
Remaining in the Vine
A Grape Grower's Perspective on John 15:1-17

What will we cover today?

Grapes!

- **Specifically, wine grapes**
- **Even more specifically, what grows here**
- **The grape growing industry in Iowa**
- **Central Iowa wineries you can visit**
- **Growing grapes – how it works**
- **Making wine from them yourself**
- **Note, wine not the focus, grape growing is (so sorry, no samples…)**

But first… a backstory!

Theology!

- **Jesus' parable of the vine and the branches**
- **Parallels with the Christian life**

Wisconsin Boy Moves to California – Warily.

Wisconsin

- Beer & Brats
- Cheese
- Tornados
- Normal People

(like dairy farmers)



California

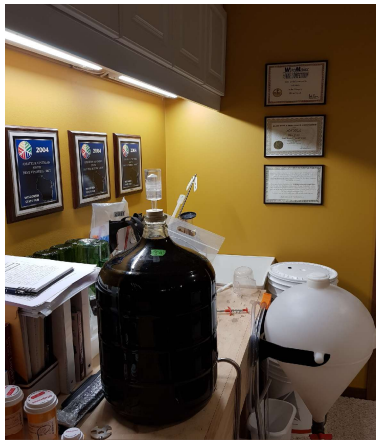
- Fruits & Nuts
- Wine
- Earthquakes
- Unusual People (actors, hippies..)



- Stepping Off the Corporate Jet, into...?
- Limited-term Assignment (2-5 years)
- Frequent Road Trips (with kids)
- An Unexpected Wine Education

Wine Tasting -> Wine Making -> Grape Growing

- Palate Improvement -> Higher Spending
- Guilt Complex -> DIY Winemaking
- Home Winemaking -> Ribbons/Awards
- Ultimate Challenge: Grow the Grapes and make the wine from scratch!











What to Grow?

Vitis Vinifera (native to Mediterranean Basin)

- Cabernet Sauvignon
- Zinfandel
- Merlot
- Pinot Noir
- Syrah/Shiraz
- Tempranillo
- Granache
- Chardonnay
- Riesling
- Sauvignon Blanc
- Viognier



Vitis Riparia (native to Canada & Midwest)

- Largely used as root stock in hybrids (U of M)
- Marechal Foch
- Frontenac
- ***Marquette***
- Seyval Blanc
- La Crescent
- Petite Pearl

Vitis Labrusca (native to New England)

- Concord
- Niagara
- Catawba

State Totals and the Iowa Wine Experience

State of Iowa Totals

- 30 Grape Varietals
- 100+ Wineries
- 300 Vineyards
- 1,300 Acres in cultivation
- 400,000+ gallons produced

Iowa Wine Experience at the Iowa State Fair in Grandfather's Barn (top of the eastern hill)

- Judging Results, commercial & amateur
- Winery of the Year award
- Samples of prize winners sold
- Exhibits on Iowa Wine History
  - Vineyards as early as 1857
  - 6th in grape production by 1919
  - Iowa Wine Growers Assoc. in 2000
  - Midwest Grape & Wine Industry Institute at Iowa State in 2006

Vineyards/Wineries in Central Iowa

- The Cellar Winery, 2183 320th St, Madrid, (515) 367-7777, thecellarwinery.com
- Dosaage Winery, 8606 NW 121st St, Grimes, (515) 238-9405, dosaagewinery.com
- Jasper Winery, 2400 George Flagg, Des Moines, (515) 282-9463, jasperwinery.com
- Covered Bridges Winery, 2207 170th Trail, Winterset, (515) 729-9463, coveredbridgeswinery.com
- Madison County Winery, 3021 St. Charles Rd, St Charles, (641) 396-2220, madisoncountywinery.com
- Nearwood Winery, 1699 IA-14, Knoxville, (641) 891-2469, nearwoodwinery.com
- Tassel Ridge Winery, 1681 220th St, Leighton, (641) 672-9463, tasselridge.com
- Thunder Creek Winery, 574 210th Ave, Pella, (641) 629-6009, thundercreekwinery.com
- Van Wijk Winery, 802 4th St, Sully, (641) 594-3325, vanwijkwinery.com

