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The Boordy Nursery Grape Book, 1990

Boordy Nursery

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The Boordy Nursery
Grape Book
The Story Behind These Grapevines

The classic European wine grapes, which are called *vinifera*, thrive in the special climate of California. They are the basis of California’s big wine industry.

In most of the country east of the Rockies, where growing conditions are so different, the *vinifera* grapes are not at home. True, they yield good wines where they manage to survive. But you can’t count on them.

They lack the necessary disease resistance and winter hardiness. That is why there has never been much wine-growing in this country, except on the West Coast.

But now we have the French hybrids. They have the necessary disease resistance and winter hardiness. They were bred by the French to meet adverse conditions, while still yielding good red and white table wines. They do this job as well over here as in Europe.

What the French grape breeders did was to cross the classic European grapes with tough American species. This way they combined European wine quality with American durability.

Thanks to the hybrids a whole new generation of small wineries has sprung up in parts of the country where wine had never been grown and made before. Or had been tried and failed, as was Thomas Jefferson’s experience.

Thanks also to these grapes, large and increasing numbers of families enjoy the satisfaction of good home-grown table wines with their meals.

The List of Varieties

The family of hybrids is large and varied. Among them are grapes suitable for practically every section of the country. But remember that the finest grapes and most famous vintages of Europe have behind them several thousand years of experience. You can expect good wine from the hybrids, but do not expect to equal the “greatest” wines of Europe.

Every branch of agriculture has been enriched by hybridizing. The work continues, with grapes as with other plant materials. With grapes, France led the way, but the work has now extended to most other wine-growing regions of the world such as Germany, Hungary, Russia, even China. Our current list includes two Riesling hybrids from the Rhineland and one hybrid from the Geneva, N.Y., Experiment Station.

Each grape in our list is identified by the name of the hybridizer and the number it had in his original test vineyard. Some have acquired or been given a name, such as Foch and Seyval. Where it matters, we include both number and name.

A line drawn through name or number means it is “out” for the current season—all spoken for. A hatchmark in the margin is a requested recommendation. A printed asterisk (*) indicates one of our leaders - safest and surest for beginning growers.
Grapes for Red Wine

BACO NO. 1 (*Baco Noir*). Early, hardy, disease resistant, ultravigoruous, moderate crops. When properly handled, its wine somewhat recalls red Bordeaux. Its great vigor can make it hard to manage in commercial plantings, but is no obstacle in family vineyards. Ideal for trellis or arbor. Cane pruning.

BURDIN 8753. Burdin’s goal has been hybrids giving wines comparable to Beaujolais, and this one perhaps comes closest. Vine has vigor, is reasonably hardy and produces well. Requires careful spraying against mildew.

BURDIN 11042. Many years of testing have shown this to be well above average in both winter hardiness and disease resistance. Late mid-season. Moderate vigor. Bunches resemble Pinot Noir. Cane pruning. Excellent wine.

*FOCH*. Extra early, originating in Alsace. Widely adapted, especially valuable for short-season areas of rigorous climate, and remarkably disease resistant. Good wine quality and reliability promise an important future. Blends well with others. Cane pruning. Hybridizer’s number is Kuhlmann 188-2.

*JOANNÈS-SEYVE 26-205 (*Chambourcin*). Mid-season, wine of very superior quality. Grown in the French Loire Valley and Savoie. Hardy and relatively disease-free, but spray treatments cannot be neglected. Short cane pruning.

LANDOT 244 (*Landal*). Gamay-type variety, widely grown in the Loire Valley and northeastern France. Its wine quality and its reliability made the reputation of the hybridizer, Landot.

LANDOT 4511 (*Landot Noir*). Very vigorous, early mid-season, moderate disease resistance. Our wine of this variety won a silver medal at the Bratislava Wine Exposition some years ago. Short cane pruning.


*SEIBEL 7053 (*Chancellor*). Early mid-season, hardy. A compact grower and one of the heaviest producers, combining quantity with good quality. Once the dominant red hybrid in southern France, basic in our vineyards. Spur pruning.

SEIBEL 9549 (*de Chaunac*). Early, hardy, disease resistant, good vigor and highly productive. Much planted in New York State. Cane pruning.

