



# Portland Winemakers Club

August 2025

## 2025 Monthly Agendas

### January 15th

Tips and tricks, Garage sale

### January 24th

Gala – Aloha Grange Hall,  
5 – 9 pm, \$15 per person

### February 19th

Speaker: James Osborne, OSU  
Enology Professor

### March 19th

Tasting & judging, member  
produced “Other Reds” #1  
(excluding Bordeaux, Pinot Noir,  
Italian reds)

### April 16th

Barrel tasting; member  
produced, any variety

### May 21st

Tasting & judging, member  
produced Bordeaux Reds

### June 18th

Tasting & judging, members  
produced all Whites, Rose’ &  
Sparkling

### July - No meeting

July 19<sup>th</sup>, Annual Picnic, \$10 ea.  
Fee, 1:00 – 5:00

### August 20th

Speaker: Patrick McElligott, wine  
sensory evaluation.

### September 17th

Tasting & judging, member  
produced “Other Reds” #2  
(Italian reds)

### October 15th

Tasting & judging, member  
produced Pinot Noir

### November 19th

Crush Talk

### December 10th

Elections, Planning for 2026

Wine-related tours may be  
scheduled on non-meeting days.



## “Bob’s Blurb”

It was a beautiful day for the summer picnic on July 19 at the Bowles home under the shade of their amazing tulip tree. It was a great way to beat the heat.

Thanks to everyone who attended for the wonderful food and wine. As usual people brought out lots of good wines (pics on page 4)

To all of you who could not make it, we look forward to seeing you at the picnic next year (and of course the monthly meetings).

August is here and grapes are progressing. I just saw a note from Sagemoor in WA that all their vineyards are through veraison (color change) so we are well on our way to another wonderful year.

I heard that Courting Hill vineyard is not going to have grapes available for a few years because they are completely redoing their vineyard. I don't have specifics but their original vineyard was around 50 years old.

I am finalizing my thoughts on yeast and nutrients for this fall. Don't wait until the last minute to get your yeast etc. See you at the August meeting.

Bob



## Upcoming Events / Save the Date

The next PWC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 20<sup>th</sup> in the basement of the Aloha Grange starting at 7:00 pm. We will have a speaker: Patrick McElligott. We will discuss and experience sensory evaluation with both good and flawed wines involved.

- Take time to visit the PWC website: [portlandwinemakersclub.com](http://portlandwinemakersclub.com) where there are Newsletters archived back to 2007.
- Also, visit our public group Facebook page: “Portland Winemakers Club” [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/portlandwinemakersclub), give it a look, Join the group and enter some posts of your own.

### Meeting Notes

(There was no meeting in July)

#### From the Editor:

I am always a little bit nervous when contemplating a change in my winemaking routine. By either including an additional additive or changing over from one product to another.

However, there are three new products, all available from Scott Lab or Crush2Cellar that I may give a try.

- Lallamand NBC yeast for white wines. A Burgundy selection for making fresh and refined Chablis-style Chardonnay with enhanced floral, citrus, and mineral notes, but is also well-suited for making rosés and Rhône style whites. I have always liked the intense aroma of good Chablis so I will give this yeast a try with my Pinot Blanc this Fall.
- Lallamand ML PRIME, a unique strain of *Lactiplantibacillus plantarum* that rapidly completes MLF (3-10 days). It lacks the ability to produce volatile acidity from glucose or citric. It also produces no to low diacetyl making it safe for co-inoculation. I will wait and see what the timing is like, but I will try this product on at least one red. ***I have included a short description on this product on pages 2 and 3.***
- Lallemand GO-Firm Protect Evolution yeast rehydration nutrient. This appears to be an improved version of the old GO-Firm most of us use for yeast hydration. Since I am almost out of GO-Firm anyway, I might as well buy the newer product.



