

It's a bitter world: Dissecting the influence of wine experts

Choosing the right wine for the occasion can be stressful business.

With such a perplexing range of products competing for the consumer dollar, most of us turn to experts like wine writers or LCBO product consultants for advice that we hope will minimize the risk in our purchase decision.

But what if the experts' advice does not have as much clout as we think?

Brock University Professor and CCOVI researcher Dr. Gary Pickering wants to investigate the consumer influence wielded by wine writers, wine judges and trained retail staff. He says the main purpose of his study is to examine how taste sensitivity affects wine preference, and that he also wants to gauge any similarities in taste perceptions between experts and consumers.

Pickering's study, Wine expertise predicts taste phenotype, co-authored by John E. Hayes, explored the relationship between food and beverage "adventurousness" and taste characteristics among both regular consumers and wine experts.1

Pickering conducted a study drinkers in Ontario. Participants were also asked to rate their willingness to try new foods and wines as well as level of wine involvement, information that was used to classify them as a wine expert or wine consumer.

The study found that experts were more likely than consumers attracted to work in the food to be "super tasters", having higher taste sensitivity to bitter- says it is important to study



CCOVI's Pickering: getting to the bottom of it

ness and other tastes.

Pickering says perhaps consumers should be a little more cautious in blindly accepting expert advice due to the differences in their taste perceptions. This research may also represent important product development and marketing opportunities.

"We are developing large data-sets of Ontario, U.S., New Zealand and Australian wine con- Inglis says the diversified focus sumers to investigate the difference between individuals in wine preferences and buying behavior relative to their (taste) sensitivthat considered taste responsive- ity," said Pickering. "This should ness among a sample of 330 wine be of interest to wine producers, retailers and marketers: the concept of market segmentation based on one's taste genotype, as well as level of wine expertise."

> Pickering's study also led him to speculate whether individuals with keen taste perceptions are and beverage industry. If so, he

what that means for consumers, since products are often developed in response to the taste of experts.

Pickering said the research should strengthen grape and wine industry marketing expertise by shedding light on psychological factors associated with purchase decisions.

CCOVI Director Dr. Debbie that CCOVI has adopted is allowing for expanded investigations to include a merging of subject areas such as science, psychology and business. She says CCOVI recognizes that a well built industry will encompass research in various segments, and this research illustrates this type of approach.

¹Hayes, J.E. and Pickering, G.J. (2012). Wine expertise predicts taste phenotype. American Journal of Enology and Viticulture, 63 (1) (in press)

Students for hire

Students in the OEVI program at Brock University are seeking jobs for 2012.

To have a position posted for our students

905-688-5550 x4949 or e-mail: jennifer.roberts@brocku.ca

Wine Tasting Challenge

Winners listed on page 2. For more information, visit: winetastingchallenge.com

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Wine Tasting Challenge winners

Last November, participants gathered in Toronto to take on the Wine Tasting Challenge, an annual competition co-hosted by CCOVI. The event was open to all professional sommeliers, food and wine industry professionals, students and wine enthusiasts.

Congratulations to all of our winners.

Professional Grand Champion: Peter Boyd

2nd Place Professional: Jonathan Salem-Wiseman

3rd Place Professional: Eugene Mlynczyk

1st Place Amateur: Anthea de Souza

2nd Place Amateur: Jordan Mills

3rd Place Amateur: Monika Janek



Competitors show dedication as they take on the challenge

Peter Bodnar Rod

Spirit Champion: Mark Coster

CCOVI/ VQA Champion:

Demystifying Kosher wines

On Monday, Dec. 12, Rabbi Nachum Rabinowitz visited CCOVI to give the talk "Demystifying kosher winemaking", and offered a tasting of various wine styles.

Rabinowitz is senior wine supervisor with the Orthodox Union, the New York-based organization that is the largest kosher certification organization in North America.

The interactive seminar featured a tasting of both kosher and non-kosher wines.

The Rabbi gave a presentation on the history of kosher wine as well as discussed some popular misconceptions.