*SEIBEL 10878 (*Chelois*). Medium early and already a “standard” in the Northeast, though it is not especially hardy. Wine somewhat recalls Burgundy. Growth starts relatively late in spring, an advantage in frosty spots. Short cane pruning.

*SEIBEL 13053 (*Cascade*). Extra early, before Foch. Very reliable, and one of the best for short-season areas. Blends well with the other red-wine hybrids and by itself makes a fine rosé or “blush” wine. Short cane pruning.

SEIBEL 14596 (*Bellandais*). Very vigorous, and a heavy producer of huge bunches. One of the best for the Southwest and other fairly dry, long-season areas. Short cane pruning.

SEYVE-VILLARD 5247. Bushy habit of growth; early, hardy and healthy, large crops of big compound lavender-colored bunches. Used for rosé or for blending. Fermented free of the skins, the free-run juice makes a delightful Vin gris. Short cane pruning. Limited quantities available.

SEYVE-VILLARD 18283 (*Garonnais*). Mid-season. Very vigorous, disease-free and a steady producer, grown in the Garonne Valley of France. Short cane pruning.

SEYVE-VILLARD 18-315 (*Villard Noir*). Late mid-season. Not vigorous, but a heavy producer, disease resistant. Now the most widely grown red-wine hybrid in southern France, well adapted over here in all but short-season areas. Wine heavy-bodied and very good. Spur pruning.
ST. VINCENT. Isolated by Lucian Dressel from an experimental block at his Mount Pleasant Vineyard, Augusta, MO. Now being grown commercially in that area. Late mid-season. Culturally reliable. Very good wine. Genetic background unknown, but a special trait is its pigment pattern, which is *monoglucoside* like the *vinifera*, not *diglucoside* like most hybrids.

**Grapes for White Wine**

**BURDIN 4672.** Early mid-season. Dependable producer. When fully ripe yields a delicately fragrant white wine with a touch of what the French call the “goût d’Alsace.” We consider it a real comer, though it has not been widely tested. Our supply is limited.

*CAYUGA (GW-3).** A white-wine hybrid, first of a series, from the New York State Experiment Station at Geneva. It is a cross of SV 3276 (Seyval) x Schuyler, a table grape. It is culturally o.k., wine of good quality.

**GM 322-58.** Best of the hardy Riesling hybrids so far, from the on-going hybridizing program at the Geisenheim (Rheingau) experiment station in Germany. True Riesling nose.

*JOANNÈS-SEYVE 23-416.** A new addition to our main list. After nearly two decades of vineyard observation and more than a dozen trial vintages we are convinced that it has an important future throughout the northeast and middle west. Great vigor of vine, hardy, virtually free of disease. Large loose bunches of oval, pale pink fruit. Good sugar/acid balance, delicately aromatic wine.

*MEYNIEU 6.** Early mid-season. A hybrid from Bordeaux turning out to be a rustic and steady producer of white wine recalling Graves. We foresee a future for this one too. Cane pruning.

**RAVAT 34.** Ripens early, with Aurore (S.5279). Sturdy vine, winter hardy and healthy. Not at all like Ravat 51. Wine recalls burgundian Aligoté.

**Ravat 51 (Vignoles).** Mid-season. Vigorous and hardy but only moderate producer. Clean, crisp white wine with a touch of tartness, recalling “petit Chablis.” Has Chardonnay in its ancestry. Cane pruning. Limited quantities.

**SEIBEL 4986 (Rayon d’Or).** Trim, handsome vine, healthy and hardy; fruit greyish-pink at maturity, in beautiful winged branches, to be picked promptly when ripe. Very regular producer, wine of high quality, only moderate vigor. Its virtues are only now beginning to be discovered. Spur or short cane pruning depending on vigor.

**SEIBEL 5279 (Aurore).** Very early, Now the leading white wine hybrid in the Finger Lakes region and other short-season areas, for still wine or champagne. Very vigorous, and hardy, not so well adapted to warm, humid conditions. Wine pale, fresh, delicate. Delicious for eating or fresh juice. Cane pruning.

**SEIBEL 9110 (Verdelet).** Early mid-season. Fruit exceptionally beautiful, with loose well-formed bunches of pinkish oval berries. Good table grape, pleasantly fragrant wine. Short cane pruning.

