Global Trends - Wine Industry Key Elements

New PD-Resistant Wine Grape Varieties Named and Released

The University of California, Davis (UCD) Office of Research’s Innovation Access unit recently informed the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) of the official release of five new Pierce’s Disease (PD) resistant grapevine varieties. The five releases include three red wine grape selections and two white wine grape selections that have repeatedly shown strong resistance to PD in greenhouse and field trials, and have shown high fruit quality and high wine quality across several vintages and in wine tastings.

The five patent-pending varieties (with their breeding program index numbers) are described below.

Camminare Noir

07355-075—50% Petite Sirah, 25% Cabernet Sauvignon: This red wine grape makes wines with characteristics of both Cabernet Sauvignon and Petite Sirah. Commercial scale wines have been made from established test plots along the Napa River. This selection is early to break dormancy, bloom and ripen. It produces relatively large berries, with well-filled clusters of medium size. It has tested to be highly PD-resistant and has a 94% V. vinifera level. It has ranked highly at numerous tastings of both Davis and Napa grown fruit. Tasting descriptions include: dark red-purple in color, bright red fruit, raspberry, cherry, ripe, tannic and elegant rather than dense.

Paseante Noir

09331-047—50% Zinfandel, 25% Petite Sirah, 12.5% Cabernet Sauvignon: A red wine grape with characteristics of Zinfandel and Cabernet Sauvignon, highly PD-resistant with 97% V. vinifera. Commercial scale wines have been made from established field trials near the Napa River and from Temecula. Blooms relatively late but ripens mid-season. Medium-sized berries and large well-filled clusters. It is spur fruitful but typically has only one cluster per shoot and is more productive with cane pruning. Tasting comments include: medium dark red with purple color, berry pie, cassis, black olive, herbal, dried hay, coffee, vegetal like Cabernet Sauvignon, licorice, round, moderate tannins, and soft finish.
Errante Noir

09356-235—50% Sylvaner, 12.5% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12.5% Carignane, 12.5% Chardonnay: A red wine grape, highly PD-resistant with 97% V. vinifera. Mid-season bloom and ripening period. Highly productive with relatively large berries and loose clusters. Tasting comments include: dark red purple color, complex fruit with herbs and earth, plum, big wine, dense, rich middle, tannic yet balanced. Winemakers believe it has great blending potential with Cabernet Sauvignon and has high levels of high quality tannin.

Ambulo Blanc

09314-102—62.5% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12.5% Carignane, 12.5% Chardonnay: A white wine grape highly PD-resistant with 97% V. vinifera. Field tested in Temecula, Sonoma and along the Napa River. Blooms and ripens early. Highly productive with small to medium berries and relatively large clusters. Wines are reminiscent of Sauvignon Blanc and tasting comments include: light straw to clear color, citrus, lime, tropical, gooseberry, golden delicious apple flavor, bright fruit, slightly bitter, and textured.

Caminante Blanc

09338-016—62.5% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12.5% Chardonnay, 12.5% Carignane: A white wine grape highly PD-resistant with 97% V. vinifera. Field trials planted in Davis, and more recently underway in PD hotspots in Napa and Ojai. It has small berries, small compact clusters and blooms relatively late but ripens mid-season. The vine has medium productivity. Wines made from Davis-grown fruit have rated well and tasting comments include: light straw-gold color, floral aromas, apple-melon, lychee, pineapple, green apple, juicy, harmonious, and well-balanced.

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