

Wines From Ohio Grapes

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Nicholas Longworth of Cincinnati made the first Catawba wine in Ohio in the year 1825, and this was the beginning of the State's commercial wine industry. He also manufactured the first champagne in America in 1842 from wine of the Catawba grape.

The wine industry of Ohio is not large but does utilize a considerable proportion of the grape crop. Since the repeal of prohibition, Ohio wineries have never utilized more than 6,000 tons of grapes, and usually fewer.

In Ohio the grapes used in wine production are Concord, Catawba, Niagara, Delaware, and in a much lesser degree, Ontario, Riesling, Ives, Green Mountain, and Iona. These are mostly old varieties. In fact, the varieties that were the foundations of eastern American viticulture are still the principle ones. We would be in error to assume that because these grapes have been grown for so long they are the ideal for Ohio. There is great room for improvement and new varieties are watched with interest by growers.

Red Wine Grapes

The Concord is the most important wine grape in Ohio because it is well adapted to the climate and soils of the region and it is grown more extensively than any other variety. Both red and white wines can be made from Concord grapes. While many declare they are fine wines, they suffer greatly by comparison with the better vintages of Eur-

ope which, after all, are the traditional standards of quality. Concord wines are sold as Claret, Burgundy, and when sweetened and fortified as Port; and also under its own name, Concord or sometimes as just plain Red Wine.

Second in importance for red wine is the Ives Seedling, or as it is usually called, Ives. This is truly an Ohio grape. It was grown from a seed planted in 1840 in the garden of Henry Ives of Cincinnati. It does not have the wide range of adaptability of the Concord, but in a few vineyards where the soil seems particularly suitable it will excel most other varieties. Wine produced from Ives grapes is better than Concord but still lacks quality.

Occasionally a vineyard is observed with a few Norton vines. They are relics of the past and recall a time when growers attempted to grow grapes that



A Catawba grape vine in the Lake Erie Islands district of Ohio.

would yield the best in wines. Ohio is too far north for the satisfactory development of this grape and the quality of the wine is inferior to that which can be produced where the grape properly matures.

The varieties Schraidt, Montefiore, and Bacchus are derived wholly or in part from the wild *Vitis riparia* and yield a deeply pigmented juice characteristic of this species. The Schraidt was developed on Put-in-Bay Island in Lake Erie by Casper Schraidt about the year 1880 and makes a wine that could be judged superior to any other eastern red wine. Unfortunately the flowers are self-sterile and thus cannot compete with the prolific Concord. However, it could be a starting point for the grape breeder to develop varieties of this type with better fruiting habits.

White Wine Varieties

The position of white wine grapes in Ohio is in direct contrast to red wine varieties. They unquestionably yield wines of quality that compare favorably with the white wine of any country. The Catawba and Delaware are two varieties which at this time cannot be excelled in this respect.

The Catawba, the first successful wine grape in Ohio, is still the principal white wine variety. It is now 144 years since the Catawba was introduced and it truly can be said to have passed the test of time. It is no longer grown in the Cincinnati area where it originated. Its culture is now limited to the islands of Lake Erie which lie north of Sandusky, and to a small section of the mainland shore in



The Ives, a red wine grape second in importance to the Concord in Ohio.

this same region. The Lake Erie Islands enjoy a climate very favorable for the late ripening Catawba. The growing season is about 200 days and the grapes invariably ripen nicely. The juice of the ripe Catawba will test about 21° Brix and the total acids will range from 8 to 11 grams of tartaric acid per 100 milliliters of juice.

The Delaware is the most satisfactory wine grape in eastern America. It ripens early and thus always matures its crops. It has a wider range of distribution than the late ripening Catawba and can be grown anywhere the Concord succeeds. The sugar content when well grown should average 23° Brix and the total acid 5 to 6 grams of tartaric acid per

100 milliliters of juice. A blend of Catawba and Delaware produces an excellent wine and is the basis for much champagne stock. The Delaware is more difficult to grow than the robust Concord, but more skill is being devoted to it and plantings are being extended.

Additional white wine varieties are Green Mountain, Riesling, Ontario, Iona, and Niagara. With the exception of Niagara their culture is quite limited. The Niagara is a productive sort and although it has limitations as a wine grape, substantial quantities are utilized.



TRULY DWARF CHERRY TREES

of both sweet and sour varieties have been developed at the Experiment Station at Geneva, New York. The desired variety is grafted on Mahaleb seedlings which have been allowed to attain a height of 26 inches before grafting. The Mahaleb body stock appears to exert a dwarfing effect on the top of the tree which results in the production of dwarf cherry trees comparable to dwarf apple trees.

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An all time high for cherry picking was set by one Wooten in the Hood River Valley — 2,168 pounds in 12 hours, a fantastic figure, but only a fair day's work for a robin.—Senator Soaper in the Chattanooga Times.

CORRECTION

In the article on "Grape Breeding in Minnesota", by A. N. Wilcox, which was published in the summer issue, several lines were inadvertently omitted in printing. Although the omission was not obvious, it considerably changed the sense of the paragraph on the selfing program.

At the top of page 34, the sentence—*Several one-generation-selfed seedlings have borne fruit but have not yet been used for further selfing or crossing* should be replaced with the following: *Several one-generation-selfed seedlings have been selected for desirable vigor, hardiness, and quality of fruit. The only one that has been used as a parent in crosses, No. 237, has been very satisfactory. A number of two-generation-selfed seedlings have borne fruit but have not yet been used for further selfing or crossing.*