**SEYVE-VILLARD 5276 (Seyval).** Early mid-season. Medium vigor, no serious cultural defects, highly productive, compact grower. At this point, the jewel among the white wine hybrids for its combination of superior wine quality, excellent cultural characteristics and broad adaptability. Our all-around favorite, and our biggest seller, with a great future. Spur pruning.

**SEYVE-VILLARD 12375 (Villard Blanc).** Mid-season. Remarkably vigorous vine and a heavy producer of large compound clusters. Does best in areas and seasons of low humidity. Not for short season areas, but otherwise widely adapted. Remarkable tonnage has been reported from some locations, especially the southwest. Spur pruning.

*SEIGFRIED. Early mid-season. A Riesling hybrid from Germany easily mistaken in the vineyard for the true Riesling. Differences: ripens earlier than Riesling, far more resistant to downy mildew—and is not up to the true Riesling in wine quality though the wine is good. Also much hardier. Cane pruning.

*VIDAL 256. Late season. Originating in the French Cognac district, it is a hybrid of Trebbiano, the Italian white Soave grape, which it resembles in both wine and vine. Good vigor, big producer, mildew resistant (mildew being the bane of the Cognac district), one of our best. Foliage sometimes shows spots of mite damage which, however, are self-healing. Short cane pruning.

WHITE ROGUE. Owing to a labeling mix-up years ago, the identity of this one was lost. We list it because it has tested out so admirably - one of the earliest, extremely vigorous and productive, winter-hardy, disease resistant, good wine quality. A boon where the growing season is short and winters are difficult. We suspect that it is one of Baco's white hybrids. Cane pruning.

Grapes for Eating

The following, though basically wine grapes, are also good eating: Aurore, Verdelet, Villard Blanc and the big-bunch pink grape, Joannes-Seyve 23-416. All of the hybrids yield delicious jellies and fresh juice, very different from the familiar American kind.

SEEDLESS VARIETIES. We propagate several of these: Himrod, Romulus, Suffolk Red and Remaily - our own favorites being Suffolk Red and Remaily. All are from the Geneva station, have only moderate hardiness but abundant vigor. Plant one or two at the end of vineyard rows.

*STEUBEN. A much improved American type. Good crops of handsome lavender-blue bunches with an agreeable spicy flavor.


LANDOT 2832 (*Dattier de Conzieu). Loose bunches of huge pale-blue neutral-flavored grapes. This one is also choosy about growing conditions, but worth a trial.

Vinifera and Rootstock Material

In spite of the odds against success, there are microclimates where some of the glamor vinifera such as Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay and Riesling can survive; and they do well in drier parts of the south. But grafting on proper rootstocks is a must. We do no commercial grafting, our specialty being the hybrids that need no grafting. But for those eager to challenge nature we can recommend reliable sources. And we do propagate a half-dozen standard rootstock varieties for those who want a source of wood for do-it-yourself grafting. These are Couderc 1613, Couderc 3309, Teleki 5BB, Teleki 5C, Rupestris St. George and AxR No. 1.


**Establishing a Vineyard**

Your vines will arrive packed with moist material to keep roots in condition. If planting must be delayed, hold vines in original package in a cool place for a week or 10 days. If longer, open package, spread out roots and trench the small vines until planting time in light soil with tops exposed. Do not let them dry out.

**Vineyard layout** If on a sloping location, plant across the slope, east-west if feasible. Plant vines 6 feet apart in the row, 8 feet for the most vigorous sorts. Alleys between rows, 8 to 10 feet, not narrower. Avoid frost pockets and shade.

**How many vines?** Planting 6' x 8' means 48 sq. ft. per vine. Planting 8' x 10' means 80 sq. ft. per vine. An acre equals 43,560 sq. ft. Compute the number of vines per acre after making ample allowance for turning room, margins and cross alleys. The number runs from 450 to 850 per acre. Compute space for home vineyards in the same way.

**Estimating yield** We are often asked this question, and there is no firm answer. A ton of grapes yields 175-185 gallons of wine; a quarter-ton around 45. Then the variables enter. Production may run from 2 to 6 tons depending on such factors as winter damage, frost and hail damage, nature of growing season, proper pruning, care in cultivation, disease and insect and bird and deer damage and other accidents, grape variety, etc. Boasts about grape yields are about as reliable as your neighbor’s story about the fish that got away. Best to assume a low figure and be pleasantly surprised. Excessive production reduces quality and enfeebles the vine.