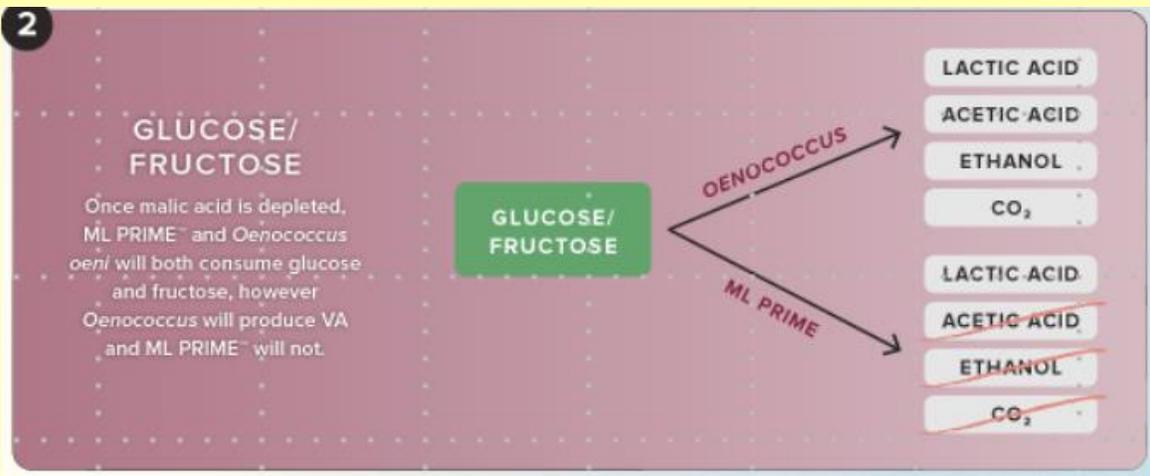
## Introducing a New Organism for Malolactic Fermentation

Scott Lab has announced that a new non-*Oenococcus* organism has been officially approved by the TTB for malolactic fermentation. It is a specific strain of *Lactiplantibacillus plantarum* and is commercially available exclusively as ML PRIME™.

#### WHY ML PRIME™?

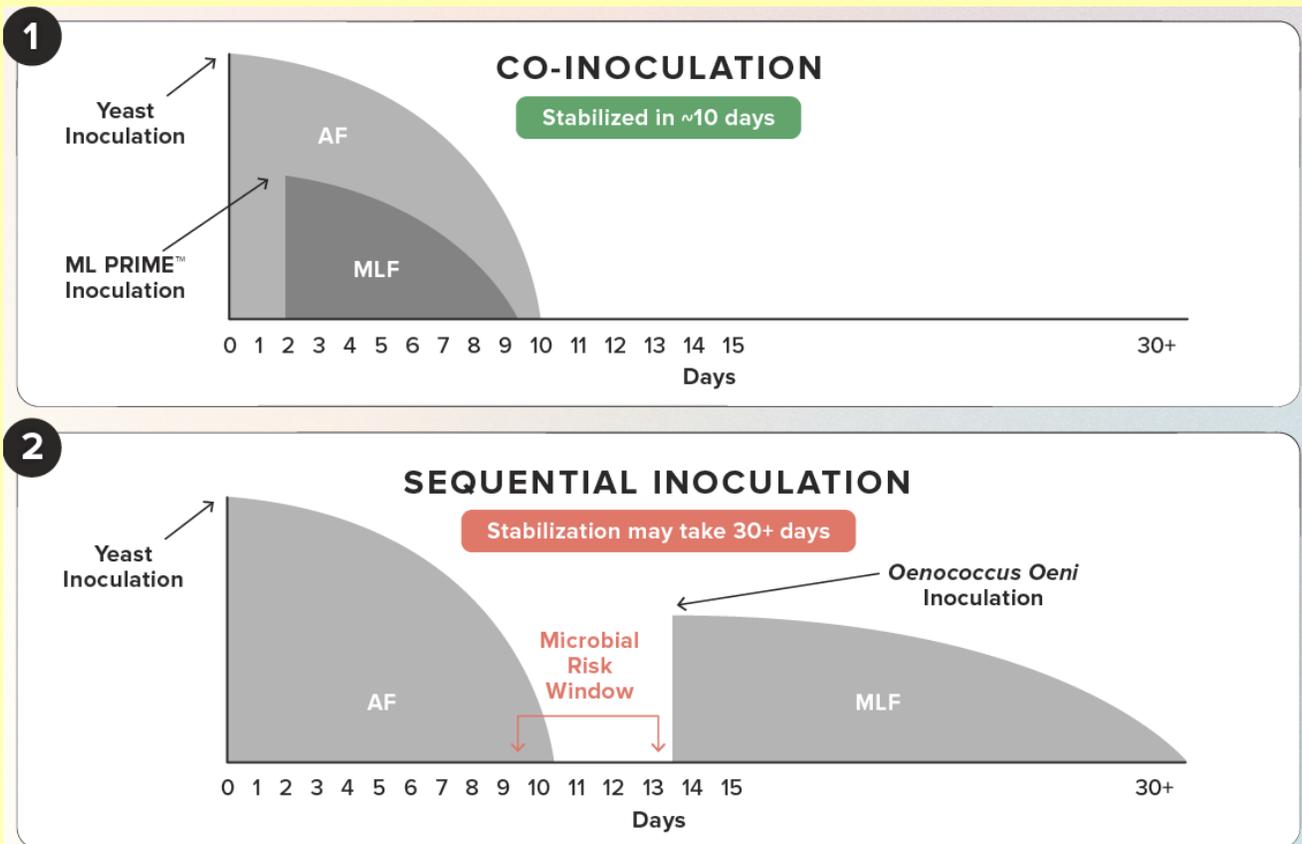
ML PRIME has a unique metabolism that offers several compelling advantages. ML PRIME does not produce volatile acidity (VA) from glucose and fructose, an issue that can be a concern with *Oenococcus* strains.





