



Brock University
Niagara Region
500 Glenridge Ave.
St. Catharines, ON
L2S 3A1 Canada
T 905-688-5550
brocku.ca

MEDIA RELEASE

CORRECTION: *this release corrects a factual error contained in Media Release #R00056, issued at 3:32 pm. Please use this version.*

R00057
29 August 2013
Brock University – Communications & Public Affairs
905-688-5550 x4471

Wine grape preharvest monitoring program back for fourth harvest

With this year's conditions cooler and wetter than the banner year of 2012, Niagara's grape crop needs to stay on the vine a bit longer to reach full maturity, say researchers at Brock University's Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI).

But optimism remains high for a strong vintage this fall.

"Based on preliminary data, the harvest will be later than last year and more typical for an Ontario vintage," says CCOVI viticulturalist Jim Willwerth. "As a result, we will likely have great quality for our core cool climate varieties due to slower but steady maturation and greater flavour development."

Tracking the maturity of grapes across the Niagara Peninsula is the focus of CCOVI's popular preharvest monitoring program that launched for its fourth harvest season this week. The program, run by Willwerth, helps winemakers and grape growers to make informed harvest decisions.

"No two vintages are alike," says Willwerth. "The 2013 crop is healthy and slightly behind some of our hotter and dryer vintages in terms of general maturity."

Each week until the end of harvest, Willwerth will collect samples at four sites across the Niagara region, tracking key ripeness indicators for the four most popular Niagara varieties - Chardonnay, Riesling, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc. Data measuring sugar levels, titratable acidity, pH and volatile acidity are posted to the program's website (ccovi.ca/preharvest) each Tuesday.

The interactive website lets users view grape maturity data, compare sites and varieties across the Niagara Peninsula, and also compare this year's vintage to harvests from 2010 to 2012.

Grape grower and Ontario Grape King Curtis Fielding says the industry values the program, as the preharvest snapshot reveals how grapes are developing across the region.

"This data is a great addition from the research wing of CCOVI," Fielding says. "With work and life being so busy these days, it is hard to be in all the places you need to be, this data gives our team an easy to use tool to see where things are headed across the Peninsula.

"Combined with the bud hardiness research that is coming out of Brock, growers are actually getting research that they can use today and for years to come."

To view the preharvest program's website visit:
<http://www.ccovi.ca/preharvest>

For more info: Kaitlyn Little, marketing and communications officer, CCOVI, Brock University, 905-688-5550 x4471; klittle@brocku.ca