

San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties  
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Introduction

The 1984 acreage figures for San Luis Obispo are 7300 total acres, 800 non-bearing; Santa Barbara, a total of 9300 acres and 700 acres of nonbearing vines. Some of the nonbearing is taken from top-worked vines; usually Zinfandel, Merlot, and Cabernet Sauvignon are grafted mainly to Chardonnay and Sauvignon blanc. The new acreage being planted in San Luis Obispo County is mostly in the area east of Paso Robles. In Santa Barbara County small acreages are scattered.

Some of the new acreages are planted with a winery attached. Variety mix in these new plantings vary, but are mainly a 60-40 mix of white and red. White varieties, Chardonnay, Sauvignon blanc, Chenin blanc, and a few Gewurztraminer; the reds are a few Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot noir, and Zinfandel to be used for white Zinfandel wine.

There is a total of 49 wineries in the two counties--25 in San Luis Obispo and 24 in Santa Barbara County.

Estrella River Winery (225,000 cases) is the largest established winery. The new Arciero Winery being constructed will have a 220,000 case capacity; both are on Highway 46 east of Paso Robles. The winery mix is from these highs to a low of a few hundred cases.

There are approximately 150 acres abandoned and one large planting in the Lompoc district of Santa Barbara County being carried by the bank and one investor. Prices have been terrible the last few years--the average crush price for the two counties is \$388.50 per ton. The average tonnage per acre in San Luis Obispo is 4.3 tons, Santa Barbara 3.1 tons--cost of production is about \$3,000 per acre. The late comers in the business are in financial trouble due to low prices and high interest rates.

Problems and Needs

1. Bunch rot is a serious problem with most varieties. Two years ago it was a devastating blow to many growers.
2. Phyloxera research needs to be increased due to the findings in Monterey County and two locations in San Luis Obispo County.
3. Clonal selections--fitting the variety to the site needs more study, as big mistakes have been made in the past.
4. Evaluation of pruning methods--over the years there has been an influx of ideas from all quarters on the training of cane pruned vines. Yields have been affected due to some of these methods.
5. The chill factor of the wind needs to be studied and included in with degree days. Costly mistakes have been made along the coast--especially those areas directly exposed to the coastal winds.

Current Research

1. Six rootstock trials -- eight rootstocks and own root -- replicated five times in each location: AxR1, 5A, SO<sub>4</sub>, 1202, 3309, 110R, St. George and Harmony are in each. Locations - Estrella River Vineyard, Paso Robles (scion-Barbera); York Mountain, Templeton (scion-chardonnay); MacGregor Vineyard-Edna Valley, San Luis Obispo (scion-Chardonnay); Leghorn Vineyard, Los Alamos (scion-Cabernet Sauvignon). Two at Vina de Santa Ynez vineyard, Santa Ynez (scions-Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon).
2. Highwire (no catch wire) training - varieties Gewurztraminer and White Riesling.
3. Ammonium - nitrate sprays - foliage removal.
4. Kocide 101 and Frost Guard experiment for frost control - Chardonnay.
5. Hydrogen Cyanamide sprays to increase bud break on Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon and Zinfandel.