That's why many winemakers avoid co-inoculation and instead opt for sequential inoculation, which can drag MLF out for weeks or even months.

Co-inoculation can be a time-saving measure that helps tank turnover by simultaneously completing alcoholic and malolactic fermentation. However, for some, the risks outweigh the rewards. ML PRIME changes that. Its unique metabolism eliminates the risk of VA production, making it a safe choice for co-inoculation.



### SPEED WITHOUT COMPROMISE

ML PRIME completes MLF in 3 to 9 days, and this speed doesn't come at the expense of quality. ML PRIME has a neutral sensory impact, and wines retain their aroma, texture, and structure. ML PRIME also lacks the ability to produce diacetyl and is great for those looking to stylistically avoid buttery character.

***ML PRIME has over 10 years of use outside the US, and it has undergone extensive trials in domestic commercial wineries.***



On July 19<sup>th</sup>, PWC held their annual picnic at the home of Brian and Jolie Bowles in West Lynn, thank you. About 30 members and friends turned out for a pleasant afternoon. The food was great and the wine plentiful. See some pictures below.



# California Wine Industry in the 1920s

This is a snapshot of the wine industry 100 years ago. Why the 1920s? Prohibition took effect in 1920 making it illegal to manufacture, transport, or sell alcoholic beverages. It wasn't against the law to drink if you acquired it legally. You could make your own hooch.



**Winehaven Winery cellar building,  
Richmond, CA**

**The largest winery in California in  
1919**

**It later became a Navy fuel depot**

Just like that, the tap was turned off in January 1920. Before Prohibition, there were 256 wineries in Sonoma County, over 1,000 in California and 2,500 wineries in the entire country. When Prohibition ended in 1933 there were maybe a hundred still standing nationwide.

In 1960 California had 270 wineries, and it would take another 50 years to reach the pre-Prohibition level. Serious harm had been done to the industry and recovery was slow as it was interrupted by the Great Depression, World War II, then a lack of interest in wine until the late-1960s.

