

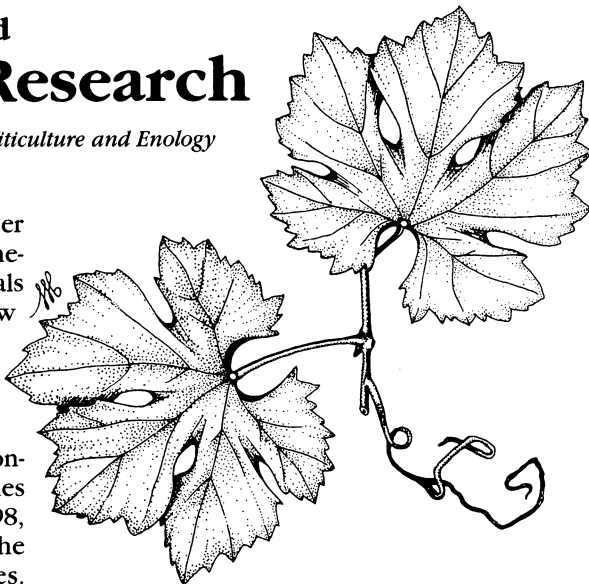
# The Zinfandel Heritage Vineyard “Cutting Edge” Research

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The number of Zinfandel vineyards older than 60 years continues to diminish as vineyards are replanted to meet production goals or due to changes in ownership. As you know from the October *Express*, the goal of the Heritage Vineyard Project is to collect and preserve some of the existing Zinfandel clones before they are lost.

The Heritage Block is a valuable demonstration and research site. Once the vines begin producing substantial fruit in 1998, many people will be interested in walking the block to observe the clonal differences. Guided tours for Adopt-A-Vine Parents will be scheduled. Growers and winemakers alike are certain to identify particular selections that they feel are superior to others. The research team decided at the beginning of the project not to identify the vines in the Heritage block as to their specific origin. The plot maps and vineyard markers use a numerical code, the key to which is a closely guarded secret. Origins will be publicized only with the permission of the vineyard owners in due course.

In 1997, the vineyard produced its first crop of about one ton. No data were taken as the first crop was small and the vines were highly manipulated by shoot thinning and later, crop thinning. Information about cluster size, berry size and cluster compactness will be aimed for the 1998 crop. The 1997 crop was combined into a single lot and made into wine by ZAP member Nil Venge of



Saddleback Cellars. ZAP will bottle this wine under the “Heritage Vineyard” label.

Some data will be taken in the dormant season by Dr. Carole Meredith of UC Davis. Carole’s research centers on DNA analysis of varieties and clones. This winter Carole will have access to the Zinfandel Heritage Vineyard in order to ensure that all the materials in the trial are truly Zinfandel. As Carole’s test develops higher resolution, perhaps some clonal distinctions can be made.

In 1998, an expansion of the Heritage Vineyard is anticipated in order to include additional selections, especially from the Sierra Foothills where Zinfandel plays such a prominent role. A selection from old vines in Riverside county is also being sought. Updates on this first vintage from the Zinfandel Heritage Vineyard will be presented in due course.