

Search Site

SUBSCRIBER LOGIN ID: Password:

[Where do I find this?](#)

- Headlines
- Features
- Data Center
- Calendar
- Digital Edition
- Free Sample Issue
- Subscribe
- Directory/Buyer's Guide
- Advertise
- OMS

WINE INDUSTRY NEWS HEADLINES

10.17.2011

READER COMMENTS

Article: [Napa's Passenger Rail Proposal](#) »

I think this is an inspired idea, which should help relieve traffic congestion, especially if...

Reader: Highway 29 Commuter

Article: [Integrated Brett Management](#) »

Clark, hi, I have met you via S.Krebs et al @ NVC. I have more...

Reader: huh

Article: [Leading Flash Sales Sites Identified](#) »

I wonder if flash sales sites can be helpful for wineries... isn't it true that...

Reader: Emily

Article: [Northwest Wine Industry Funds Research](#) »

Thank you for this story. The concept that the PNW wine industry would invest in...

Reader: winodad

Article: [California Vineyard Gets Fracked](#) »

Jane, Many kudos to you for the fine article. I was shocked to hear of the...

Reader: lynn



10.14.2011

El Dorado Wine Harvest Panning Out

Wacky season produces lower yields but ripe flavors

by Jane Firstenfeld



El Dorado wineries like Madroña Vineyards are hoping for warmer weather to continue harvesting varieties like Cabernet Sauvignon (shown here). Photo: Beiron Andersson

El Dorado County, Calif.—Sporadic but heavy fall rainstorms followed a cool summer, a spring freeze and a late snowstorm that blanketed high-elevation vineyards in late May, but the intrepid winemakers of El Dorado County resumed harvest this week. Barring further unseasonable weather events, many expect crush to be complete by month's end.

Sacramento, Calif.-based public relations pro Jolaine Collins reported last week that El Dorado winegrowers had started picking Chardonnay in mid-September, but harvest was interrupted by a drenching rainstorm Oct. 4, followed by near-freezing overnight temperatures that stalled sugar development. Rain returned unexpectedly on Monday, but temperatures have since rebounded to normal, with overnight minimums in the 56°F range in the Sierra Foothills.

Lynn Wunderlich, University of California Cooperative Extension farm advisor for El Dorado and neighboring Central Sierra counties Amador, Tuolumne and Calaveras, maintains a weather station. The Oct. 4 deluge brought 2.7 inches of rain, she said, "then it got cold." Yesterday, she told *Wines & Vines*, "It's looking good; beautiful and 80°F. We should start moving sugar again."

Fruit set was generally erratic, she said, because of frigid spring temperatures and problems with bud formation due to an also challenging 2010 season. Damage varied by variety, with Grenache grapes especially prone to shatter, and El Dorado's signature Zinfandel "spotty," depending on vineyard location. Looser clusters, Wunderlich noted, were, "in some way, a blessing," reducing threat of rots during the damp fall.

Paul Bush, winemaker/owner of 12,000-case [Madroña Vineyards](#) in Camino, farms 70 acres: At up to 3,000-feet, they include some of the highest elevation vineyards in the county. Yesterday he was pressing Zinfandel and sampling Riesling, Merlot and Petite Sirah grapes "like there is no tomorrow." Before the rain he harvested some Zin at 24.6° Brix, with 355pH and acid at .61, which, he said, "Should drop nicely with malolactic fermentation."

Phenolics are developing nicely, although before the rain, he said, his Bordeaux varieties showed greenish skins and high acid. Merlot has now ripened, and he planned to harvest today. "I think

Directory/Buyer's Guide — Your Wine Industry Marketplace

WINERY SUPPLIER

SUPPLIER SEARCH

by Product

by Company Name or Brand

[Browse by Category »](#)

2012 Directory/Buyer's Guide



EXPANDED ONLINE SEARCH INCLUDED WITH PURCHASE

[PRE-ORDER NOW »](#)

[LEARN MORE »](#)

Wines & Vines Magazine



[REQUEST YOUR FREE COPY »](#)
[SUBSCRIBE »](#)

Digital Edition Now Available!



Read it, Search it, Share it, Download it!

[LEARN MORE »](#)

[ORDER NOW »](#)

ONLINE MARKETING SYSTEM
Powered By WinesVinesData



The Industry Standard winery

ADVERTISEMENT

The Gyro Tank Cleaning Nozzle For Mid- to Large-Size Tanks

Find out more

Quality spray nozzles since 1879
www.lechlerusa.com

ROSS
The All-in-One WineScan™

Now with 50+ Analysis in about 1 minute

BACCHUS CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

STRATEGIC CAPITAL AND WINE INDUSTRY EXPERTISE

[LEARN MORE](#)

Click here for a chance to win a Free Conference Registration

Eastern Winery EXPOSITION
MARCH 7-8, 2012

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE WINE COMPETITION

Entries Open Now!

HEADLINES

- Old Grapevines Thrive in California Vineyards
- French-born Wine Executives Organize
- Napa, Okanagan Unite for Wine Venture
- Mendo Winegrowers: Damp but Determined

[MORE »](#)

FEATURES

- **Cover Story**
A Bigger, Better Warehouse
- **Barrels**
Coopers Roll Out Innovations
- **Sales & Marketing**
Tasting Room Focus
- **Regional**
Wines & Vines moves to bigger office
- **Packaging**
New Class for L'Ecole No. 41
- **Wine East -- Wine in Print**
Books by and About Eastern Vinners
- **Wine East Features**
Replacement Viticulture Is a Fact of Life

[MORE »](#)

NEWSBRIEFS

- **San Diego Chargers kick off**

a Cabernet

The San Diego Chargers teamed up with winemaker Anthony Bell of 15,000-case Bell Wine Cellars, Yountville, to release a limited edition Cabernet Sauvignon.