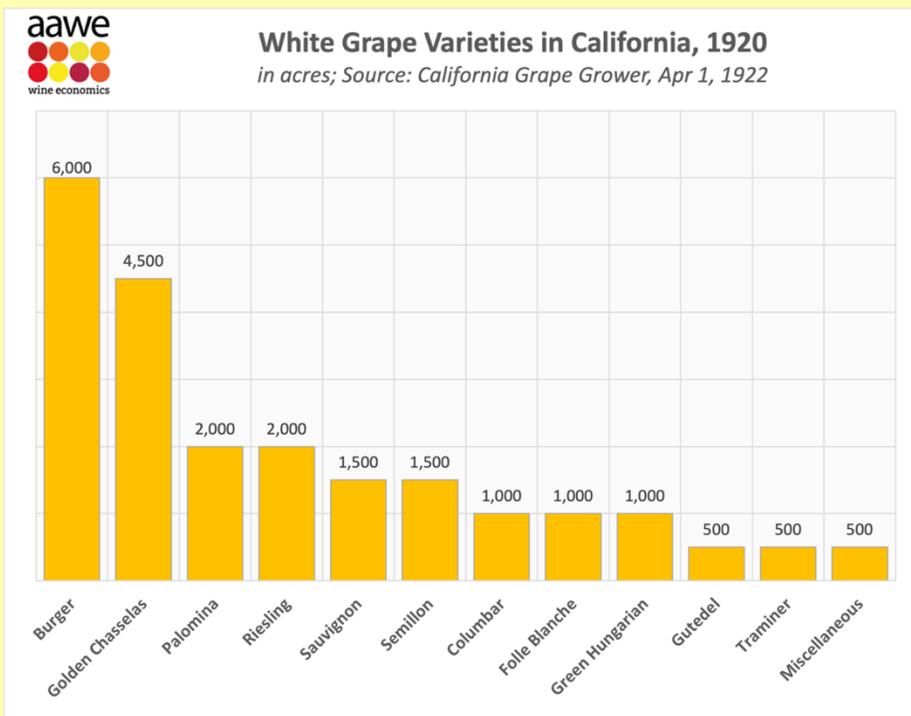
The wineries that made it through did it with sacramental wine for the church and wine for home winemaking. There were some illegal shenanigans going on, and occasionally a winery got caught.

The history tour at Korbel Cellars contains a ledger book from

that time. They sent a lot of grapes to "cousins" in Chicago. Coincidentally, the Chicago Mafia was big in the bootlegging business.

Business boomed for grape growers. Beaulieu Vineyards in Napa famously planted more vineyards in 1923 to keep up with the demand from home winemaking.

The graph below shows the most popular white wine grapes planted in California in 1920. Caveats: (1) It's unknown how well the growers reported their crops to the state. (2) Grape vines were sometimes mislabeled.



From the Editor: The chart shows total acres planted up through April of 1920.

- The most planted was Burger, possibly the German Arnsburger or a nearly extinct grape of France called Monbadon.
- Golden Chasselas. Some Californians also called it Palomino (with an o). It was planted to make Sherry. Popular in Switzerland.
- Columbar (add a D) is still used today, from France, similar to Chinin Blanc.
- Folle Blanche, an obscure and rapidly declining variety, found in W. France, susceptible to rot & disease.
- Green Hungarian, origin Hungary and Romania.
- Gutedel, origin Germany and Switzerland, very similar to Chasselas.

- Traminer, probably Gewurztraminer.
- Miscellaneous, I have never heard of this grape.
- You might wonder about Chardonnay? It wasn't introduced into California until around 1940.



# Game-Changing Innovations

Written by Clark Smith, extracted from WineMaker magazine

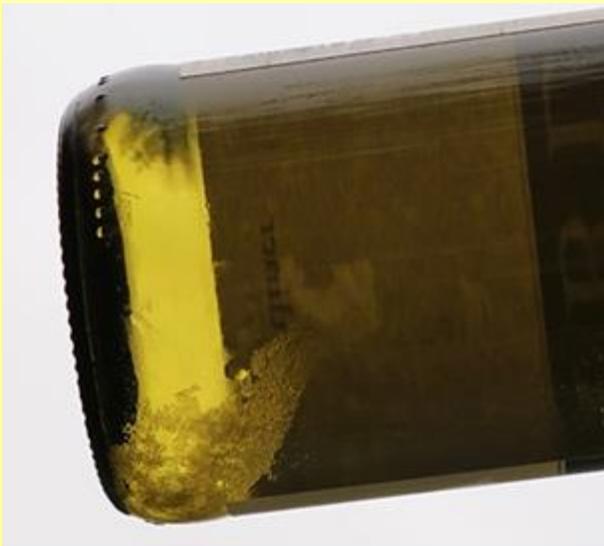
Readers who are making wine at home are sometimes frustrated that technologies I discuss such as flash détente, electro-dialysis, and micro-oxygenation are not available to small-scale winemaking, and perhaps never will be. Yet there are many recent advances that are a boon to the micro-practitioner. Some are exclusively suited to small production and do not scale up for the large commercial industry.

