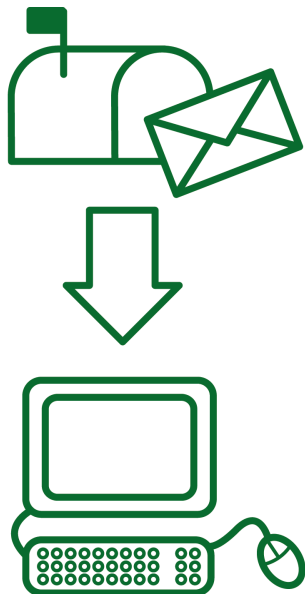




RESEARCH · IPM NEWSLETTER



IPM Newsletter goes **electronic** FOR NON-LWWC MEMBERS

A significant number of people who are not members of LWWC receive this newsletter. In an attempt to cut costs LWWC asks that **all non-LWWC members who wish to continue to receive this newsletter call Sherri at the LWWC office (209-367-4727) and give her your email address.** Soon the newsletter will only be sent out electronically to non-LWWC members. LWWC members will continue to receive their newsletter via normal mail or can elect to receive it electronically.

THE LODI RULES FOR SUSTAINABLE WINEGROWING PROGRAM *Has an Eventful Second Year*

BY CLIFF OHMART
LWWC Research/IPM Director

The year 2006 was a good one for *The Lodi Rules for Sustainable Winegrowing* program. The number of participating growers doubled from the program's first year and the number of certified acres increased fourfold to over 6,000. The US Department of Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) approved the first Lodi wine label bearing the *Lodi Rules* program logo, Joe Dexter's Lobo Loco 2005 Syrah. And to cap the year off, the 6 growers who achieved certification in 2005, the first year of the *Lodi Rules* program,

won the California Department of Pesticide Regulation's 2006 IPM Innovator Award, presented to them in Sacramento on October 26 (see story on page 4).

The Lodi Rules for Sustainable Winegrowing is California's first (and only) 3rd party-certified sustainable winegrowing program. The committee that created the program, consisting of Lodi growers, PCAs, viticulture consultants, a wildlife biologist, LWWC staff and University of California personnel, believe that certified vineyards will produce higher quality wines more reflective of the unique

qualities of the Lodi region and add value to Lodi winegrapes and wine. Vineyards in *The Lodi Rules* program are certified by Protected Harvest, an environmental non-profit organization. Protected Harvest has received Consumers Union's highest rating as an eco-label certifier. *The Lodi Rules* takes a comprehensive approach to address the overall health of the vineyard and ecosystem. The farming standards go

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beyond just pest management to promote practices that enhance biodiversity, soil and water health, and employee well being. *The Lodi Rules* are designed to lead to measurable

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Continued from pg. 1 improvements in the environmental health of vineyards and surrounding ecosystems.

The *Lodi Rules* is a voluntary certification program with two components; farming practices and the environmental impact of any pesticides used in the vineyard during the year. The grower must achieve a minimum number of farming practice points and not exceed a threshold of pesticide environmental impact points for each vineyard they wish to qualify for sustainable certification. Protected Harvest handles all grower enrollments, vineyard audits, and certification.

Growers and wineries making wine from certified grapes can then use certification in their marketing programs,

including putting the program logo on the wine label. The public is showing a growing interest in purchasing products that have been produced using sustainable practices and a year-long national market research program done by LWWC and Protected Harvest indicated they would react positively to a program like the *Lodi Rules*. Participation in the *Lodi Rules* program may be a way for Lodi wineries to differentiate their wine in the marketplace and as a result recognize Lodi winegrape growers for their efforts.

There are several things that you can do if interested in finding out more about the *Lodi Rules* program. First, attend a breakfast meeting on December 19 at 9am at the Central Valley Waste

Management Services seminar room located at 1333 East Turner Road in Lodi. LWWC staff will explain the program, answer any questions, and growers participating in the *Lodi Rules* program will be on hand to share their experiences. Secondly, visit the *Lodi Rules* internet website at www.lodirules.com. The program is described in its entirety, including how the program was put together and by whom, the farming practices requirements, an explanation of the pesticide environmental impact points system, and the steps involved in certification. Thirdly, talk to growers who are participating in the program. Finally, call Cliff at the LWWC office with any questions you might have.

