

AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
STANISLAUS COUNTY



733 County Center III Court
Scenic Drive and Oakdale Road
Phone 526-6654 - Modesto, Calif.

May 11, 1973

Dear Grape Grower:

I have a few things to talk with you about; these are scurf, mildew, leafhopper, the important subject of mailing lists, and the OSHA Act.

SCURF

When you first read this name above, you probably said to yourself, "What in the world is that?" To tell you the truth, I had barely heard about it myself until last week. Scurf is a disease first noted in the spring of 1962 in Fresno, Tulare, and Kern counties by Dr. William B. Hewitt on Perlette and Delight and, to a limited extent, on Thompson Seedless vineyards. We noted this disease in a few Valdepena vineyards last year. Specimens were sent to Dr. Hewitt who identified it as scurf. He is now plating it out in order to confirm that this is the disease.

The responsible fungus is Alternaria tenuis. The symptoms are quite confusing until you have seen quite a bit of the disease; then it becomes easy to identify. These symptoms are an absence of leaves on the shoot. If leaves are present, they are small, cupped, with a brownish tinge and are apt to be tattered, much like a leaf that has been infected with deadarm disease. On the stem will be dark, almost black, streaks which also resemble deadarm but are not as wide as the streaks deadarm causes. The shoots will be stunted much like those which have had an early infestation of vine thrips. The more severely affected shoots are quite brittle. I have seen these symptoms on Grenach, Carignanes, and Valdepenas with the Valdepenas being most seriously affected.

Dr. Hewitt has stated that, because of its rarity, no treatment is necessary. However, because of the severe damage on Valdepenas, I am corresponding further with Dr. Hewitt as, in the case of this variety, we may have to develop a control.

Alternaria is the same fungus that is suspected of causing the stems to shrivel on Carignane grapes just prior to harvest. Some vineyards have suffered rather heavy losses from this problem. We have had some preliminary tests for a control and have plans to do more work this year--hopefully to be able to make some recommendations for a control by next season.

MILDEW

Although I have not seen mildew personally, some of the fieldmen from two different wineries have told me that they have seen some severe outbreaks of it already. For this reason, I would check the vineyard very closely and, if any sign of mildew is

found, I would suggest an immediate washing of the vines with water and sulfur while it is still easy to wash them. Following this treatment, I would immediately commence a good strong program of sulfur dust. The spray mixture is 3 pounds of sulfur to 100 gallons of water, plus a good wetting agent.

The foliage and fruit forms must be thoroughly wet for an effective control. Various winery representatives have stated that the price for grapes should be at least as good as it was last year. It would be a shame for anyone to lose out because of mildew when sulfur is so cheap.

If you are in doubt about what mildew is and how to control it, call our office for the spray schedule. We are enclosing a copy of the article written by Dr. William B. Hewitt.

LEAFHOPPER

I have noted some vineyards where leafhopper has overwintered in such numbers that treatment has been necessary in spite of this early date. The great majority of vineyards appear to have low populations of leafhopper.

If you are unfamiliar with the recommended treatments for leafhopper, consult the 1972 Pest and Disease Control Program for Grapes available at this office. Call 526-6654. In addition to the listed recommended materials, there are some additional newly registered materials which have appeared to be very good.

MAILING LIST

By law, we are required to bring our mailing lists up to date from time to time. Please return the enclosed card indicating that you wish to remain on the mailing list. If you have friends, neighbors, or relatives who you think would benefit from receiving this letter, please add their names.

OSHA

Enclosed is some recent information on OSHA (the Occupational Safety and Health Administration Act). This act will have a great deal of influence on the way you farm in the future and, for the sake of your pocketbook, keep as well informed on this subject as possible. Phil Osterli in our office has been made responsible for keeping up with the latest information and I will in turn see that you are informed.

Sincerely,

Paul D. LaVine
Paul D. La Vine
Farm Advisor

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enclosures

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