We now have the capability to enhance extraction, automate fermentations, nearly eliminate water use, and cold stabilize without refrigeration. New fining agents include highly efficient vegan proteins, red-friendly bentonite, and microbial-controlling chitosans. Single-use plastics have replaced the much-despised variable-capacity tanks and breakdown cooperage. A vast array of new yeast products are now available to protect cold soaks and pre-crushed grape shipments, reduce acidity, enhance aromatics, and lower pH. Surprisingly affordable electronic devices are available to measure dissolved oxygen and to enable real-time monitoring of *Brettanomyces* and *Acetobacter* in barrels. Enzymatic advances have rendered obsolete the tedious and expensive winery labs of the past.

So, this article is geared for you — the home winemaker and operators of small-scale wineries and will dig into these newer innovations. Talking about these advancements is impossible without dropping the names of products. While this article might be construed as a giant infomercial, to be clear neither *WineMaker* magazine nor the author endorse or profit from the sale of any of these innovations.

## Bitartrate Crystal Magic

Few home winemakers have jacketed tanks and refrigeration systems capable of cold stabilization of white wines and rosés. Even if you are an exception, chill-proofing is not good for wine. Besides increasing the solubility of oxygen, thus promoting oxidation, bitartrate precipitation robs the wine of potassium, an important contributor to perceived body and flavor persistence. Commercial wineries, particularly those making jug wines principally sold in grocery stores, are obliged to cold-stabilize lest the inexperienced consumer think he has served his mother-in-law ground glass. Believe it or not, cold stabilization is the single most energy-consuming process in wine production, typically twice the kWh consumed during fermentation season.



***Cold stabilization has long been the only way to ensure potassium bitartrate “diamonds” will not form in chilled bottles of wine. New products including Zenith Ono and Zenith Color now do the same thing, without requiring bulk wine to be cooled for days prior to bottling.***

Many alternatives have entered the market including mannoproteins, carboxymethyl cellulose, and gum arabic. These have one thing in common: They don't work real well. Generally, they offer protection that lasts only a few months. More recently, Enartis USA has introduced a patented proprietary potassium poly-aspartame that really works. It acts to disrupt the formation of so-called “wine diamonds.”

The proprietary name for whites and rosés is Zenith Ono. The only prerequisite is that the wine must be adequately bentonited for heat stability. Since reds are always heat-stable, this is not a concern there, but Zenith Color does contain gum arabic as a color stabilizer.

I love this stuff. Simply dose the wine at bottling and don't worry about the cold stabilization step.

## Fine and Good

Besides its heat stabilization properties, bentonite has always been one of the home winemaker's most useful tools for clarification of whites and rosés. Unfortunately, it's murder on red wine color. Now at last, Vason has brought us Mastervin Compact, the world's first color-friendly bentonite. I have also used it successfully on smoke-tainted Cabernet when it turned out that the taint was entirely in the suspended solids.

The making of high-terpene wines (Muscato, Riesling, Gewürztraminer, Vignoles) has always been plagued by bitterness and oxidative browning. It's easy to understand why. These are the tastiest eating grapes and are the choicest items on the menu of bees and birds. To cauterize the wounds these pests inflict, these varieties have evolved highly tannic skins that seal off cuts and punctures in their tissues, just as occurs in bananas and apples. Unfortunately, when these tannins show up in wines, they can oxidatively polymerize, leading to browning. A side reactant of the browning reaction is the production of hydrogen peroxide, which attacks the wine's aromatics, robbing freshness and leading to dull, stale, and petroleum characters.

In Germany's Mosel region and in the Finger Lakes region of New York, the practice of hyper-oxidation of juice proactively removes these phenolics at the juice stage prior to fermentation.<sup>1</sup> Once the brown polymers are formed, however, they need to be removed using a protein fining agent with a strong attraction for polyphenols but not prone to stripping flavor. The traditional animal-based agents (gelatin, egg albumin, isinglass, and casein) aren't very good at this.

The good news is that highly suitable vegetable-based protein agents have emerged from a great deal of research in recent years. Prompted by consumers' ethical concerns, the properties of a broad spectrum of sources have undergone screening, and several suppliers now offer an array of vegan products, principally from pea and potato. Vegan agents are superior simply because such studies have never been performed on animal agents.

