



Portland Winemakers Club

October 2025

“Bob’s Blurb”

After 20 years of wine making, I finally did it. I have joined the broken carboy club (See the picture). Fresh 5 gallons of Gewurztraminer on the floor. Such is the risk of glass carboys.

Mess aside, harvest is in full swing, There was a delivery by Jim Jamison on the 27th, lots of members were picking up pressed grapes and Rose Juice. My Grenache is already done with primary fermentation and is in Carboys.

I brought back Tannat and Petit Verdot from inland Desert (Benton City). Both are high brix but still have good acid. I am looking forward to these wines. I have been looking for a source for Tannat for quite a few years, and it finally showed up! The October meeting is the highly anticipated PWC Pinot Noir tasting. Bring out the good one’s folks. See you there.

Regards, Bob

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 19th, 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.



Upcoming Events / Save the Date

The next PWC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 15th in the basement of the Aloha Grange starting at 7:00 pm. We will have a tasting, judging and discussion of member produced Pinot Noir. Please bring two (2) glasses per taster.

Don't forget to bring a bottle of your own wine for the exchange table and a snack for the potluck table.

- Take time to visit the PWC website: 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 submit some posts of your own.

September Meeting Notes

Portland Winemakers Club September 15, 2025

Treasurer Report:

The club sponsored a booth at the Oregon State Fair. Several club members volunteered to staff the booth to share information about the club. Overall, it went well and provided publicity for the club.

Club hats will arrive in a few weeks. Barb will bring the hats to the next meeting after they arrive.

Grape Buying:

Harvest season is in full swing with many vineyards picking now or anticipating picking in the next few weeks. Club members are reminded that prior orders are financial commitments, and they are responsible for grape payment even if they can't pick up or use the grapes due to changed circumstances.

When contacting the grape buying chairs, please leave your contact information on the email to facilitate response. Jamison continues to make deliveries – club members will be notified as information becomes available.

New Business:

Paul Rogers discussed the concept of club members potentially pooling used wine bottles and finding a source to recycle the bottles. More research is needed to find a recycling location.

Chris Dix expressed interest in documenting the specifics of how club members make wine, including yeast selection.

Member Wine Tasting:

Nine members brought wine to be tasted as part of the Italian Reds night.

Following the business portion of the meeting, member produced Italian red wines were tasted and judged.

Congratulations to Bob Hatt for a gold award for his 2017 Sangiovese.

Member Tasting September 2025 Italian Red											
Winemaker	Year & Wine	Yeast	Gold	Silver	Bronze	NM	Score	Medal	# of Votes	POINT SCORING	
Hank Armstrong	2023 Nebbiolo	BM 4x4	3	11	6		1.85	Silver	20	Each Gold vote	3
Brian Bowles	2023 Sangiovese	BM45	1	2	19		1.18	Bronze	22	Each Silver vote	2
Bob Hatt	2017 Sangiovese	BM45	12	8	2		2.45	Gold	22	Each Bronze vote	1
Mark Hernandez	2023 Sangiovese	BM45	0	12	10		1.55	Silver	22	Each no medal vote	0
Bob Hatt	2020 Nebbiolo	BM45?	10	7	5		2.23	Silver	22	MEDAL SCORING	
Jolie & Brian Bowles	2023 Super Tuscan		4	12	6		1.91	Silver	22	Gold is a score >	2.35
Al Glasby	2024 Aglianico	D254	2	11	9		1.68	Silver	22	Silver is a score >	1.49
Paul Sowray	2020 Sangiovese	Syr			17	5	0.77	Bronze	22	Bronze is a score >	0.49
Jeremiah Deines	2023 Barbera	BM45	7	15	1		2.26	Silver	23	No medal is a score <=	0.49

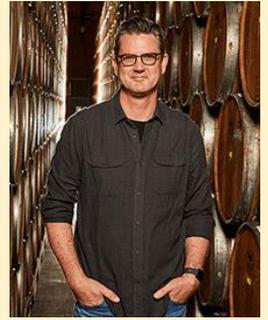


Co-fermentation: Tips From The Pros

Written by Dawson Raspuzzi

Winemakers most often ferment each grape variety separately and then create blends after conducting precise blending trials. However, some winemakers believe fermenting varieties together results in more complex wines.