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GROWER PROFILE

Brad Goehring

BY CHRIS STORM

Brad Goehring earned his first dollar at age seven. His father, Ben, gave him a job suckering grape vines for \$1 per vine row. With quarter mile long rows, Ben thought this would be a good way to keep his son out of the house for a while, but he never anticipated that Brad would finish 72 rows in the first day. Ben quickly realized he was paying too much for his vines to be suckered. Brad chuckles about the story and says that he “still isn’t making that kind of money”.

Later, Ben began paying Brad and his brother for all their work once a year on January first. The boys didn’t mind this for the first few years. However, once they were old enough to begin driving tractors, Ben worried about the damage his vines would suffer as his sons cultivated the vineyard. So, he decided to give them an incentive for straight driving. If the boys pulled out a vine during the previous year, the entire year’s pay would be forfeited. Brad claims that “very few vines were ever hit”, but an occasional unfortunate vine would find its way into a neighbor’s vineyard in order to ensure payment for that years work. Brad smirks at the thought of his neighbor finding a few dead Tokay vines scattered through his zinfandel vineyard.

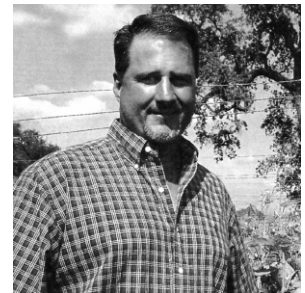
Brad was born and raised in Lodi and is a fourth generation winegrape grower in the area. He went to Lodi High School and graduated in 1983. Before entering college, Brad had to make a decision; would he enter into the family’s successful meat business, Goehring Meat Company or the family’s farming business? He agonized over the decision, but resolved to work in the meat business. So, after graduating from high school he enrolled at California State University, Chico where he majored in marketing and minored in meat

science. While at Chico he joined the water ski team often spending 6 days a week “practicing” on the Sacramento River.

Shortly after leaving Chico State and only after a couple of months with the Goehring Meat Company, the family sold the business and Brad fell back on his second career choice of farming winegrapes.

Today, Brad farms and runs a labor contracting business with his wife Kristin. They have three children, Lexus, Bryson, and Brielle.

Brad never intended to be a labor contractor but during the big planting years in the mid 1990’s, there was a shortage of people able to plant grapes, so neighbors and friends starting asking Brad if he could help them plant. Word spread and Brad’s small side business grew into a much bigger full time vineyard development business. Brad realized the big planting years would not last indefinitely, so in order to keep valuable employees busy, he broadened his focus from only vineyard development to all aspects of viticulture. At busy times, Brad employs nearly 300 workers and over the years he has planted over 16,000 acres of grapes, an accomplishment of



Acres Owned/Managed:
480 Acres

Varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet franc, Chardonnay, Malbec, Merlot, Petite Sirah, Petit Verdot, Pinot grigio, Sangiovese and Zinfandel

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The 2006 season was a mixed year of both challenge and opportunity. Unlike 2005 the crop was more manageable, but similar to 2005 there was a mix of good opportunity, good quality and yet still grapes without a permanent home that may be left in the field. Another wet spring was followed by extreme heat in July. This year the rain was especially concentrated in during late February and March. Good soil moisture, good growing conditions and an excellent bloom period resulted in good set, some tight clusters and with the record 11 days heat in July; sour rot in susceptible varieties such as Zinfandel. The almost ideal bloom conditions did help Malbec and Merlot set some good crops along with Syrah.

Unfortunately this year the repeat hot spell lasted 11 days and hit at a bad time for several varieties, most especially Zinfandel. After the extreme heat, moderate temperatures prevailed for the rest of the season. Zinfandel seems to have suffered most from the excessive rains early and the hot weather late, even worse than last year in 2005.