Another new family of fining agents are the chitosans. Chitin is the structural material that comprise the shells of crustaceans and the structure of mushrooms. The black mold *Aspergillus niger* is used to produce chitosans that act physically to disrupt the cell membranes of microbes, available from many suppliers, and can be used to control the populations of runaway spoilage from *Acetobacter* and *Brettanomyces* species much more effectively than sulfur dioxide.

Assessing oxygen pickup during storage, racking, and bottling is one of the most important quality control winemaking necessities. A decent dissolved oxygen meter used to be completely out of reach for the home winemaker. Oxidation prevention was left to guesswork and gut instinct.

The Milwaukee MW600 is a portable handheld instrument that now does the job for just over \$200. Besides assessing oxygen pickup in wines, it can also assess headspace oxygen, taking the guesswork out of inert gassing of containers, minimizing waste, and assessing whether your technique is effective. If you are interested in the practice of juice pre-browning for your high-terpene whites, the MW600 can tell you exactly when you have completed the hyper-oxidation reaction to optimize tannin removal while preventing aroma loss.

What you want in your Christmas stocking is a tool that can replace that battery of analytical lab equipment some of you have invested in and eliminate the delays and breathtaking expense others incur sending samples off to professional labs. The new start-up Sentia now offers a unit that provides highly accurate, inexpensive, and immediate results for titratable acidity, free SO<sub>2</sub>, glucose, fructose, malic acid, and acetic acid. It works like a blood glucose monitor, with a drop of

wine applied to a specialized strip inserted into the meter, producing readings in a few minutes at a cost of less than \$5 per analysis. The unit employs dependable solid-state electrochemistry that requires no calibration.

The importance of immediate, on-site analysis cannot be overstated. Sending out your free SO<sub>2</sub> samples will always return bad numbers due to the deterioration of samples during shipping. The same can be said for metabolic changes that may occur when wine glucose/fructose or malic acid samples are in transit. For titratable acidities at the juice stage, you need that number *right now* so you can make informed decisions about additions and treatments to raise or lower acid levels prior to fermentation.

While you may grit your teeth at its one-time cost of \$2,300, if you are serious enough about making wine and honest about the true cost of alternatives, you'll likely find it pencils out pretty well.



**(L) The Sentia Wine Analyzer provides immediate results for testing TA, free SO<sub>2</sub>, glucose, fructose, malic acid, and acetic acid.**

**(C) The MW600 dissolved oxygen meter assesses oxygen pickup in your wine, as well as headspace oxygen and even when hyper-oxidation is done.**

**(R) Fermentations in GOlite plastic bags eliminate issues with air/bugs and are easy to monitor.**

## Single-Use Plastics

Many of you are aware of the innovations of Vijay Singh, a plastics engineer who revolutionized the global pharmaceutical fermentations industry and built a small winery in western New Jersey in which he turned his inventive genius to rethinking winery design. His GOf fermentor (3/4-ton) and GOf fermentorJR (100-lb./45-kg) auto-fermenters are becoming popular among home winemakers for their ability to mix fermentations all day and all night.

Vijay's SmartLiners are an alternative to variable-capacity tank lids and breakdown cooperage, replacing them with a collapsible bio-liner.

The latest innovation is the GOlite™ system (pictured above). Fermentations of whites and rosés, which don't require mixing, can now be fermented in these simpler systems for a small fraction of the cost.

Vijay is also working on a parade of micro-winery innovations including an affordable sterile bottling system for sweet wines. Stay tuned.



## Exotic Woods

By now, most readers will be familiar with the vast array of oak chips, powders, balls, staves, cubes, spirals, and inserts on the market from every conceivable forest source and a wide array of toast levels. An entire issue of *Consumer Reports* could only scratch the surface of the variability in characteristics and quality, and I certainly won't attempt it here. You probably already have your favorites.

What's new is the emergence of non-oak exotic woods. These are being championed by a Chilean cooperage, Toneleria Nacional, which provides both barrels and chips from several trees. Here I will highlight a couple of my favorites.

***Cherrywood chips are just one of the newer wood products.***

Cherrywood chips are wonderful for enhancing the red fruit aromas of various reds such as Pinot Noir, Grenache, and Sangiovese in levels of 1–2 g/L.