An expert with many years in the field, Rabinowitz performs site inspections and oversees the kosher supervision of wine in 12 countries.

Thank you to Rabbi Nachum Rabinowitz for the informative talk and thank you to all who attended.

Top students to attend Cuvée

Niagara Community Foundation and BASF Canada Inc. announced their support for the top 10 students from the OEVI program at Brock University to attend the Cuvée Gala to be held March 2nd.

Ian Bock, 4th year student in the OEVI program will attend this years event, "Attending Cuvée provides a meaningful opportunity to experience the Niagara wine industry in a forum that inspires excitement for the coming years. I would like to express my sincere thanks for the opportunity to attend and thank the NCF and BASF for making this award available to OEVI students while at Brock."

Congratulations to our students on their accomplishments.

CCOVI goes to Australia for Cool Climate Symposium

Four grape and wine researchers affiliated with CCOVI have been invited to speak at the International Cool Climate Symposium (ICCS), held Jan. 31 to Feb 4 in Hobart, Tasmania.

The symposium takes place about every four years and features an array of international experts who share knowledge on issues specific to cool climate wine regions around the world. The CCOVI presenters will be Andy Reynolds, Kevin Ker, Tony Shaw and Gary Pickering. The symposium will also hear speakers from the Netherlands, France, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and the U.S.A.

Reynolds, a CCOVI Researcher and Professor of Biological Sciences, will deliver the symposium's keynote address when he presents his topic, Applied geomatics- joining the dots between vine physiology, wine quality and remote sensing.

Reynolds, an integral part of the ICCS since its inception in 1984, said the event's ability to attract attendees from around the world "helps to disseminate knowledge, develop collegial relationships and indeed to form many lifelong friendships."

Ker, a CCOVI Professional Affiliate, will speak about Climatic influences on vine hardiness- vine assessment

and use of protection prac-

Shaw, CCOVI Fellow and Professor of Geography at Brock, with *Profiling Pinot* Noir wine climates worldwide.

Pickering, CCOVI Researcher and Professor of Biological Sciences at Brock, will showcase, Coccinellidae and ladybug taint in cool climate wine regions- the threat and sustainable prevention practices.

Several other CCOVI affiliated researchers have also contributed to or co-authored presentations for the symposium. Debbie Inglis, Director of CCOVI; Wendy McFadden-Smith, CCOVI Professional Affiliate; and Jim Willwerth, CCOVI Staff Scientist have all made contributions to one or more of the presentations.

The ICCS series is the platform for communication between the global cool climate regions and people with interests (from vine to consumption) in cool climate wine. ICCS events traditionally attract an international audience of between 300 and 500 delegates, representing viticulture, winemaking, research, marketing, and consumption interests. Attendance typically comes from North America, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, and Europe.



Registration Open for spring course

OEVI 0N06 - WSET Level 2: Intermediate Certificate in Wines & Spirits

Geared to those employed in the beverage industry or anyone wishing to broaden their knowledge of wine and spirits in a structured way. Course runs Wednesday evenings for 9 weeks starting April 11, 2012

www.brocku.ca/ccovi, click on "Continuing Education"

Research Q&A

Beating the cold: Optimizing cold hardiness for Ontario



CCOVI Scientist Jim Willwerth is investigating best viticulture practices to determine how to optimize vine cold hardiness.

What is your role at CCOVI?

I am the viticulturist at CCOVI. My position is unique as it is divided 50% research and 50% outreach to the grape and wine industry. My major research program is focused on grapevine cold hardiness and understanding how to optimize it. I also have outreach responsibilities to provide effective technology transfer to the grape grower community.

What research are you currently involved with?

One project involves the question of whether crop level and/or harvest date has an effect on cold hardiness using our key vinifera cultivars in Ontario. This has always been a debatable topic for our industry, particularly in regards to Icewine production. Other projects include examining the effects of some plant hormones on cold hardiness and how the use of geotextiles effect bud hardiness and survival. I am also involved with the regional bud cold hardiness monitoring program along with KCMS where multiple cultivars are being sampled across designated viticultural areas (DVAs) throughout Ontario including Niagara's subappellations, Prince Edward County, and Lake Erie North Shore.