Planting and Growing to Maturity



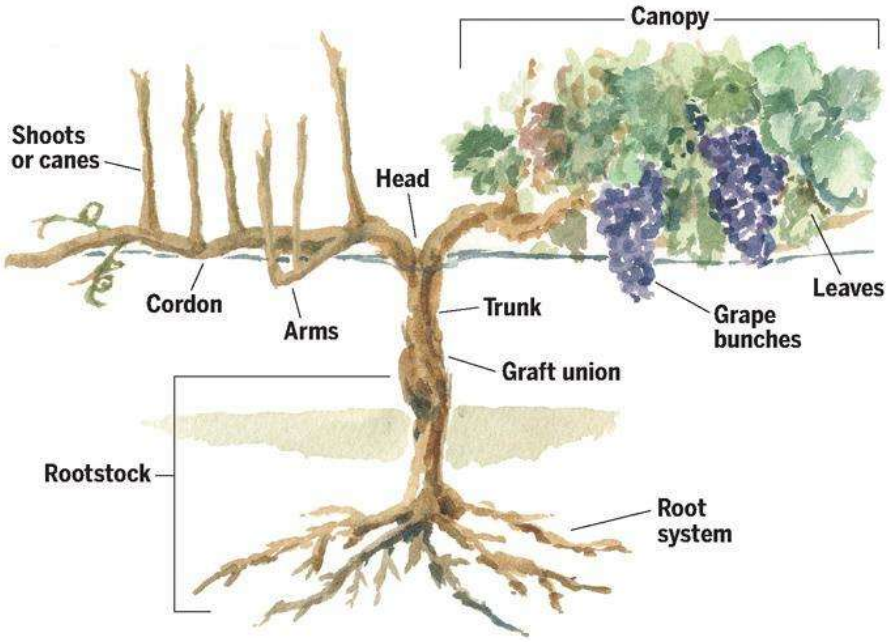


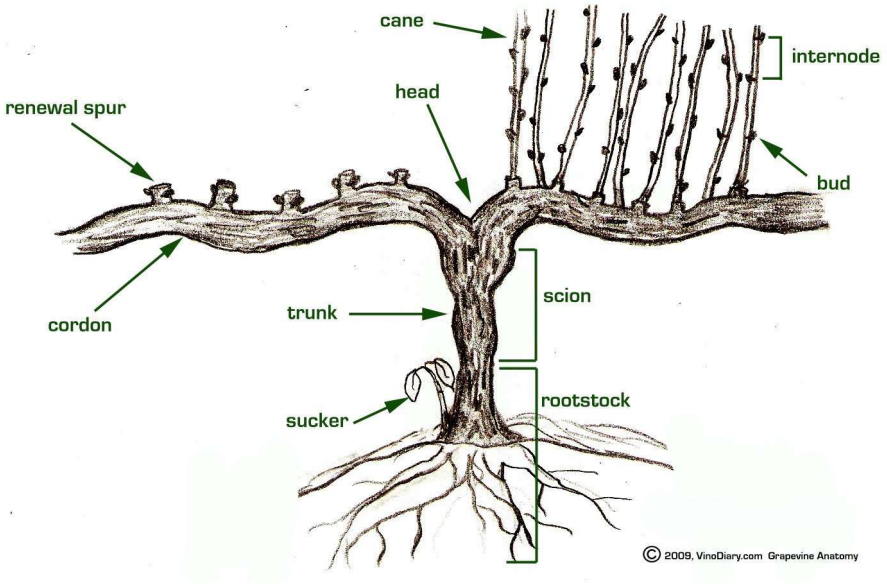




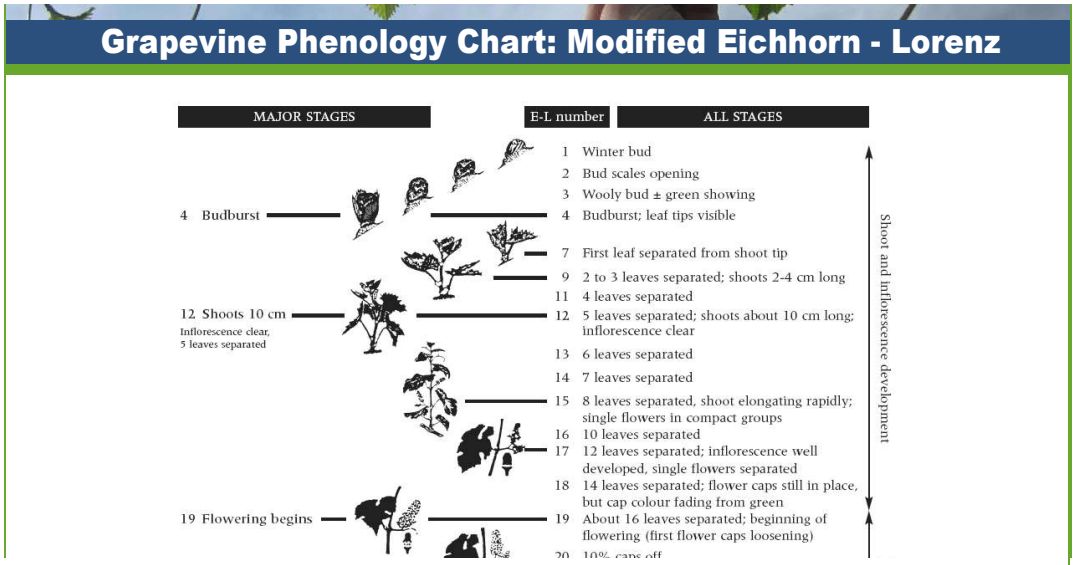


Parts of a Grapevine





A Year in the Life of a Grapevine



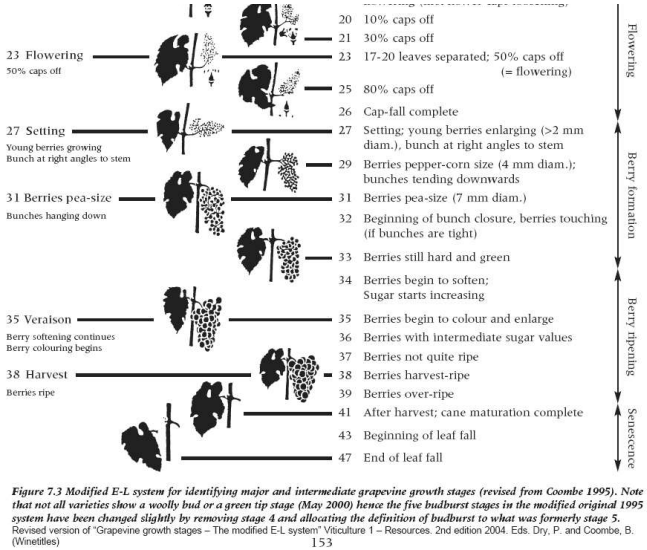


Figure 7.3 Modified E-L system for identifying major and intermediate grapevine growth stages (revised from Coombe 1995). Note that not all varieties show a woolly bud or a green tip stage (May 2000) hence the five budburst stages in the modified original 1995 system have been changed slightly by removing stage 4 and allocating the definition of budburst to what was formerly stage 5.
Revised version of "Grapevine growth stages – The modified E-L system" Viticulture 1 – Resources. 2nd edition 2004. Eds. Dry, P. and Coombe, B. (Winetitles)
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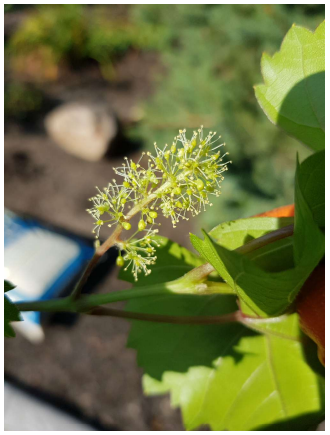
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Crucial points: Bud Break, Flowering, Fruit Set, Shoot Thinning, Veraison, Harvest, Rough- and Finish-Pruning
(April) (May) (June) (June) (July) (August) (December) (March)
<-----spray regimen -----> <------netting------>

Critical Stages in a Season












Threats to the Vineyard (and how to Counter)