I like chips more than barrels because you can do two-week soak trials to determine the right level to use.

This goes double for acacia chips. These are exclusively used in whites and rosés to impart a honeysuckle aromatic enhancement as well as a lushness to the palate. They can be overwhelming even at low rates, so trials are essential. I will commonly end up using 0.15–0.2 g/L, though trials are critical as sometimes the wood's impact is not desired.

### The Yeast You Can Do

A staggering number of novel yeast strains, both *V. Saccharomyces* and non-*Saccharomyces*, have become commercially available in recent years. Far beyond the traditional role of converting sugar into alcohol, you can now choose selections to lower malic acid, aid phenolic extraction, lower pH, enhance ester or thiol production, and a host of other winemaking miracles.

Here I will mention only one: The bio-protective strain of *Metschnikowia pulcherrima* developed by Lamothe-Abiet, the materials arm of Bucher-Vaslin, under the proprietary name Excellence B-Nature. This yeast produces bio-regulators that suppress the growth of spoilage bacteria and yeasts such as *Acetobacter*, *Gluconobacter*, *Pediococcus*, *Brettanomyces*, *Kloeckera*, and *Candida*. It can be used to protect grapes or must during trans-country shipping or cold soaks, and can also be sprayed on rotting fruit a few days before harvest to prevent development of volatile acidity. Amazing as it may seem, it becomes the dominant organism until the only organism immune to its inhibition comes along — you guessed it — good old *Saccharomyces*. Because it can't tolerate alcohol, it checks out as soon as fermentation commences, leaving wine yeast to do its job on a nice clean must.

### Saving the best for last

Dr. Richard Smart, perhaps the world's leading viticulturist, conceived in 2014 a brilliant theory that has revolutionized winemaking. In 2019, I was privileged to hear Dr. Smart speak at a workshop in California where he introduced that concept of Accentuated Cut Edges (ACE). He explained that the wax cuticle on the outside surface of grapes prevents extraction, which instead must diffuse through the inner pectin layer over the course of several days. The exception is that rapid extraction of color and flavor occurs from skin cells located along the cut edge created by crushing.

But this is only a tiny fraction of skin cells. His idea was to use a rotating blade to cut the skin into 8–10 pieces, thus facilitating rapid extraction. In 2014, he persuaded Dr. Angela Sparrow, an enologist at the University of Tasmania, to try this out on Pinot Noir. The results were astonishing.

Dr. Smart licensed his idea to the Della Toffola Group, who produced the Della Toffola Maceration Accelerator (DTMA) for commercial wineries. You can't afford it. Neither could I, with my two-ton (1,800-kg) lots. But Dr. Sparrow's original experiments employed an immersion blender from Robot Coupe with a variable speed that allowed her to dial in the right RPMs to cut the skin while pushing the seeds, which are heavier, away from the blade. So, I bought one of those for under \$1,000.

Now, I had over fifty vintages under my belt and thought I had my game down pretty good. Little did I suspect that my wines would take a quantum leap in quality: Deeper color, rounder tannins, richer fruit aromatics, and improved density on the palate. It works best in lighter varieties, so I wouldn't use it on Petite Sirah, but even Cabernet Sauvignon is greatly improved. Who knew?

That's my list. If you need any help implementing any of these, just email me at [clark@winemaking411.com](mailto:clark@winemaking411.com). I'm at your service.



## Reference Library

(updated 3-25-2025)

Here is a list of hobby winemaking manuals and other materials in the editor's file. They are available for downloading by e-mail or via an internet transfer service. Some are downloadable from the source such as Scott Lab. All are in PDF format.

