

April 28, 2006

Kern/Tulare

GWSS Update



A project of the Glassy-winged Sharpshooter Task Force of Kern and Tulare Counties. Participants: Agricultural Commissioner's Offices of Kern and Tulare Counties, California Department of Food and Agriculture, University of California-Cooperative Extension, U.S. Department of Agriculture (APHIS and ARS Divisions).

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Napa makes first 2006 GWSS finds; declares May GWSS Awareness Month

Napa County inspectors this month made their first glassy-winged sharpshooter discoveries of 2006 — just as county supervisors declared May to be Glassy-winged Sharpshooter Awareness Month.

Both of April's GWSS findings were viable egg masses, said Jeff Erwin, Napa County's deputy agricultural commissioner in charge of the GWSS program.

The first pest detection occurred April 4 on one of 33 15-gallon cherry laurels that were shipped from the Los Angeles County growing ground of a large wholesale nursery. The plants were intended for a residential landscape project in American Canyon, a town in south Napa County.

Inspectors made their second discovery April 11 on one of 40 five-gallon size purple hopseed bushes. The containers had arrived from the Riverside County growing ground of a large Orange County wholesale nursery. The plants were destined for a landscape project at the Silverado Country Club.

Both egg masses were taken immediately for official identification and viability determination to the Sacramento entomol-



ogy lab run by the California Department of Food and Agriculture. Within a couple of hours, the lab determined that the egg masses were indeed GWSS and viable when found.

Both wholesale nurseries picked up the plants to take back to their Southern California origins.

Documentation for the April 4 shipment showed that the plants had been treated with the insecticide Talstar prior to shipment from Los Angeles County. "Unfortunately, Talstar is not one of the treatments required by Napa County's more stringent
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Napa County GWSS inspectors hunt for life stages of the pest, which threatens the county's premier wine-grape vineyards. (Photo courtesy of Napa County Agricultural Commissioners Office)

2005's bumper crop lets wine grapes rule in Napa County

A bumper crop of more than 181,000 tons led Napa County's wine-grape production to account for nearly 99 percent of the value for all crops and livestock raised in the county last year, according to the 2005 Napa County Agricultural Crop Report released April 25.

The value of Napa County wine grapes reached nearly \$541 million in 2005, an increase of almost 55 percent from the previous year.

The total value of the wine grape crop rose 54.7% while production increased by 61,15 tons, or 51 percent. Total

tonnage for the 2005 crop (181,025 tons) climbed 50.6 percent over the previous 10-year average of 120,237 tons.

The average price paid per ton was \$2,987.12, compared to \$2,915.86 per ton in 2004, an increase of \$71.26 per ton.

Once again, Napa County grapes received the highest average price of any grape-growing district statewide. Petit Verdot received the highest average price per ton for any Napa County wine grape variety at \$4,974.95.

Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay were Napa County's top two varieties.

Kern Grape Pest meeting set for May 4

The 2006 Kern County Grape Pest Management meeting will be held Thursday, May 4 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon in the UCCE conference room at 1031 S. Mount Vernon Avenue in Bakersfield.



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standards,” Erwin said.

Agricultural Commissioner Dave Whitmer sent letters to commissioners in GWSS-infested counties, reminding them of Napa County’s nursery shipping requirements, Erwin said. Nursery shipments must specifically be treated with fenprothrin (Tame) or carbaryl (Sevin), two chemicals that have been shown to kill emerging GWSS nymphs.

Documentation for the April 11 shipment showed that the plants had been treated with the insecticide Sevin in accor-

dance with Napa’s restrictions on host plants entering the county.

“These finds remind us that our program is 1) important and 2) working,” Erwin said. “The plants were inspected in Southern California before being shipped. The redundancy that multiple inspections allows is what’s catching GWSS.”

Through May’s GWSS Awareness activities, officials will “remind people that the GWSS threat is still very real in Napa County,” Erwin said.

—Catherine Merlo

California final grape crush report shows 2005 increase

California’s 2005 grape crush totaled 4,328,840 tons, up 20 percent from 2004.

The information comes from USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service.

Red wine varieties accounted for the largest share of all grapes crushed, at 2,234,595 tons. That’s an increase of 36 percent from 2004. The 2005 white wine variety crush totaled 1,520,572 tons, up 34 percent from the previous year.

Tons crushed of raisin type varieties totaled 467,483, down 36 percent from 2004, while tons crushed of table-type varieties totaled 106,190, down 6 percent.

For the 2005 season, the total number of tons crushed for concentrate production reached 550,296, approximately 13 percent of the 2005 grape crush total.

Prices. California grape growers received prices in 2005 for raisin and table grapes that were, on average, below the 2004 prices, while the prices received for red and white were, on average, above the 2004 prices.

The 2005 average price of all varieties was \$532.78, up 10 percent from 2004. Average prices for the 2005 crop by type were:

- red wine grapes, \$633.48, up 1 percent from 2004;
- white wine grapes, \$506.37, up 4 percent from 2004;
- raisin grapes, \$164.25, down 18 percent;
- table grapes, \$121.36, down 39 percent.

Leading grape varieties and districts. In 2005, Chardonnay accounted for the largest percentage of crush volume with



Photo: Catherine Merlo

17.1 percent. Cabernet Sauvignon was second with 12.5 percent of the total crush. The next eight highest percentages of grapes crushed were all wine varieties, with the exception of Thompson Seedless.

Grapes produced in Napa County received the highest average price of \$2,990.23 per ton, up 2 percent from 2004. Sonoma and Marin counties received the second highest return of \$1,871.23, virtually unchanged from 2004.

The 2005 Chardonnay price of \$713.98 rose 3 percent from 2004, while the 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon price of \$938.12 dropped 4 percent from 2004.

The 2005 average price for Merlot was \$729.53, down 9 percent from 2004, while the Zinfandel average price of \$472.08 was down less than 1 percent from 2004.

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Jeff Erwin,
Napa County
deputy agricultural
commissioner