■ **Washington state promotes wine in India**

Winemakers from Washington state launched a marketing campaign in India during September. Winemakers hosted a series of trade tastings and winemaker d...

■ **Brock receives \$2.8 million for Ontario research**

Gary Pickering, Brock University Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute researcher, professor of biological sciences, psychology and wine sci...

■ **Aluminum bottles now legal in New York**

The Aluminum Association, Arlington, Va., announced the passage of a bill in the New York State Legislature that will permit the sale of aluminum bott...

■ **French oak mill celebrates 20th anniversary**

Tonnellerie Quintessence announced the 20-year anniversary of its French oak stave mill, Merrain International. Tonnellerie Quintessence aims for wood...

[MORE »](#)

CALENDAR

■ **October 19-20**

6th Australian Wine Industry Environment Conf.

■ **October 20**

2011 Berry Sensory Evaluation Workshop

■ **October 20-23**

11th annual Kohler Food & Wine Experience

■ **October 21-23**

Harvest Wine Weekend, Paso Robles

[MORE »](#)



Wine Review Weekly

A compilation of wines reviewed each week by leading wine service and major daily newspaper wine columnists

[READ »](#)

we'll end up picking on the lower side of normal Brix," he said, because the grapes are ripe, acids are dropping quickly. "If we have weather like this for two-and-a-half weeks, we might be done," he said, noting that in some seasons, harvest has lingered until Nov. 23.

Summing up the season

"What we're seeing is the culmination of the whole year's weather—everything is delayed, and the crop lighter than usual," said [Greg Boeger](#), president/vineyard manager at 20,000-case [Boeger Winery Inc.](#) in Placerville. "We got in maybe 30%-40% of our grapes before the first set of rains," including most of the Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay and Sémillon on his 95 vineyard acres.

Most of his Zin is also in, albeit with a lighter crop than usual. "I'd say the crop will be down by 20% overall—some varieties down 60%—because of the spring conditions," Boeger said. Although he's hoping to wrap up harvest by Halloween, "I'm afraid it will go well into November."

"It's going along, but slow, in a holding pattern," [Jon Latcham](#) said of the crush at 8,000-case [Granite Springs Winery](#) in Somerset. Latcham is VP of vineyard management, farming about 50 acres. "Whites came in just fine: Sauvignon Blanc at 24°Brix and Chardonnay at 23°Brix."

About one-third of the crop is in, including some Zinfandel and a little Merlot. "We had a little bunch rot in the lower ends of fields where water holds a little more," Latcham said. Rounding up and keeping crews has been more difficult than usual. "It's hard to schedule when it's off and on," He said.

"If everything goes according to plan, we'll finish next weekend—if I can keep the guys going and the weather holds. That's what I'm shooting for."

Or, as farm advisor Wunderlich said, "Pray for more sunshine."

According to WinesVinesDATA, there are 74 bonded and virtual wineries in El Dorado County. For more information, visit [El Dorado Winery Association](#).

[SHARE »](#)

[PRINTER-FRIENDLY VERSION »](#)

[E-MAIL THIS ARTICLE »](#)

[POST A COMMENT »](#)

Currently no comments posted for this article.

[SUBSCRIBE TO WINES & VINES PRINT EDITION »](#)

[CONTACT OUR EDITORIAL STAFF »](#)

[CURRENT NEWS INDEX »](#)

WINES & VINES

866.453.9701 | 415.453.9700 | Fax: 415.453.2517
info@winesandvines.com

[VIEW VIDEO »](#)

[WineJobs.com](#)

Search WineJobs.com

[SEARCH JOBS](#)

Latest Job Listings

[Harvest Cellar Worker](#)

Crozet, VA
Winemaking and Production

[Tasting Room Help](#)

Crozet, VA
Hospitality and Retail

[Administrative/Custome...](#)

New York, NY
General Administration and

[Sales Representative F...](#)

Houston And Austin, TX
Sales and Marketing

[Wine Marketing Special...](#)

Tarpon Springs, FL
Sales and Marketing

[Demand Planning Analys...](#)

Napa, CA
General Administration and

[Marketing Coordinator](#)

San Rafael, CA
Sales and Marketing

[Marketing Coordinator](#)

Oakville, CA
Sales and Marketing

[Online Marketing Coord...](#)

New York, NY
Sales and Marketing

[Client Services Accoun...](#)

Napa, CA
General Administration and

[More Job Listings >>](#)

Follow Us On:



Subscribe Now!

Magazine subscribers get full online access to the current edition and all back issues!



[Home](#) | [About Us](#) | [Editors](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Print Edition](#) | [Digital Edition](#)

[Industry Links](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)

Copyright © 2001-2011 by Wine Communications Group, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

No material may be reproduced without written permission of the Publisher.

Wines&Vines does not assume any responsibility for any unsolicited manuscripts or materials.

Search Site

[SEARCH](#)

Your Ad Here.
This space is open for advertising.
[Contact Us](#)