

## **Progress Report to the Virginia WineBoard**

**Bruce Zoecklein, Virginia Tech**

### **Laboratory Technical Assistant**

The goal of this project is to follow the goal established by the Virginia Winegrowers Advisory Board: continuing to increase wine quality by providing extension and applied research assistance. The activities of the Laboratory Technical Assistant during the reporting period included the following:

- Analysis of research grapes, juices, and wines.
- Preparation of wines and reagents, and data analysis for extension programs.
- Assistance in conducting short courses, seminars and workshops for the Virginia industry.
- Statistical analysis of research data.
- Assistance in experimental wine production.
- Help to maintain the Enology-Grape Chemistry Group's website ([www.vtwines.info](http://www.vtwines.info)).

It should be noted that this Board-funded position is more critical than ever before. As of March 2008, I have lost the only other technical assistant due to retirement. That position was funded by Virginia Tech. It is my understanding that the position is lost, and will not be renewed.

Attempts to improve Virginia wine quality control have taken the form of research-based extension, including short course programs, winemaker roundtable meetings, extension publications, newsjournals (*Vintner's Corner* and *Enology Notes*), expansion of our website, laboratory extension activities, and direct contact. In addition, we provide supplemental quality control (QC) analysis performed by the Enology Service Lab of the Enology-Grape Chemistry Group.

Our publications highlight the importance of monitoring wine quality control, including the establishment of HACCP (hazard analysis and critical control point) programs. Specific activities of the Laboratory Technical Assistant during this reporting period include:

- Annual Juice and Wine Analysis Workshop. This was an annual two-day, hands-on analysis course conducted in Blacksburg.
- VVA Winter meeting.
- Sustainable Winery Layout and Design. March, King of Prussia, PA
- Technical Winemakers Roundtable, December and April, others planned
- Annual Pre-harvest Workshops, two scheduled for this season: May and June

Additional extension activities assisted by the Laboratory Technical Assistant:

- Surveys of the industry's research needs. The results of past surveys have been posted on the Enology-Grape Chemistry Group's website at [www.vtwines.info](http://www.vtwines.info)

The Laboratory Technical Assistant has been involved in Board-funded research efforts designed to help resolve practical and limiting problems facing the Virginia wine industry. .

- Wine grape cultivars, clone and training system evaluation of Cabernet franc, Traminette, and Viognier.

A manuscript on Viognier has been published in the American Journal of Enology and Viticulture. I have also submitted a revised edition to Practical Winery and Vineyard magazine.

The wines from these studies have been evaluated by Virginia industry members through short courses and Winemaker Roundtable meetings.

- Wine grape cultivar evaluation in Virginia's Southern Piedmont

The practical significance of each research effort has been conveyed to the industry in the form of my electronic newsjournal (*Enology Notes*), short courses, and industry meetings, such as Winemaker Roundtable and on the Enology-Grape Chemistry web site at [www.vtwines.info](http://www.vtwines.info).