Although it was not a particularly “good Zin year”, there are always exceptions to the rule. There is still some very good quality Zinfandel to come from the vintage, but it was difficult. Some early Botrytis rot problems occurred in Chardonnay, which dried up and was of little concern. Most other varieties seemed to “weather” this year’s conditions a little easier and Syrah had a second straight harvest of high quality. In general quality will be good, but the concern is prices. Even with the average to below average yields there may be some un-harvested blocks and “bargain” fruit being delivered.

As last year harvest started about normal, around the 13th of August this year. Also as in 2005, moderate weather slowed the pace of harvest, but this year more normal yields allowed for a reasonable progression of delivery to the

wineries. Around mid harvest there was a slowdown from cool weather, a rain and wineries waiting for flavor development. Mother Nature continues to accommodate the interest in longer ‘hang time’ this year as in 2005. This is the second consecutive year that the harvest has extended into November, but the season is wrapping up in early November. Per acre yields are close to normal, but generally down 10 to 20% across most varieties. The total crop is still a big one because of some new acres and from the maturing vineyards planted in the last few years. Although yields are way down from last year and generally more around average, there are exceptions in each variety and in some vineyards. Syrah is one, having more crop this year than last year when it was lighter than most other varieties.

Most vineyards including Zinfandel are not showing any maturity problems or excessive potassium deficiency and there seems to be less expression of severe leaf roll virus symptoms. It appears most, but not all sites, have recovered from last years huge crop load. There are some cases of more general reddening of leaves in some highly colored varieties, which seem to be associated with the cool dry conditions we have experienced over the last six weeks. If you do have specific questions give me a call.

Increased costs, more regulations, and tougher competition continue to drive consolidation of growers and wineries, even with a fair amount of helpful people in Sacramento and Washington working on the problem. Overall pest problems have not been excessive, but as in 2005 Vine Mealy Bug (VMB) continues to find its way around the district. Be aware of the possibility of VMB popping up and keeping a watchful eye open to sooty mold on vines or fruit. Any incidence of high ant activity should be investigated and also check vineyards near bird

roosting sites as a place to look first. Information is available at the LWWC office, our office and online at ipm.ucdavis.edu or vinemealybug@ucdavis.edu.

The Glassy Winged Sharp Shooter (GWSS) problem has not gone away, but the Ag Commissioner’s office has been effectively monitoring and keeping it out of the county.

Applicator permits and licensing require continuing education hours. A recent question I received encouraged me to do a little digging and come up with the following:

With the end of harvest one item that may be coming up for your attention is renewing your private applicator license, pest control operator license or your PCA license. Part of the process, besides actually attending the meetings, is to document the classes or meetings for your Continuing Education (CE) hours. Three ways that are possible include:

1) Join CAPCA, California Association of Pest Control Advisors- its costs \$125 per year, keeps a record of your Continuing Education hours with a year end printout on the internet or by hard copy. The organization also offers online CE hours, besides sponsorship of meetings. See www.capca.com

2) Join PAPA, Pesticide Applicators Professional Association - it costs \$40 per year and provides an automatically updated record of your CE hours for you. They also sponsor meetings and have online opportunity to obtain CE hours. See www.papaseminars.com

3) Go to the DPR web site at cdpr.ca.gov. Then go to the site index to the left titled ‘Index A-Z’. From there select ‘C’ then select ‘continuing education’; then click on ‘DPR approved classes’. With that you can see displayed the current year by month or the archive years from 2002 to 2005. *Continued on pg.4*

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All the information you need to document is there **except for the meeting code**; that you will still need to get from the meeting sponsor listed there on the DPR calendar. It is all free, but you need to do the work.

Now for the fall checklist, which seems to be getting longer each year.