Michael Bairdsmith is the Assistant Winemaker at Ridge Vineyards' Lytton Springs, California



We co-ferment Zinfandel along with Petite Sirah and Carignane. The Petite Sirah lends some weight, tannin, color, and dark fruit character, while the Carignane contributes bright red fruit character and vibrant acidity. We also do a small amount of Syrah that we co-ferment with Viognier, which is a common practice in France's northern Rhône region.

We farm a number of estate vineyards that were planted well over a century ago. It was common practice back then for California grape growers to deliberately plant various varieties intermixed in the vineyard. For instance, our Lytton Estate – East vineyard is broken into 18 blocks, and years ago we went through and identified every single vine in the field and were able to assign a percentage of each variety to each block. For example, a block we've designated North Flat 1 is planted to 85% Zinfandel, 5% Carignane, 5% Petite Sirah, 3% Mourvèdre, and 2% Alicante Bouschet. Another block designated Hill 3 is 75% Zinfandel, 25% Petite Sirah.

As part of our commitment to traditional, or "pre-industrial" winemaking, we honor the practice of planting a mixed bag of grape varieties by picking whatever is planted out in the vineyard all together. This is known as a "field blend." When we decide to harvest, we'll pick all the different varieties within the block together and co-ferment them.

There is some kind of alchemy that happens when you co-ferment. A number of years back we harvested one of our vineyard blocks in two ways. We first went through a portion and picked the Zinfandel, Carignane, and Petite Sirah separately. We then went through the rest of the block and picked everything together like we normally do. We then fermented the three varieties separately and blended them after the fact and compared the results of that wine against the co-fermented wine in a blind tasting. Literally everyone participating in the tasting preferred the co-fermented wine. The most common reason given for the preference was "greater complexity."

At our Montebello location where we produce our Bordeaux blends, we ferment varietals separately. The main reason Bordeaux varietals are better suited to blending post-fermentation is that, particularly in cool-climate regions like the Santa Cruz Mountains, the grapes ripen at different times. Here at Lytton Springs things tend to ripen all at once. There may be an argument that the small amount of Mourvèdre in a block is going to be well behind the Carignane, but their ripening times are not so disparate to have a negative impact on the resulting wine. In fact, a little variation in ripeness within a block may even be part of the alchemy that makes co-fermented wines special.

Just because you're co-fermenting doesn't necessarily mean you have to pick all at once; there's nothing in the rulebook that says you can't add new grapes to already fermenting grapes. If, for example, you're making a Zinfandel at home and it's halfway through fermentation but you're not getting the color you want, go find some Petite Sirah and toss it in the mix.

I think anyone making red should consider co-fermenting with a little white thrown in the mix. It really works wonders when it comes to aromatics and acidity. And if you're looking for a bit more structure and color in a home wine, a little Alicante Bouschet goes a long way.

Recently we have co-fermented Syrah with Mourvèdre, as well as a fruit wine of Sauvignon Blanc with pears. Previously we've done Pinot Noir with Chardonnay, Carignane with apple, and

Jason Phillips is the Winemaker at Jumbo Time Wines in Los Angeles California

Carignane with pear. The only combination we've repeated so far has been 50/50 pear-Sauvignon Blanc. It hits a nice balance of ABV, acidity, and residual sugar, so we've decided to stick with it. Whether or not we co-ferment often depends on the vintage and if both varieties are ready to be picked at the same time.

The benefit of co-fermentation is that there's likely to be greater complexity and a more seamless integration to the finished wines. We've never done an experiment where we do the same grapes co-fermented and blended, it's just a feeling from experience tasting co-ferments versus blends.

If the harvest dates line up, we'll always be interested in trying co-fermentation. We have to choose a harvest date that works for both varieties. So, often you have to split the difference, and one variety might be slightly over or under your ideal ripeness. Sometimes this gap is too big, and the logistics just don't work out to do a co-fermentation. Don't force it. If the grapes aren't ready to be picked at the same time, then it's not likely to work out well.

I'd consider co-fermenting anything that you plan on blending. You have to tle control, but the give up a lit results can be interesting.

Cardiff Scott-Robinson is the Winemaker at Paraduxx in Napa, California

We typically co-ferment Syrah and Viognier. This is an Old -World style of winemaking that we implement at Paraduxx for our Winemaker Series Co-Ferment Napa Valley Red Wine.