Threats	Counters
• Winter Kill	• Rough Prune Late Fall; Finish in Spring
• Hungry Rabbits/Deer	• Grow Tubes/Garden Fence
• Late Freeze, Storms During Flower	• C'est La Vie! It's farming... (30/60/100 fold)
• Too Much Growth	• Shoot Thinning
• Canopy Too Dense	• Leaf Pulling
• Disease (fungus, mildew)	• Spray program
• Pests Type 1 (insects)	• Spray program
• Pests Type 2 (birds, raccoons *Song 2:15*)	• Netting/electric fencing
• Harvest too soon/too late	• Testing the fruit

Keeping Track of Growth and Evaluating Fruit

Wine Grapes Diary for Marquette Vines in Clive, IA

Year	Snow Drop	Daffodil /Jonquil	Red Maple	Forsythia	Red Bud	GDD @ 4/8	GDD @ 4/15	GDD @ 4/22	Pruned	Forecast Bud Break	Actual Bud Break	Julian Date	GDD @ Break	Flower	Veraison	GDD @ Veraison	Harvest	GDD @ Harvest	Forecast Harvest	Brix	Harvest Weight	Comments
2014	Newly Planted 1st Year vines - no data available																					All vines grew, more on East half than West
2015	3/8	3/30	3/29	4/2	4/16	61.5	122.5	189.5	4/14	4/10	4/17	107	152.5	6/1	7/25	2,002	9/7	3,072	TBD	25.5		No winter kill, but animals bit through trunk on 3 V
2016	2/20	3/16	3/25	3/27	4/14	26.5	79.5	166.0	4/3	4/18	4/19	110	142.5	5/29	7/17	1,853	8/26	2,888	7/17	21.2	2.0	Pruned to one cane high and one low (6-8 buds eac
2017	2/24	3/20	3/24	3/28	4/15	33.0	131.5	209.5	4/8	4/18	4/18	108	171.5	5/25	7/21	1,976	8/19	2,666	9/1	24.8	5.0	Rough pruning on 2/18-19, training cordons for eve
2018	3/30	4/24	4/26	4/25	5/1	3.0	32.0	57.5	3/30	4/22	5/5	125	237.0	5/20	7/17	1,971	8/18	2,782	8/23	24.0	10.5	Continued move to spur pruning. Could not thin sl
2019	3/25	4/6	4/8	4/6	4/24	37.0	68.5	148.5	3/23	4/26	4/25	115	184.9	6/1	7/29	2,032	9/3	2,782	8/31		6.0	Spur pruning used again. Shoot thinning on 5/31.
2020	2/24	3/26	3/28	4/2	4/26	45.5	64.0	95.0	3/29	4/30	4/29	120	186.5	6/5	7/29	1,972	8/22	2,606	9/3	23.0	5.0	Spur pruning used again. Shoot thinning on 5/16 &
2021	2/27	3/24	3/25	3/29	4/13	92.0	112.0	133.5	2/27	4/13	4/27	117	195.0	5/29	7/23	1,993	8/20	2,678	8/26	21.5	11.0	Spur pruning used again. Rough prune on 2/27, as
2022	3/2	4/10	3/27	4/8	5/3	7.5	52.5	74.5	3/27	5/7	5/10	130	208.0	6/3	7/25	1,950	8/22	2,622	8/27	20.0	10.0	Spur pruning used again. Replacing some dead can
2023	3/6	3/24	4/17	4/9	4/15	47.0	150.0	180.0	4/17	4/21	4/27	117	208.0	5/26	7/21	1,866	8/26	2,790	8/22	23.5	19.0	Spur Pruning used again. Rough pruned in Decemb
2024	Advice for 2023: Rough prune in late December, finish in April. Do shoot positioning early and often, keeping shoots on THIS side of fence. Remove 10"+ shoots without flowers. Spray with combo of fungicides bi-weekly from Bud Break through veraison. Pull leaves from fruiting zone in June. Thin clusters to have more grapes ripen. Ensure netting is all the way to ground and anchored. No need to spray for Japanese Beetles as leaf damage does not affect harvest.											(45,291)		2/1	3/27				4/29			
2025												(45,657)										

61.5	122.5	189.5	Old
26.5	79.5	166.0	Fcst

So, once you have the fruit...

What do you do with it?

- Extract juice (destem, crush, press)
  - Whites – remove skins
  - Reds - leave skins in (creates “must”)
- Pitch yeast
  - Match yeast to grape variety
  - Consider malolactic fermentation
- Stop fermentation
  - Fully dry, or with some residual sugar
- Siphon into glass “carboy” & wait
  - Solids will drop and wine will clear

What equipment is needed?

