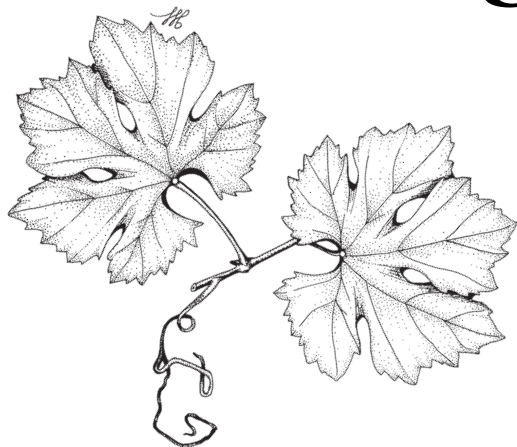


# Heritage Vineyard Update



*by Dr. Jim Wolpert*

*Chair, Department of Viticulture & Enology  
University of California, Davis*

**T**he Zinfandel Heritage Vineyard is entering a new and exciting stage! As ZAP members know, a wine has been made each year from the Heritage block, first by Saddleback Cellars (in 1997), followed by Robert Biale Vineyards (1998) and Cline Cellars (1999), and with Joseph Swan offering to make the 2000 vintage.

For the first time, in vintage 2000, we will make individual lots of wine from specially chosen field selections. For the past two years, we have taken data on berry size and cluster weight, in an initial effort to assess the variability of the Heritage selections. These data have shown that the selections differ considerably within a given year although the selections did not necessarily behave identically in 1998 and 1999. However, we now feel that we should expand the effort by making individual lots of wine from selections that show different yield characteristics.

Small-lot winemaking presents some challenges. The protocol must ensure that the wines will be as close to commercial quality as possible and represent the true characteristics of the selection. The wines will be made at UC Davis, under the direction of field technician Mike Anderson and winemaker Ernie Farinias, utilizing a method that was approved by the ZAP Research

Committee, with particular input from Kent Rosenblum, Joel Peterson, Don Williams and Rod Berglund, among others. We will look forward to reporting on the differences among these selections in later newsletters.

On a separate note, we have run virus profiles on all of the selections. This was due to the superb assistance of the Foundation Plant Materials Service (FPMS) staff at UC Davis. We discovered that numerous selections that visually appeared to be free of virus, tested positive in the FPMS test. While this may be disappointing, it is not surprising as many viruses show no visible signs. (This is an important fact to keep in mind when propagating an uncertified old vine selection and where virus-rootstock interactions can be deadly).

We will probably not take extensive data on virus-infected selections because it is

likely that these viruses will be eliminated (by shoot-tip culture, not by heat-treatment any more). Re-evaluation will have to be done then at that stage. In the meantime, all of the selections we have chosen for small-lot winemaking above are ones that tested free of virus. So, if we find promising selections that show improved wine quality we have a higher level of confidence that they will pass certification.

**ZAP has awarded a grant in the amount of approximately \$20,000 to UC Davis for 2000/01 research.**

**Additional auction proceeds will go to other heritage projects and educational programs.**