Co-fermentation is not usually a standard practice for us other than with this Syrah/Viognier blend, but this past year we co-fermented some Petite Sirah and

Zinfandel and had great success. Petite Sirah is a very tannic grape, and Zinfandel can be very juicy and fruit-forward. We were pleasantly surprised how the Zinfandel tamed the big, bold tannins of the Petite Sirah and made the post-fermentation wine smoother and more complex. We enjoyed the result with these grapes so much it may become a standard practice for us going forward.

The determining factor of how much Viognier we used in these co-ferments for many years was our supply of Viognier. We only had a limited supply from our estate ranch, with the majority used for our Proprietary White Wine. Recently, we acquired another vineyard with a small block of Viognier on it, which has allowed us to increase the amount of Viognier we can co-ferment with. The 2019 vintage of the Paraduxx Co-Ferment Red Wine had 7% Viognier, with 84% Syrah, and 9% Grenache.

When co-fermenting Viognier with Syrah, the Viognier will naturally stabilize the Syrah's dark purple red color and make it appear almost glossy and bright while softening the larger tannins Syrah can contain. Additionally, it will add aromatic complexity to the wine. Putting a glass of dark red wine to your nose and getting white flower aromas can be perplexing yet alluring at the same time.

We use specific yeasts and fermentation tanks for certain wines. Since our typical co-fermentation is with Syrah and Viognier, we tend to ferment this in an open top, which allows more oxygen into the fermentation. We are using a pneumatic punch-down device that is very gentle in terms of extraction and a yeast strain that accentuates floral notes to increase the aromatics.

All of our other wines are fermented and aged as separate varietal lots and then blended pre-bottling. This allows far more control over the flavors we strive to highlight in the final product. We can always do blend trials and see if we want more Cabernet Sauvignon in our Zinfandel.

Winemaking is exploration. You don't really know if it is worth it unless you try. Start small. Be curious and adventurous. That is what makes winemaking fun!





Natural wine

May 19, 2021

In wine as in food, the word “natural” is so common as to have become almost meaningless. Every winemaker begins with fruit grown on a vine, and so all winemaking is to some degree “natural.” But viticultural and cellar practices diverge widely around the world, and it’s also fair to say that some wine is far more “natural” than others. Rules, trends, conclusions, and benefits can all be hard to determine.

But while the range of winemakers in France still covers the spectrum from carefully engineered to extreme low-intervention, one trend is unmistakable: the center is moving. The average winemaker in France uses less intervention and more “natural” practices today than they did a few decades ago. And that’s something, amid all the confusion and argument, we think is worthy of celebration.

ORGANIC VITICULTURE

Organic viticulture attempts to solve one problem in particular: how to keep vineyard soil healthy. Because vines are perennial plants which can live and bear fruit for decades without crop rotation, vineyard soils are easily depleted of nutrients. Particularly in the second half of the 20th century, winemakers commonly used industrial chemical compounds to boost grape yield or ward off pests,



further harming soil health. Organic viticulture attempts to remedy these practices and the resulting damage to the soil, eschewing industrial chemicals and focusing on physical interventions to aid fruit production.

Under organic guidelines, pesticides, herbicides, and industrial fertilizers are not permitted. Vignerons instead focus on pruning methods and canopy management to promote the health of the vines and their fruit. Organic growers often permit cover crops (grains, grasses, flowers) to grow between the rows of vines — these plants do compete for nutrients with the vines, but the organic matter and fungal networks they contribute to the soils outweigh the effects of competition.

Organic viticulture is difficult and expensive. Without pesticides, winemakers must be more proactive about their vineyard work to prevent maladies, requiring more labor and effort in maintaining biodiversity. Organic grape production is less consistent, and grape production and quality can vary greatly between vintages. Finally organic viticulture requires substantial background knowledge and rarely works well with only casual adoption.

But for those that practice it, the long-term benefits far outweigh the costs. Organic vineyards are healthier, live longer, and have proven more resistant to climate change. And according to growers, the fruit from these vineyards produces a truer expression of the land.