What has your research allowed you to discover or implement?

All of the cold hardiness related work is applied research to assist the grape grower community. Last year we launched the VineAlert cold hardiness database which is a very powerful resource for those involved with grape and wine. Data on bud hardiness and bud survival is input and stored within this web-based database so that timely and critical information can be accessed easily. At any given time throughout the dormant period a grower can see how cold hardy the grapevine buds are for a particular cultivar and location. This information is very useful in determining when cold mitigation practices should be used (i.e., running wind machines) because vine cold hardiness changes throughout dormancy and varies according to cultivar, site conditions, and management practices.

VineAlert is home to all of our cold hardiness information and will continue to expand to include research findings. This vear we have added some new display features to allow more user flexibility. The concept of VineAlert is unique because sample data are collected in DVAs across Ontario whereas data from other cold hardiness monitoring programs usually come from one or two research vineyards. This allows for more site-specific information which is important because of the diversity of Ontario's terroir. The cold hardiness monitoring program and VineAlert are truly a team effort with many collaborations and a lot of time and resources put into this initiative. It is satisfying to know that this program can help our industry combat the great threat of cold injury.

Brock presents PhD grad



Dr. Gary Pickering, Supervisor and Nicole Gaudette

Nicole Gaudette, PhD student in Biological Sciences, specializing in Plant Sciences and Oenology and Viticulture, presented her thesis defence on Thursday, Dec. 22. The title of her thesis is "Characterisation and optimisation of the flavour of health-promoting, plantderived bitterants in functional beverages."

Nicole defended her thesis before Examining committee members: Paul LeBlanc, chair; Valerie Duffy, University of Connecticut, external examiner; Gary Pickering, supervisor; Cameron Muir, internal examiner; Debbie Inglis and Jeffrey Stuart, committee members

Nicole's thesis has also been nominated for a Brock award due to high quality content. CCOVI and Brock University congratulate Nicole on her hard work and dedication in completing her PhD.

VQA Promoters' Awards

Thank you to everyone who submitted nominations for this year's VQA Promoters' Awards. The awards are given to recognize individuals who promote VQA wines through education and/or promotion. Awards will be announced at the Cuvée Awards celebrations and then given out at the Experts' Tasting held on Saturday, March 3, 2012.

Growers, sign up now for VineAlert

Grape growers are invited to register for the next phase of cold hardiness monitoring.

Monitoring bud cold hardiness is an invaluable tool to assist grape growers in managing winter injury.

Sign up to ensure you get the latest updates on all grapevine cold hardiness related information including regional specific bud hardiness, bud survival and cold weather alerts.

To receive alerts, you must register at: www.ccovi.ca/vine-alert

CCOVI Briefs

VITICULTURE

Balint, G. Exogenous ABA and its impact on vine physiology and grape composition of Vitis vinifera l. cv. cabernet sauvignon in wet and cool seasons. American Society of Enology & Viticulture/ Eastern Section Meeting, Baltimore, MD, July 2011.

Jasinski, M. The terroir of winter hardiness: Assessing spatial variability of winter hardiness and yield in Niagara Riesling and Cabernet franc vineyards using geomatic technologies. American Society of Enology & Viticulture/ Eastern Section Meeting, Baltimore, MD, July 2011.

Ker, K., Brewster, R., Willwerth, J., and Inglis, D. Climatic influences on vine hardiness- vine assessment and use of protection practices. 8th Annual International Cool Climate Symposium, Tasmania, Australia, Feb. 2012.

Pickering, G., Hallett, R., Inglis, D., McFadden-Smith, W., and Ker, K. Coccinellidae and ladybug taint in cool climate wine regions- the threat and sustainable prevention practices. 8th Annual International Cool Climate Symposium, Tasmania, Australia, Feb. 2012.

