



Site Selection & Preparation

- **Vines need to be in full sun** – at least 7 hrs/day.
- **Soil drainage** is very important, soils should be at least 3 or 4 feet deep above hardpan, stratified layer, or rock. Grapes are known to do well in less fertile / rocky soils.
 - Your most likely amendment in Santa Clara County will be compost, especially if you have clay soils. Nutrients other than nitrogen are generally present in the soil.
- **Grapes will need support**, your trellis system will depend on your site, the variety of grapes you grow, and your pruning system. Among the more common support/trellis systems used in California: Vertical Shoot Positioned (VSP) Trellis, Simple or Double Curtain, Lyre Trellis, Arbor/fenceline. <http://ucanr.org/sites/intvit/files/24348.pdf>
- **Spacing** will vary with the variety you plant, common spacing:
 - **Row spacing** (distance between rows): 6-10 feet.
 - The distance between your rows should be greater than the height of full canopy.
 - **Vine spacing** (distance along row between plants): 4-8 feet.
 - **Single plant / arbor**: you'll need *roughly* one vine every 50-100 sq feet.
- **Pruning systems** are determined by the variety of grape you plant. Some grapes will grow under either system.
 - **Spur pruning**: vine is grown with 12-20 spurs, from which 2-3 canes per spur are allowed to grow each year.
 - **Cane pruning**: one non-fruiting cane is grown each year, such that it becomes the fruiting cane in year two.

Plant & Variety Selection

- In Santa Clara County, we have the advantage of being able to grow both European (*Vitis vinifera*) and American & American Hybrids (*Vitis labrusca*). Look for specific rootstocks to address vigor and disease management (grape phylloxera and parasitic nematodes.)
- Vines: **always plant certified, virus-tested stock.**
- **Table grapes** tend to yield fruit that's smaller and tastier than what you get in supermarkets. Girdling (cutting out a ring of bark from the vine trunk) or spraying with GA (gibberellic acid) at fruit set can increase berry size.
 - Best varieties for Santa Clara County: <http://mgsantaclara.ucanr.edu/garden-help/fruits-nuts/grape/>
 - European Table Grapes:
 - Black Monukka, Black Rose, Cardinal, Delight, Exotic, Flame Seedless, Perlette, Ribier, Ruby Seedless, Flame Tokay and White Malaga
 - European/American Hybrids:
 - Black Muscat, Catawba, Delaware, Delicatessen, Diamond, Golden Muscat, Iona, Jefferson, July Early Amber, Moscato d'Adda, Moscato di Terracina, New York Muscat, Niagara, Perle de Csaba, Queen of the Vineyard, Niabell, Niagara, Pierce, Suavis, Wapanuka and Xlnta
- **Wine grapes**: Most growers prefer *Vitis vinifera* (European) grapes for wine production: Barbera, Cabernet franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Carignane, Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc, Durif

(Petite Sirah), Gamay Noir, Grenache, Malbec, Merlot, Pinot Gris, Pinot Noir, Sangiovese, Sauvignon Blanc, Semillon, Tempranillo, Viognier, Zinfandel

- Cultural Information for Selected Table Grape Varieties:
<http://ucanr.org/sites/gardenweb/files/28956.pdf>
- Cultural Information for Selected Winegrape Varieties:
http://iv.ucdavis.edu/Viticultural_Information/?ds=351&reportnumber=516&catcol=2603&categorysearch=Grape%20Varieties
- Raisin grape varieties
<http://iv.ucdavis.edu/files/24430.pdf>

A VERY Brief Year in the Life

- December through March: Grapes go dormant.
 - Prune late in the dormant season to lessen chance of Eutypa infection.
 - Prune on dry days, never in wet, windy, or rainy conditions.
- Late March – April (depending on variety): Budbreak, the point where buds swell and eventually break from late March – mid-April.
- April – July: you'll be training, and managing, the shoots as they grow.
 - From year 3 on, you'll begin a spray program.
 - In Santa Clara County, Powdery Mildew (PM) is the most common condition to spray for, needed every 7-21 days to control. Popular choices include wettable sulfur, narrow-range oil (Stylet Oil), bacillus subtilis (Serenade), among others. Complete list of options:
<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/r302100311.html>
 - Ongoing Canopy Management tasks during this time include:
 - Lateral removal: pinching off parts of the vine so energy goes to fruit.
 - Leaf pulling: removing leaves that are in the way of forming grape clusters.
 - Hedge your vines and/or adopt other techniques to control vigor.
- July – August is usually when veraison happens – the time when berries soften, and turn color for darker varieties.
 - Birds may start to take interest – if so plan to net the entire vine, or wrap grape clusters in a paper bag.
- July - September = Harvest!
 - For table grapes, harvest when berries taste good to you.
 - For raisin and winegrapes, you'll be measuring sugar and acid to determine best harvest date.

Additional Resources

- California Garden Web's Growing Grapes in the California Garden
http://ucanr.org/sites/gardenweb/Growing_Grapes_in_the_California_Garden/
- Year-round IPM Program for Wine and Raisin Grapes
<http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/C302/m302yi01.html>
- Year-round IPM Program for Table Grapes
<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/C302/mt302yi01.html>

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