are obtained by fermenting with the natural yeast found on the apples, *Kloeckeraspora Apiculatus*. As we have previously pointed out, this yeast is unsuitable for winemaking since it produces three times as much acetic acid as an average wine yeast; in cider, however, this faint trace of sourness is an important flavour constituent.

***Kloeckeraspora* is plentiful on windfall apples and commercial cider producers in the UK use it. Freshly-produced soft cider from the nearest orchard to you will also have a sufficient quantity of this wild yeast that, unless it is killed with metabisulphite, will begin fermenting the cider spontaneously within a day or two of the pressing.**

Here at home in Ontario, cider is generally made from apples which are not ideal for this purpose; just as the best wines are not made from table grapes, so cider should not be made from eating apples. In France and England, special cider apples, such strains as St. Laurent and Bramlot, are cultivated, and Norman strains are used in the State of Virginia. Cider apples are higher in tannin than table varieties, having 3 to 5 times the tannin content of eating

apples, as well as a lower acid content. Sugar content of cider apples is also somewhat higher. Since true cider apples are not obtainable here, the Canadian winemaker must either use canned concentrates, or simulate the cider apple characteristics (a blend of Jonathon and Delicious varieties is reported to give good results). A farmhouse type of cider can of course be made from available juice, and in Quebec considerable quantities of cider are made from MacIntosh apples. In such a case, however, a dose of tannin, and the use of natural kloeckeraspora yeast, appears advisable.

Production of cider itself is quite simple and is a fitting way to begin the winemaking season.

In Ontario we are able to obtain freshly pressed "soft" cider from apple growers. In most cases this juice has not been treated with preservatives (at least it won't be if you tell them that you are a winemaker, in which case you may also receive a discount); it is then brought home in your own containers and should then be placed in a primary fermenter which has been cleaned and sterilized. No sulphite or sugar should be added, and the wine started with a good general purpose wine yeast. Tannin should be added at the rate of 1/4 teaspoon per gallon, and - note

this! - be prepared to add at bottling 1/4 ounce of cider vinegar per gallon! These two additions will give the cider the slightly bitter profile generated by true cider apples and as well the faint sourness that kloekeraspora would produce had we allowed it to be part of the party.

At this point the specific gravity should be about 1050; fit a fermentation lock, and fermentation should be underway within about 1 to 2 days and finished within 2 - 3 weeks. The fresh cider should then be allowed to settle and is then racked off. It should then be allowed to clear and, should it be necessary, fined. Once it is clear, we are ready to proceed further.

The specific Gravity should be measured and enough sugar added to bring the value up to 1003. At this point the cider vinegar which we have been holding in reserve should be added. Normally about two ounces of sugar per gallon, for the final "in bottle" fermentation, is also about right, but it is essential that an S.G. of 1005 not be exceeded. The sweetened cider is then immediately siphoned into beer bottles with about a one-inch headspace to the top, and capped with crown caps. The bottles should then be placed in strong containers (such as beer cartons) and left for at least two weeks and preferably four in a warm room

environment (but not hot). If the Specific Gravity was too high at bottling, there is a danger of bottles exploding, so do NOT exceed SG 1005.

When the two to four weeks have elapsed, the cider should be clear and will have a light deposit. Chill the bottles in the 'fridge, and open. A sparkling cider should be the result.

Again, if the Specific Gravity was high at bottling, but not high enough to cause the bottle to burst, the pressure inside will be such that, on the bottle being opened, excessive foaming will take place and much of your cider will be lost.

Besides being wasteful this makes a kitchen floor sticky and a spouse annoyed.

To summarize the steps for one gallon/ 4 liters:

1 gallon (or ~4 liters) of soft cider (approx S.G. 1050)

1/4 teaspoon grape tannin

1/4 ounce apple cider vinegar

Wine yeast (let's not trust completely in a wild card!)

NO sulphite or sugar

Place in primary fermenter under lock and ferment to dryness.

Allow to clear (fine, if necessary), rack and add sugar to bring the S.G. to 1003.

At this point add the apple cider vinegar, and a good champagne-style yeast for the final fermentation. Siphon into beer bottles, crown cap, and store for two to four weeks. Chill and serve.