ORGANIC WINEMAKING

In the cellar, organic rules mainly deal with the use of SO₂, sulfur dioxide. This compound's natural preservative and anti-bacterial capabilities have been known for millennia, particularly advantageous because of its non-toxicity to humans. Grape skins naturally contain small amounts of sulfur, so all wine contains small amounts of sulfites naturally. Sulfur added during the winemaking process accomplishes two main goals: protection from oxidation, and prevention of unwanted bacteria growth.

The rules of organic winemaking dictate treatments permitted in the vineyards, and most notably the use of sulfur dioxide in the cellar. There are several definitions of what constitutes "organic wine." In the US, "organic wine" means wine made without added sulfites, and only with organic added yeasts; "made with organic grapes" is similar but allows minimal sulfites to be added. In the EU, organic wine may include up to 100 mg/L for red wines (150 mg/L for whites) during vinification.

Low or no-sulfur winemaking is controversial, as the finished wines are less stable. Winemakers who avoid sulfur believe the increased expressiveness gained from its absence outweighs the potential instability. As with most elements in organic winemaking, there's a wide range of how much sulfur vignerons add, and some vary their levels depending on vineyard plot, vine age, or vintage.

BIODYNAMICS

Biodynamic winemaking takes the principles of organic winemaking and intensifies them. Based on theories invented by Rudolf Steiner in the 1920s, biodynamic viticulture posits that the most successful vineyards are those plugged into other forces of the universe, particularly the lunar calendar. This holistic approach to winemaking has its advantages and disadvantages, but we believe it is based in practices that generally improve winemaking.

In France, biodynamic winemaking began in 1962 and spread very slowly until the 1980s. Today it still only represents a tiny fraction of the vineyard surface in the world but is continuing to grow. Biodynamics proscribes various detailed compost preparations, and a calendar based on four elements of the vine: root, leaf, flower, and fruit. Biodynamic growers follow this calendar for guidance on when to plant, prune and harvest, all in an attempt to sensitize their soils to celestial cycles. In the cellar the calendar advises when to rack, bottle, and even when to drink.

Demeter International is a German organization that awards biodynamic status to vineyards who meet its guidelines. And while the number of fully certified biodynamic winemakers is small, many winemakers we work with follow some of its principles, particularly racking and bottling based on the lunar calendar.

WHAT DOES NATURAL WINE TASTE LIKE?

The wide range of natural winemaking practices produces a similarly wide range of flavors and characters. Natural wines often claim a more honest expression of their terroirs by limiting the mark of a winemaker's style between vineyard and finished wine. Limiting sulfites also results in wines that are more naturally expressive and less quiet. Made carefully, low-intervention wine can be astonishingly complex and layered.



On the negative side of the ledger, the wines can be less stable, less predictable, and less age worthy. Sulfites help protect a wine from contamination from unwanted bacteria (such as the yeast *brettanomyces*) and volatile acidity. Wines with low sulfites also oxidize more quickly, and, particularly in white wines, can hold up poorly over time. We find many wines made naturally tend to change character over time, sometimes dramatically so.

Flawed wine is sometimes justified by its “natural” preparation, and the exact definition of what makes something a flaw or a feature is widely discussed. But to the extent that flaws can be avoided through careful cellar work, the tastes of naturally made wine can be truly extraordinary. The flavors themselves depend on the varietal, but in general we find more earthiness, more floral components, and more vibrant textures in naturally made wines.

WHO IS MAKING NATURAL WINE?

For centuries all winemaking was what we now consider “natural,” as intervention options were limited or unknown. In France the modern movement toward natural wines began in the 1960s, particularly in the Beaujolais, Roussillon, and Loire Valley. The bold, opulent, high alcohol wines popularized by Robert Parker in the 1990s led to a backlash in the early 2000s and the increasing adoption of natural practices. Today the Loire Valley continues to be a hub for natural winemaking in France, though every region now claims hundreds of domaines striving to make some degree or organic wine.

Recent warmer growing seasons have enabled more widespread adoption of low-intervention viticulture — vines are less susceptible to maladies amid the drier, sunnier conditions, and so need less treatment. We’ve heard from several growers that their vines farmed organically have been faster to adapt to the warmer climate as well.