- 6 gallon food grade pail with lid
- Vent valve to allow CO2 to escape
- Hygrometer for sugar measurement
- Food grade hoses to siphon wine
- Stirring and “punch down” tools
- Chemicals to drop solids & clear wine
- 5 gallon glass carboys (more than one)
- Wine bottles and sealers (corks)
- Sanitation and cleaning equipment

Life Lessons from Grape Growing/Winemaking

- Grape Grower for not quite 10 years
- Winemaker for about 25 years
- Follower of Jesus for over 50 years
- Seminary Grad with a Masters in Theological Studies
  - Naturally, much time spent reading what Jesus did and taught
  - Jesus taught about many topics, from money to relationships to eternity
  - Often used parables (short vignettes from life situations, with a point)
  - One of the most famous is in the Gospel of John, chapter 15, the one about the Grape Vine and the Branches.

John 15:1-17 (NKJV)

1-4 “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away [or, lifts up: *airo*]; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes [or, cleans: *kathairo*], that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean [or, have already been pruned] because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

5-8 “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

[…]

16-17 “You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. These things I command you, that you love one another.

Interpreting Jesus' Metaphor

- Who is the Vine and who is the Gardener/Vinedresser?
- To whom is Jesus speaking?
- Who is conspicuously absent & why?

(hint: a branch cut off)

- On what part of the Vine does the Vinedresser focus His attention (tying up, cleaning, pruning, thinning, removing, burning)?
- What is the Vinedresser's ultimate goal?

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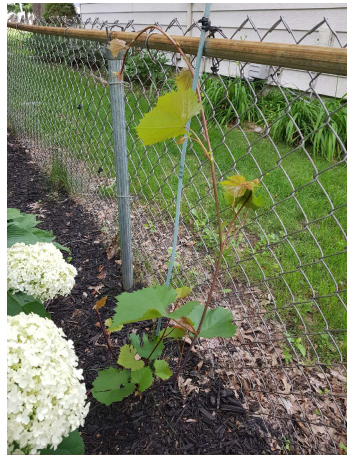
  - Fruit! Of good quality, and lots of it!
  - Not leaves, not shoots; that's what the branches want - to be busy with non-essentials
- Which branches are pruned/cleaned? Which branches are "taken away"? Which branches are "lifted up"?

Actions on Branches

















Interpreting Jesus' Metaphor

- What can we learn from other "farming" parables?
  - Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23 — Lots of seeds sprout, but not all produce
  - Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43 — Initially fakes look the same, until the fruit matures
  - Matthew 7:16-20 — "By their fruits you shall know them" (see also Mt 25)
  - Galatians 5:22; Colossians 3:12,14 — What good fruit looks like
  - Luke 13:6-9 — In some cases, fruit may come next season
- Which branches are pruned/cleaned? Which branches are "taken away"? Which branches are "lifted up"?
- Which branches are which? (only the Vinedresser knows - branches don't decide!)
  - Bearing good fruit: pruned
  - Non-fruit-bearing: taken away
  - Needing more time: lifted up
- As a branch, what is <u>your</u> primary job?

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Interpreting Jesus' Metaphor

- Abiding in Jesus IS fruit-bearing; they are *synonymous*
- Apart from Jesus, you can do NOTHING! (nothing of eternal value)
- God will determine the best action to take for every branch/shoot in the Vine
- Every action God takes is for the health of the Vine and the production of fruit
- Fruit is why you were chosen

  I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain
- Fruit brings glory to God and ratifies your calling

  By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.
- God has chosen in advance what fruit we will bear (Ephesians 2:10)

  For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.
- Your job: abide in Jesus. Everything else will follow!

Questions at Your Tables

1. What keeps you from abiding in Jesus?
   a) The World?
   b) The Flesh?
   c) The Devil?
   d) Other?

2. What helps you to abide in Jesus?
   a) Personal Habits? (which)
   b) Other Believers? (how)
   c) Personal Disciplines? (list)
   d) Other?

This is what the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, says:
"In repentance and rest is your salvation; in quietness and trust is your strength. (Is. 30:15)