FALL CHECKLIST

- ✓ If the soil is dry, a light irrigation to help maintain soil moisture is okay until it rains steady.
- ✓ Little to no nitrogen should be applied now, but potassium now (or early next year) is okay. It won't move like nitrogen. To get full benefit of compost, it needs to be disked in.
- ✓ Make a note of any problem weed species that may be increasing.
- ✓ Mark any vines with excessive red leaves and/or leaf roll for possible removal.
- ✓ Renew your Ag Waiver Discharge membership.
- ✓ Update your air pollution mitigation plan if you have 100 acres or more in a single vineyard.
- ✓ Also, review your pesticide use reports and get everything up to date as there is continued interest to keep agriculture "accountable" for problems real and perceived.
- ✓ For VMB, Lorsban (chlorpyrifos) post harvest can help keep it checked until the summer control program. Be careful not to apply before a storm, especially near natural drains and waterways.
- ✓ Gopher and squirrel activity are still common and may deserve attention with baits, gas cartridges, fumigant pellets (usually better in spring), trapping, shooting, or a combination of several of the methods. Remember ground squirrels are fair game, tree squirrels require a depredation permit. Owl boxes help, but usually stabilize rodent populations, not control them.

THE LODI RULES PROGRAM AND LODI RULES GROWERS RECEIVE IPM Innovator Award for 2006



Top Row left to right: Craig Ledbetter, Kim Ledbetter-Bronson, Cindy Johnson, Bruce Fry, Keith Watts; Bottom row left to right: Robert Abercrombie, John Ledbetter, Jerry Fry, Robert Pirie, MaryAnn Warmerdam (Director California Dept. Pesticide Regulation), Joe Dexter, and Cliff Ohmart)

On October 26, the *Lodi Rules for Sustainable Winegrowing* program and the six Lodi growers first to achieve *Lodi Rules* certification were awarded the California Department of Pesticide Regulation's 2006 IPM Innovator Award. At a ceremony at the CalEPA Building in Sacramento DPR Director MaryAnn Warmerdam presented the awards to Cliff Ohmart representing the *Lodi Rules* Program and to Joe Dexter, Lobo Loco Winery; John Ledbetter and Kim Ledbetter-Bronson, Vino Farms; Keith Watts, K & S Watts Vineyards; Jerry and Bruce Fry, Mohr-Fry Ranches; Robert Pirie, Colligere Farm Management; and Robert Abercrombie, Sutter Home Winery. "Each award winner has created an enduring partnership with nature — not just to co-exist, but to contribute to a sustainable environment and economy. And each one of these recipient is building on the success of our previous IPM Innovators" said DPR Director Mary-Ann Warmerdam.

DPR's IPM Innovator program has recognized nearly 100 individuals and organizations since 1994. They represent a range of business and community interests, including farms and other businesses, community groups, schools, and advocacy organizations. Most importantly, all have actively shared their successful ideas with others. LWWC congratulates the *Lodi Rules* growers for receiving this award.

Continued from pg. 2 which he is very proud.

Brad's labor contracting business covers everything viticulturally from planting to pruning. Although winegrapes are the majority of his business, he has diversified into other areas and crops, planting peaches, walnuts, olives, cherries, and winegrapes in 11 counties around the state. He has installed vineyards at 3500 feet in elevation on 55° slopes where he was forced to lean into the hill to keep from losing his balance and tumbling down the incline. Through this and many other experiences, Brad has gained an understanding of the methods used at a variety of vineyard operations statewide, accumulating experience with each new project, so that when he goes to plant the next vineyard, he knows what might be possible and what is not. Brad explains that "when Mother Nature throws us a curve ball, I've seen what others have done in other counties, and I'm able to use that knowledge and experience and apply it to my own operation and in my contracting business."

Through his experimentation and vineyard installation experience, Brad has developed a passion for designing trellis systems. His goal is to achieve as much viticulture as possible through the trellis in order to reduce labor costs, tractor passes, and recoup trellis investment expenses. Like many growers in the late 1990's, Brad planted numerous vineyards using a traditional VSP trellis system, but soon found that sun exposure was too intense for non-shaded berries. After extensive experimentation, Brad now prefers a modified VSP trellis where the top cross arm is much wider (width depends on variety) than the lower cross arms allowing the canopy to flop over providing more shade for the southern or western facing fruit. He is currently working on using a taller cordon height with his modified VSP, so that after the canopy flops over, it will take several weeks longer for the shoot tips to reach the ground. This greater height should allow Brad to trim the vines as late in the season as possible thereby reducing vine vigor, laterals and vegetal flavors in the fruit. Brad explains that "hedging too early can have the opposite effect."