Reynolds, A., Keynote Speaker. Applied geomatics-joining the dots between vine physiology, wine quality and remote sensing. 8th Annual International Cool Climate Symposium, Tasmania, Australia, Feb. 2012.

Reynolds, A.G. Applied geomatics: Connecting the dots between grapevine physiology, terroir, and remote sensing. Vinandino, Mendoza, Argentina, Sept. 2011.

Reynolds, A.G., Jasinski, M., and DiProfio, F. The terroir of winter hardiness: Assessing spatial variability of winter hardiness and yield in Niagara Riesling and Cabernet franc vineyards using geomatic technologies. American Society of Enology & Viticulture Annual Meeting, Monterey, CA, June 2011.

Shaw, T. Profiling Pinot Noir wine climates worldwide. 8th Annual International Cool Climate Symposium, Tasmania, Australia, Feb. 2012.

BUSINESS

Clemente, S., Dolansky, E., Mantonakis, A., and White, K. The Effects of Perceived Product-Association Incongruity on Consumption Experiences. Society for Consumer Psychology, Las Vegas, NV, Feb. 2012.

CCOVI Publications

BUSINESS

Voronov, M. and Vince, R., Integrating Emotions into the Analysis of Institutional Work, Academy of Management Review, 37(1): 58-81, 2012.

OENOLOGY

Jackson, R., Table wines, Alcoholic Beverages: Sensory Evaluation and Consumer Research, Woodhead Publishing, 2011.

Jackson, R., ed., Advances in Food and Nutrition Research, 63: 1-344, September 2011.

Jackson, R., Shelf-life in Wine, Food and Beverage Shelf-life and Stability, Woodhead Publishing, 2011.

2012 CCOVI Annual Lecture Series

Featuring talks by CCOVI Researchers, Fellows and Professional Affiliates.

The free lectures are Wednesdays at 3 p.m. EST in Mackenzie Chown Complex, room H313, Brock University. Live webcasts & archived video available at www.brocku.ca/ccovi

Karl Kaiser

CCOVI Professional Affiliate Co-founder, Iniskillin Wines,

winemaker and consultant Date: Jan. 25

Topic: Chemical deacidifica-

tions in winemaking

Antonia Mantonakis CCOVI Fellow

Associate Professor, Marketing,

Date: Feb. 8

Topic: Does a wine's name perception?

George Kotseridis CCOVI Scientist

Oenologist, Brock University

Date: Feb. 15

Topic: Targeting wine balance using biological deacidification Topic: Getting started: methods and by monitoring polyphenolic maturity

Kevin Ker

CCOVI Professional Affiliate

Industry consultant in vineyard management, KCMS Applied Research & Consulting Date: Feb. 29

Topic: How growing season weather patterns affect vine

hardiness

Vincenzo DeLuca CCOVI Fellow

Professor, Biological Sciences,

Brock University Date: March 7

Topic: Icewine grapes are biochemically active between September and harvest

Wendy McFadden-Smith **CCOVI Professional Affiliate** IPM Specialist, OMAFRA

Date: March 14

Topic: What we've learned about sour rot: an update on

research

Ralph Brown **CCOVI Fellow**

Professor, School of Engineering, University of Guelph

Date: March 21

Topic: New tools to fine-tune quality harvests

Jim Willwerth **CCOVI Scientist**

Viticulturist, Brock University

Date: March 28

Topic: Beating the cold: Best viticulture practices to maximize vine hardiness

George van der Merwe **CCOVI Fellow**

& Cellular Biology, University of

Date: April 4

Adaptation of wine yeast to early fermentation stress

Andy Reynolds CCOVI Researcher

Professor, Biological Sciences,

Brock University Date: April 11

Topic: New adventures in vineyard geomatics

Jeffrey Stuart **CCOVI** Fellow

Associate Professor, Biological

Date: April 18

Topic: Investigating resveratrol's anti-cancer and neuroprotecive effects

Don Cyr

CCOVI Fellow

Interim Dean, Faculty of Business, Brock University

Date: April 25

Topic: A cost-benefit analysis of entering and exiting vineyard operations in Niagara,

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