



Understanding Fine Wines

It's Winegrape Harvest Season! Here's What You Need To Know

(NAPSA)—As late summer turns to fall, vintners bring to bear all their skill in tasting and timing as they aim to harvest their grapes when they are “just ripe.” Aaron Lange has worked the harvest since he was a kid, so he has seen a lot of great vintages. Now he's Director of Viticulture Operations at LangeTwins Family Winery and Vineyards, and Chairman of the California Association of Winegrape Growers (CAWG). Here's his behind-the-scenes look at how the harvest affects the delicious wines you know and love.

What are the ideal conditions for a healthy harvest?

A good season of winter rain lays the foundation for a successful harvest, preparing the soil before the growing season that begins in March. After April, a sunny, dry spring and summer are ideal so vintners can control the amount of water they apply through irrigation, hoping to prevent the grapes from getting too big and losing flavor.

Should you be picky about when to pick your grapes?

Definitely! While a lot of science goes into determining ripeness, growers primarily rely on their taste buds for the ultimate decision about timing. LangeTwins tends to harvest sparkling wine grapes first, its Chardonnay and Pinot Noir varieties, to ensure lower sugar levels. Next are the white winegrapes for Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Gris, and late-in-the-season varieties, Lodi's famous Zinfandel, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah, are harvested last.

The secret is in the skin!

All the flavor, color and tannic structure reside in the skin of the grapes. During harvest, you'll see winemakers and growers squeeze the pulp out of the grape and put only the skins in their mouths to help determine ripeness.

Let's meet at the vines at 9...p.m.?

The mechanical harvesters and workers take advantage of Lodi's cool evening temperatures, which allow the grapes to snap off the vine easily, and less oxidation takes place as the grapes



Expert vintners such as Aaron Lange say Lodi, California will produce high-quality wines this year.

are transported from the vineyard to the winery crusher, maintaining flavors.

A look at the Lodi, California harvest

“While it was a challenging year for California growers, with wet weather and a lot of leaf-pulling to open the canopies, the growers kept with it,” said Lange. “The crop size looks average in comparison to years past, and we believe that we'll be able to harvest a quality crop that will pay off in the wines once we get them bottled.”

Fourth- and fifth-generation growers like the Langes have worked to transform Lodi from a supplier of grapes to a world-class wine-producing region. With 110,000 acres, more than 750 winegrowers, 90 wineries and over 125 varieties of wine, Lodi is the largest appellation in the U.S. It boasts more acreage than both Napa Valley and Sonoma County combined.

About LangeTwins Family Winery and Vineyards

For five generations, the LangeTwins family has been a sustainable winegrape grower in the Lodi appellation of California. The LangeTwins Family Winery and Vineyards produces a collection of brands including LangeTwins Reserve, LangeTwins Estate and Caricature. LangeTwins is the recipient of the 2014 International Award of Excellence in Sustainable Winegrowing competition and has been honored by the Botanical Research Institute of Texas and the 2017 CAWG Grower of the Year Award.

For more information, visit www.langetwins.com or connect via [@LangeTwins](https://www.facebook.com/LangeTwins) and www.instagram.com/langetwins.