Brad has been a member of the BIFS program since the beginning and has been one of its biggest supporters. Recalling how he farmed before joining the BIFS program, Brad explains that if one leafhopper or mite was discovered anywhere in the vineyard, he would spray. By the end of the year, he would have made an average of two applications per block. The BIFS program taught Brad damage tolerance and now rather than using just one leafhopper or mite as a justification for a spray, he takes into account the time of year, the damage, the population trend and distribution. Brad explains "if leafhoppers are heavy on one edge of the vineyard, just that edge gets sprayed." This method has reduced his sprays from an average of two per year to about one application for every two years, a huge cost, energy, and time savings. It takes a bit more effort to monitor as leafhopper or mite populations approach economic thresholds; however as Brad explains "by tolerating some damage and spraying each block judiciously, I am more

profitable."

Even with moderate damage, Brad is confident the vines are in good health and wine quality isn't suffering. He explains that "5% leaf damage looks a lot worse than it really is and 15% damage looks horrific. But, is 15% damage really having the effect we think it is?" Brad has experimented with his economic thresholds by allowing pest populations to get high enough to risk delaying harvest. He no longer allows damage to get quite so high, but he uses this experience to predict when to pull the trigger and when to wait.

Outside of farming, Brad still water skis, only now instead of with Chico State teammates, he skis with his family. He also spends a lot of time landscaping his new home and plenty of time enjoying his favorite beverage. Brad loves wine and prefers Sangiovese, because it is hard to grow, and hard to make good wine, but when done right it is "wonderfully unique." Brad is a member of the Commission Research Committee and Commission Board.



CHRIS STORM MOVES ON

Chris Storm, LWWC's Viticulturist since January of 2003 has accepted a job as Viticulturist for Vino Farms in Lodi beginning on January 1, 2007. Chris has been an invaluable member of the LWWC staff, participating wholeheartedly in the BIFS program, self-assessment workbook workshops, played a critical role in the development and implementation of the *Lodi Rules for Sustainable Winegrowing* program, writing the second edition of the *Lodi Winegrower's Workbook* (to be published in early 2007), and probably most importantly as traffic Czar at ZinFest. Any Lodi growers and PCAs who have been fortunate to work with Chris I think will agree with me that he will be sorely missed. The upside is that we helped convince him to remain in Lodi so the wine industry can still benefit from his unique contributions. If you are free please join us at the Lodi Wine & Visitor Center on 4pm on Thursday, December 21 to give him a proper send off.

LWWC is currently accepting applications to fill Chris' position so if you know of a recent graduate in Viticulture who might be interested in applying have them contact Cliff at the LWWC office.

Up-Coming Grower Meetings

DEC. 19, 2006, 9am – 10:30am: *The Lodi Rules for Sustainable Winegrowing* Certification Program. LWWC staff and participating growers will explain the program. Central Valley Waste Management Services, 1333 East Turner Rd., Lodi. PCA credits applied for.

JAN. 10, 2007, 9am – 10:30am: The Latest on Viticulture Database Software. Presented by representatives of the following companies: AgCode, SureHarvest, Premiere Viticulture and Orange Enterprises. Cellar Room, Lodi Wine & Visitor Center, 2545 West Turner Rd., Lodi. PCA credits applied for.

FEB. 2, 2007, 9am – 10:30am: Vineyard Spray Application Technology. Dr. Andrew Landers, Cornell University. Dr. Landers, an authority on vineyard sprayer technology and spray application will discuss the ins and outs of sprayers and spray application. Central Valley Waste Management Services, 1333 East Turner Rd., Lodi. PCA credits applied for.

MARCH 1, 2007, 9am – 10:30am: Integrated Viticulture Online: A new internet viticulture resource for Lodi growers. Dr. Deborah Golino, Director Foundation Plant Services, UC Davis. Dr. Golino will demonstrate a new website where growers can access all the information about winegrapes that has been produced by University of California researchers and extension personnel. Central Valley Waste Management Services, 1333 East Turner Rd., Lodi. PCA credits applied for.

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