Today nearly every winemaker we work with is either organic or in some type of conversion to organics, either in the vineyards, the cellar, or both. And in a profession where multi-generational domaines are the norm, the importance of maintaining long-term soil health is not hard to sell. “Organic is the future,” one grower told us — “it’s not about the certification or the philosophy, it’s just how to make better wine in the long term.”



Apples, Meet Grape Pomace

Written by Paul Knox and Sara Holt-Knox

A fermentation experiment combining fresh apple cider with the pomace of our white winemaking has become an annual component of our fall in recent years.

We are part of a 12-person amateur winemaking group whose origins go back over 30 years, the second half of which we have been active members. Through the group we buy grapes from Lonesome Spring Ranch located in the warm, well-drained Rattlesnake Mountain AVA in Yakima Valley near Benton City, Washington. We vary our annual red and white grape variety selections to fit our interests — for the past six years we have made Roussanne, Sauvignon Blanc, Viognier, and Chardonnay.



We live on two acres in Olympia, Washington, with nine apple and pear trees of various sorts — some heritage trees (our house is 99 years old) — and some dwarf trees we have planted. Each year, we do cider crushes with friends. As none of our apple trees are specifically hard cider varieties, the results of our fermented cidermaking often have been unimpressive. Around the same time, we began making cider we began to explore the world of “orange” wines — white wines that are fermented with the skins.

The combination of the two separate fermentations got us thinking. In 2017, we decided to take some of the pomace from our group’s Viognier crush/press and add it to our 10-gallon (38-L) fermenter of fresh-pressed apple cider. Our hope was that the skins, stems, seeds, and residual juice

from the grapes would complement the apple cider to make a pleasing combination. We first doused it with sulfur dioxide for 24 hours and then pitched with a white wine yeast and fermented on the skins as one would do with an orange wine.

As the fermentation was slow, we left it on skins for two weeks and then pressed and racked in mid-October. Over the next 5 months, we racked two more times and also added oak chips in the carboy for final aging and then bottled in mid-March 2018. Notes from that first batch say the result was “damn good!”

We have continued this process the past seven years, each year using our apple cider (often with some pear juice added) and whatever grape pomace is available. Our experiences have included:

- A variety of yeasts: Lalvin K1-V1116 and other fruit-forward white wine yeasts.
- Adding some Petit Verdot pomace, resulting in a blush color cider.
- Adding a few cups of corn sugar to overcome low °Brix.
- Adding toasted oak cubes and barreling in an older 5-gallon (19-L) oak barrel.

Some batches have been better than others, but each has resulted in a light wine good for summer drinking, with a 7–9% ABV. Once or twice the results were very thin and without much nose or complexity of flavor. Higher skin-to-apple ratios seem to help add more vitality, and if the °Brix is very low (under 18), chaptalizing has improved the outcome. Thus far we have used taste and gut over firm data in adding sugar.

We think they are best when they have developed some natural carbonation, but a few batches held up fairly well without any bubbles. We now are experimenting with adding corn sugar and bottling in beer bottles to gain a slight carbonation.

Most recently, we re-used a small barrel where we had aged an experimental Port-style wine and found that it picked up a lot of Port-like flavors from the barrel, giving us yet another idea to pursue. How does an oak-aged, skin-contact apple Port sound?



Reference Library

(updated 10-15-2025)

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. (*Newly added or updated, 15 Sept. 25)

- *Understanding Wine Fining – Andreea Botezatu – 2.2 MB – 11 pages
- 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
- *Barrel Care Procedures - The Beverage People - 227 KB - 7 pages
- Barrel Care Techniques - Pambianchi – 42 KB – 3 pages
- *Enartis Winemaking - 2025 Handbook – 8.8 MB - 85 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

- 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

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

Secretary: **Bob Thoenen**

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

- Arrange for speakers & educational content for our meetings

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

msicard@willamettehvac.com

- Conduct club tastings

steve.fine@comcast.net

- Review and improve club tasting procedures.

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

- Select wineries, vineyards, etc. to visit

lynn@lynnhilbert.com

- Arrange tours

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

- Supplies – These should be passed to 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

mindybush@hotmail.com

brown.marilynjean@gmail.com

Web Design Editor: **Barb Thomson**

bt.grapevine@frontier.com

<http://portlandwinemakersclub.com/>

Newsletter:

Ken Stinger

kbstinger@frontier.com or

kbstinger2@gmail.com