

Lindsay's Vineyard Chronicles

What's been going on in the vineyard this week?

Thursday July 6



Figure 1: Frontenac Gris fruit set

Returning to the vineyard after the holiday weekend, we were greeted by the wonderful sight of fruit set across all vineyard blocks. Last week most of these clusters were still in bloom, but just a few days of heat (and humidity, and yes, more rain) has mercifully nudged our berries into the 'peppercorn stage' of growth. There are many times in the season where grape growers can find themselves holding their breath, and the time between flowering and fruit set is a pretty big one.

That handful of days between these two phenological stages determines the size of our harvest for the season. Many things can impede flowers from developing to berries, including vine nutrition status, fungal infections, and poor weather (ugh!).

Additionally, each variety has their own tendency to set (or not set) fruit along the cluster.

We're happy to report that we're seeing healthy fruit set among all our varieties so far! Fruit set is also a cool time to see how different the grape varieties can be when it comes to cluster structure – Frontenacs are looking long and spread out, and the Itasca is pretty compact, for example.

The impacts of the May freeze are still showing themselves, as there are a few late clusters here and there which are just starting to bloom. It will be interesting to see how these later clusters impact the overall ripening and our decision-making for harvest dates later in the year.



Figure 2: Itasca fruit set