**Pruning.** Grapes require drastic annual pruning, undertaken in late winter or early spring, and a proper job of pruning is the key to successful production. The various systems cannot be described here, but essentially they boil down to two types of pruning, cane pruning and spur pruning. The point to remember is that grapes are borne on “one-year wood,” the woody canes which were the green shoots of the previous season.

**Planting and first season.** Keep young vines from drying out during planting. Give soil a final cultivation just before planting to kill weed seedlings, then lay off row. Dig hole and plant so the place where the top growth begins is just above ground level. Then trim off the top growth to leave two buds only above the ground.

After growth begins and danger of frost is past, rub off all tender young shoots except the strongest one, which is to become the permanent trunk and should be tied to a lath or stake as it grows during the season. During the season rub off any suckers that may develop from the base, to concentrate all growth in the one shoot, or cane. Keep clean cultivated and water if necessary. Apply a general fruit spray several times the first season.

**Subsequent seasons.** At the end of the first season after the leaves fall you will be left with a single woody cane. The first dormant season is the time to install trellis, settle on your training system (which begins with that single cane) and determine your routines for cultivation and spraying. There are many sources for this information. They include the public library, state and U.S.D.A. bulletins, experienced growers, your county agent, and for that matter the two books mentioned elsewhere. Plus, we are always available to answer questions.
**ORDER FORM**

Your tel. ____________________________

Ship to ________________________________________________________

Address ________________________________________________________

City _____________________________ State ________________ Zip _______________

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**TOTAL COST OF VINES**

**SHIPPING (See Note)**

**AMOUNT ENCLOSED**

*NOTE:* Orders for 100 vines or less are payable in advance.

You may eliminate bill for shipping by adding 15% to your order.

A 25% deposit is required on larger orders, balance including shipping cost to be billed at shipping time. Packing/shipping at cost.
Books on the Subject

We call attention to two books by Philip M. Wagner which together form a library of grapegrowing and wine-making.

_Grapes Into Wine: The Art of Wine-Making in America_, by Philip M. Wagner. Knopf, 1988 revision $12.95. (Supersedes Mr. Wagner's standard work on wine-making, _American Wines and Wine-Making_.) A text for the serious amateur and small commercial producer, as well as for wine drinkers who wish to broaden their background.


These may be had through your bookseller or direct from us. In ordering from us, please add $1.70 each for postage and handling.

Prices for Spring 1990

The following prices apply to all grapevines unless otherwise noted. Minimum order 5 vines. Sent f.o.b. Riderwood, shipping cost extra.

- Assorted vines: 3.50ea.
- 10 or more, 1 variety: 2.00ea.
- 50 or more, 1 variety: 1.45ea.
- 100 or more, 1 variety: 1.20ea.
- 500 or more, 1 variety: .95ea.

Orders currently accepted for Spring 1990 delivery. No fall shipments. We suggest early ordering as many sorts are in short supply. In case of a late order, please specify second choice or allow appropriate substitution, or inquire by phone.

We ship only sound, healthy 1-year vines. These are beyond our control once they leave the nursery, hence are shipped without guarantee of replacement — except that we will replace vines untrue to name. It is mutually agreed that this is the extent of our liability.

Small orders payable in advance. If you wish to eliminate a subsequent shipping invoice, add 15% to cover packing and shipping. Orders of 500 or more are payable 1/3 in advance, balance when invoiced at time of shipment. No C.O.D. or credit cards.

THE BOORDY NURSERY
_Grape Vines for Wine Growers_
J & P Wagner, props., Box 38, Riderwood, Md. 21139
Tel. (301) 823-4624
Like home-grown vegetables, a home-grown dry table wine makes the meal taste better. Not only that. It contains no sugar, no cholesterol, no fat, no salt. We think of it as a glass of balance food. We call it a glass of health food.

THE BOORDY NURSERY
Grapevines for Wine-growers
P. O. Box 38
Riderwood, MD 21139
Tel. 301/823-4624

Accepting grapevine orders for spring delivery. Hours from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., except noon to 1 p.m., when we are usually enjoying lunch with a glass of one of our own wines.

T.D. 301/823-4624
P. O. Box 38
Riderwood, MD 21139

THE BOORDY NURSERY