

Spring 2020

CCOVInews

A newsletter from
the Cool Climate Oenology
and Viticulture Institute



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Brock University

CCOVI highlighted by Canada Foundation for Innovation

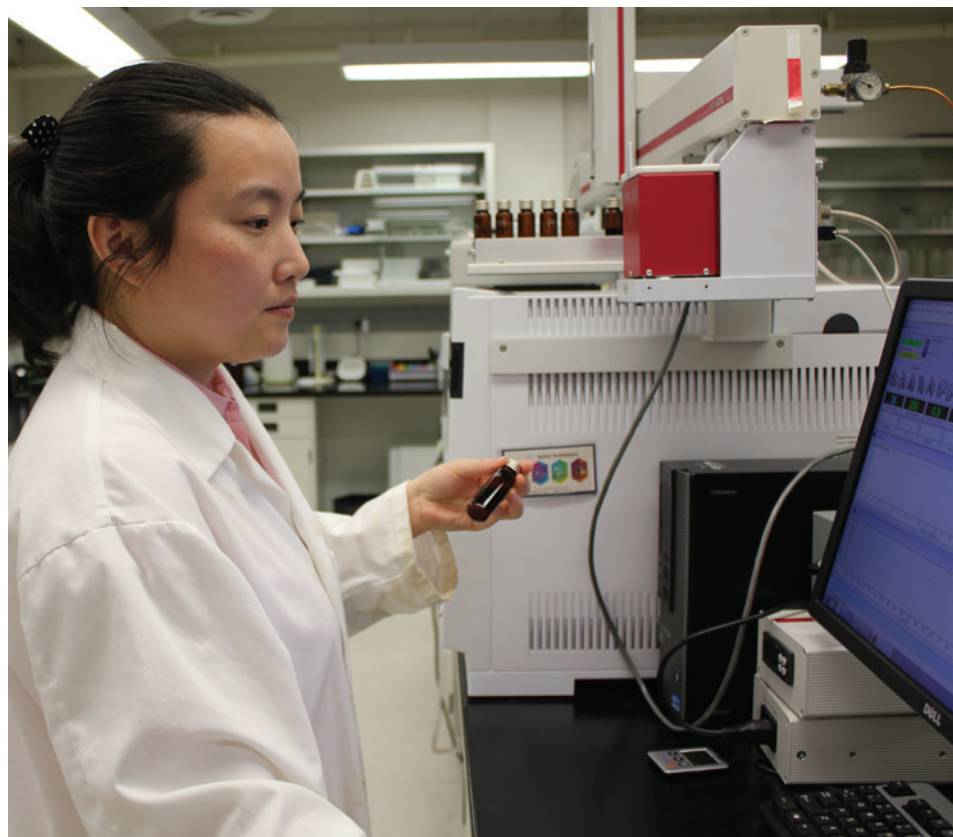
Innovations from Brock University's Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI) are being recognized for giving Ontario winemakers a more competitive edge.

The Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) launched its Research is my business partner campaign on Monday, Jan. 27 detailing how its investment in academic research institutes such as CCOVI, is helping businesses. The relationship between CCOVI and Fielding Estate Winery in Beamsville was an example given, with CCOVI helping the winery grow its sparkling wine sales by 30 per cent.

Richie Roberts (BSc '04), who has worked as winemaker at Fielding Estate for 12 years, calls himself a proud Brock University graduate.

"The time I spent at CCOVI was an integral part of my future career in the wine industry," said Roberts. "Having different sites that are monitored through the Harvest Monitoring Program, and the analytical services they have at Brock are really valuable."

Fizz Club, a sparkling wine network that provides sparkling winemakers with the unique opportunity to compare notes and exchanges ideas, taste wines, hear about new research and visit sparkling wine regions, along with the Vine Alert program, a grapevine management and monitoring



Technologist Shufen Xu is pictured here with the CCOVI Lab's new gas and liquid chromatography mass spectrometry machine purchased as part of the CFI grant.

system for cold hardiness and injury, are some of the ways CCOVI is boosting the Ontario wine industry.

CCOVI Senior Scientist Belinda Kemp says in addition to the research winery at the Institute, CCOVI is also equipped with world-class equipment that was purchased from the CFI fund.

"The reputation of Ontario wines has grown so much over the past 10 years," said Kemp. "We've got a very good reputation for innovative techniques during winemaking. We also have some amazing equipment that's been purchased from

the CFI fund that's been fundamental in allowing us to pursue this project from the winemaking side and also the science side."

"Being recognized on a national scale reinforces the groundbreaking research we do at CCOVI," said Director Debbie Inglis. "We're grateful for the support we've received from the Canada Foundation for Innovation, which has also allowed us to play a key role in cultivating the success of the Ontario wine industry and contribute to the industry across Canada."