Scott Lab 2025-2026 Winemaking Handbook – 26.8 MB – 144 pages

Scott Lab 2024 - 2025 Cider Making Handbook – 6.2 MB – 96 pages

Scott Lab 2018-2019 Sparkling Handbook – 8 MB – 58 pages

Scott Lab 2022 Craft Distilling Handbook – 5.2 MB – 26 pages

Anchor 2021 – 2022 Enology Harvest Guide 2.6 MB - 104 pages

A Guide to Fining Wine, WA State University - 314 KB - 10 pages

Barrel Care Procedures - The Beverage People - 100 KB - 2 pages

Barrel Care Techniques - Pambianchi – 42 KB – 3 pages

Enartis Handbook – 5.1 MB - 124 pages

A Review Of Méthode Champenoise Production - 570 KB – 69 pages

Sparkling Wine brief instructions - 20 KB - 3 pages

Sacramento Winemakers Winemaking Manual - 300 KB - 34 pages

The Home Winemakers Manual - Lum Eisenman - 14 MB – 178 pages

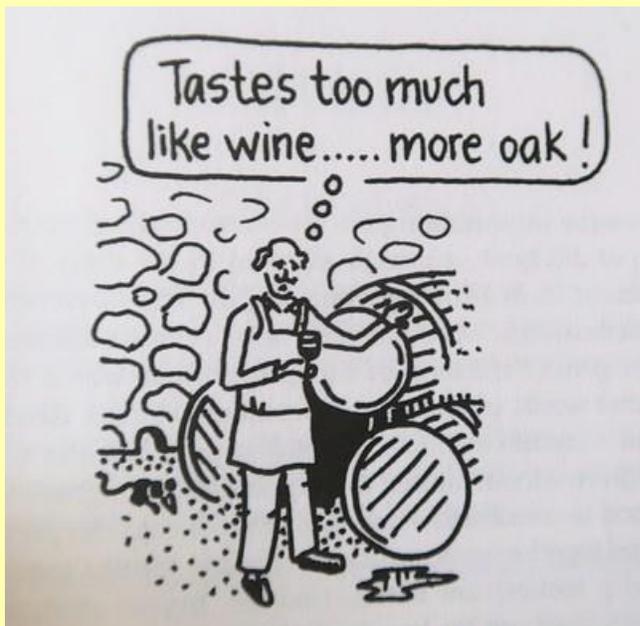
MoreWine Guide to Red Winemaking - 1 MB - 74 pages

MoreWine Guide to White Winemaking – 985 KB – 92 pages

MoreWine Yeast and grape pairing – 258 KB – 9 pages

Wine Flavors, Faults & Taints – 600 KB, 11 pages

Daniel Pambianchi wine calculator set – 13.5 MB, 10 calculators



# Portland Winemakers Club

## Leadership Team – 2025

President: **Bob Hatt**

[bobhatt2000@yahoo.com](mailto:bobhatt2000@yahoo.com)

- Establish the leadership team
- Assure that objectives for the year are met
- Set up agenda and run the meetings

Treasurer: **Barb Thomson**

[bt.grapevine@frontier.com](mailto:bt.grapevine@frontier.com)

- Collect dues and fees, and update the membership list with the secretary
- Pay bills

Secretary: **Bob Thoenen**

[pwc\\_secretary@outlook.com](mailto:pwc_secretary@outlook.com)

- Communicate regularly about club activities and issues
- Keep an updated list of members' email, name tags, and other club information

Chair of Education / Speakers **Paul Natale**

[paulnatale6@gmail.com](mailto:paulnatale6@gmail.com)

- Arrange for speakers & educational content for our meetings

Chair for Tastings: **Mike Sicard / Steve Fine**

[msicard@willamettehvac.com](mailto:msicard@willamettehvac.com)

- Conduct club tastings

[steve.fine@comcast.net](mailto:steve.fine@comcast.net)

- Review and improve club tasting procedures.

Chair of Winery / Vineyard Tours: **Lynn Hilbert / Jeramiah Deines**

- Select wineries, vineyards, etc. to visit

[lynn@lynnhilbert.com](mailto:lynn@lynnhilbert.com)

- Arrange tours

[mycothused@live.com](mailto:mycothused@live.com)

- Cover logistics (food and money)

Chair of Group Purchases: **Mark Hernandez / Hank Armstrong**

- Grape purchases and make the arrangements

to purchase, collect, and distribute

[mark\\_hernandez14@comcast.net](mailto:mark_hernandez14@comcast.net)

• Supplies – These should be passed to [HANKARM@gmail.com](mailto:HANKARM@gmail.com)  
the President or Secretary for distribution

• Encourage club participation in all amateur competitions available. Make information known through Newsletters, e-mail, and Facebook

Chairs for Social Events: **Mindy Bush / Marilyn Brown**

- Gala /Picnic/parties

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