Wine television show featuring Brock's CCOVI comes to YouTube



Cork Screwed Director of Photography Kevin Davidson, left, records hosts Ralph de Groot and Patrick Gagliardi when the show filmed at Brock in July, 2018. The wine show will be available on YouTube starting Friday, April 17

In case you missed it the first time around, season one of the wine television show *CorkScrewedTV*, featuring scientists from Brock University's Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI), will now be available on YouTube. Created by Brock graduate Patrick Gagliardi (BA '13) and Ralph deGroot, the show takes a fun and light-hearted approach to teaching viewers — and the hosts themselves — about the Niagara grape and wine industry.

The first episode will be available to watch

for free beginning Friday, April 17 at 7:30 p.m. The remaining 12 episodes will be released on the channel one at a time, every other day.

Creators say that the show, which originally aired on Bell Fibe TV, will be available to Canadians on YouTube for at least as long as the country is required to stay at home as a result of COVID-19.

"Ralph and I, like everyone, are feeling the effects of COVID-19 and often reference the fun and educational times we had while producing *CorkScrewedTV*," says Gagliardi.

"If this brought our lives a little bit of joy and normalcy, we thought we should share it with all Canadians in hopes they will feel the same."

The creators credit the help of CCOVI researchers in bringing the show to fruition, saying they provide each episode with a scientific perspective and explanation to questions and processes about the grape and wine industry. CCOVI senior scientists Jim Willwerth and Belinda Kemp are featured in every episode, while CCOVI Director Debbie Inglis introduced the show's hosts to the institute and the expansive wine cellar located in Brock's Inniskillin Hall.

"Without CCOVI, there would be no show," says Gagliardi. "Viewers get to know the institute's hard-working scientists and researchers along the journey, who are one of the key elements to making our show accessible for all to watch and enjoy, with no previous wine experience required."

The show also enlisted the help of several other Brock alumni, including camera operators Jade Robertson (BA '16) and Adrian Dudziak (BA '10), and media manager Taylor Zajdlak (BA '15, MA '17).

Episodes of the series will be available on the *CorkScrewedTV* website and corresponding YouTube channel.

CCOVI scientist helps region's grape growers navigate uncertainty during COVID-19

Although they are well-versed in overcoming fluctuations and uncertainty from one growing season to the next, Niagara's grape growers are facing a unique set of challenges this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To address some of those challenges, Jim Willwerth, Senior Scientist at Brock University's Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI), recently partnered with the Grape Growers of Ontario (GGO) to host a webinar on the Economics of Crop Management During COVID-19.

"The entire world is dealing with the uncertainty of this global pandemic. I am



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glad to be able to provide support to the grape growers by discussing crop management and ways to improve efficiency in the vineyard during this challenging time," says Willwerth.

Since harvest season is still a few months away, Ontario grape growers aren't currently in the same situation as other farmers who have to determine what to do with early season crops due to lack of available workforce or that have become superfluous due to plummeting demand.

The immediate challenge for grape growers, rather, lies in safely and cost-effectively completing the critical vineyard work that takes place in the spring while also adapting to new physical distancing protocols. The mandatory 14-day isolation period in place for

seasonal workers coming to Ontario farms from outside of Canada also creates its fair share of challenges. That two-week delay, combined with having to logistically spread out workers to ensure a safe operation, means there may simply be less hands on-deck to get the work done.

With many operations already working on tight margins, growers have to determine what key vineyard practices need to be maintained — and which can be scaled back, delayed, or forgone altogether to cut costs. And, as grape vines are perennial plants, Willwerth says those decisions are crucial not only to this year's harvest, but to future harvests, as well.

"There's no one-size-fits-all solution, and it's important to ask questions about your vineyard and the individual block within them," he says. "Your decisions will depend on a variety of factors, such as what your vineyard looks like in terms of winter damage, what you are growing, and the contracts you have in place. This might be a year where

you don't do everything you normally do, or, that you opt out of certain tasks that aren't absolutely essential to the health and vitality of your vineyard."

He suggests that growers put the focus on their best vineyard blocks and aim to reduce labour intensive activities (such as manual leaf removal) and use more mechanization where possible.

Integrated pest management is still critical, he stresses, as is completing major canopy and crop management tasks. Pruning, tying, trunk replacement and other winter injury mitigation is also important, as is training young vines to prepare for the growing seasons to come.

Willwerth also knows that growers are worried about what it will mean for their operations if COVID-19 restrictions are still in place when harvest season does roll around this fall.

"The biggest thing is the uncertainty—how long will this be in place?" Willwerth says. "But as growers, you always deal

with uncertainty and risk management, this is just another level. So be positive and work together, and you can navigate this challenge, too."

Providing timely research and support to the industry is a critical part of CCOVI's mandate. In addition to this recent webinar, the institute also produced a viticulture webinar series with the GGO. The videos can be viewed on CCOVI's website, with more videos planned for later this year.

"The Grape Growers of Ontario remain committed to keeping our members engaged and informed and we thank CCOVI and Dr. Jim Willwerth for helping us deliver an educational webinar and collaborative Q&A session on the economics of crop management during COVID-19," says Matthias Oppenlaender, Chair of the GGO. "We look forward to bringing more engaging content to our members in the coming weeks and months."

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CCOVI



Cuvée launches new online experience to celebrate the VQA wine industry

The Cuvée 2020 Online Experience was launched on Friday, May 22 at cuvée.ca. The free online event features 48 wineries, 12 restaurants and seven breweries/cideries and will run until the next Cuvée.

In exclusive videos, winemakers virtually pour, reveal and discuss the wines they chose as their favourites for Cuvée. Links to each winery, brewery/cidery and culinary partners' online store allows guests to place online orders and bring the Grand Tasting experience into their living rooms. Jonesy also contributed a Show from Home video for the virtual Après Cuvée.

When the 2020 Cuvée Grand Tasting was cancelled due to COVID-19, organizers worked quickly to develop a fun, virtual experience for wine-lovers to celebrate together and support the local grape and wine industry.

"What makes Cuvée special is its ability to bring the industry together in celebration of excellence in the Ontario VQA wine industry and, in 2020, guests can do that virtually," says Cuvée Manager Barb Tatarnic. "Visit cuvée.ca to meet and support our industry partners and learn about the labour of love driving their craft."

Thomas Bachelder, Winemaker and Co-Owner at

Bachelder Niagara, and Winemaker at Le Clos Jordanne, is thrilled that a virtual Cuvée was possible.

"Cuvée is a moment in time, a brief shining moment, once a year, where all come together as one collegial community," he said. "We have learned how to reach out and hug our fellow human beings virtually, and to all of you who have dreamt your 'Cuvéés' into being but are not able to physically be together to pour them, we say 'Santé!'" Cuvée also acknowledges breakthroughs in the industry and advances vital grape and wine research.

"Bringing Cuvée online showcases Brock's ability to still support and celebrate our VQA wine industry while it navigates unprecedented challenges," says CCOVI Director Debbie Inglis. "Raising a glass together, even virtually, will unite us and help us emerge stronger."

Proceeds from Cuvée support the Cuvée Legacy Fund, established to fund industry-driven research initiatives and scholarships for students. This year's Cuvée Hosting Award for Academic Excellence recipient is Brock Oenology and Viticulture student Jessica Oppenlaender.

Please visit cuvée.ca for more information.

Continuing Education Courses

August 7 - September 11
Online Certificate in Ontario Wines

September 1 - December 15 (NEW!)
Online Cider & Perry
Production – Foundation
foundationonline.eventbrite.com

September 7 - October 4
Online WSET Level 1 in Wine

September 7 - October 4
Online WSET Level 1 in Spirits

September 7 - October 11
Online WSET Level 2 in Wine

New! WSET Online Examinations now available through Remote Invigilation (WSET Levels 1 & 2 in Wine and WSET Levels 1 & 2 in Spirits, only)

Go to the CCOVI Continuing Education webpage and navigate to your course option for further information, including cost and dates.

brocku.ca/ccovi/continuing-education

International Cool Climate Wine Symposium postponed to 2021



As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to cause significant uncertainty and risk to public health around the globe, the International Cool Climate Wine Symposium (ICCWS) 2020 Advisory Organizing Committee has made the decision to postpone its upcoming conference until 2021.

The ICCWS 2020, which was slated to take place this July, will now be held at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada from July 25 to 29, 2021. The Symposium is being organized by Brock's Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI) alongside its research and industry partners across the country. This difficult decision was made after careful evaluation of all currently available information from the Public Health Agency of Canada, Niagara Region Public Health, and the World Health Organization.

The province of Ontario, where the conference was scheduled to be held, is currently operating under a state of emergency. That, combined with global travel restrictions and other rapidly evolving COVID-19 response measures, led the committee to determine that postponing the ICCWS is in the best interest of all attendees, partners, sponsors and organizers.

"With the great degree of uncertainty that lies ahead, we believe postponing the conference is the best option to ensure a safe and successful event for all involved,"

said CCOVI Director Debbie Inglis, Chair of the ICCWS 2020 Advisory Organizing Committee. "While we are disappointed we will not be able to come together to celebrate innovations and advances in cool climate grape, wine and business research this year, we place everyone's health, safety and well-being above all else. We look forward to showcasing our Canadian grape and wine industry to the world when we host ICCWS in July 2021."

All registered delegates, invited speakers, sponsors and trade show exhibitors will be contacted directly days with more information. All payments made for conference registration, sponsorships and trade show booths will be honoured and applied to the 2021 date. Refunds will be issued to those who do not want payments used for the rescheduled date.

"We appreciate your ongoing support in this extremely difficult time and wish you all the very best in the weeks and months to come," said Inglis.

For further updates as they become available, please visit the ICCWS website.



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