

## COLD HARDY WINE GRAPES



# La Crescent

The La Crescent grape variety is known to produce award winning wines with the most Governor's Cup wins of any variety entered into the International Cold Climate Wine Competition. The grape carries the name of a town along the Mississippi River in Minnesota. This white grape provides a very cold hardy and moderately disease resistant variety for growers. The wine produced from La Crescent has flavors of apricot, citrus, and tropical fruit similar to that of muscat varieties from where it descends.

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## FRUIT CHARACTERISTICS

This grape can be characterized by its fruitiness thanks to high levels of aromatic, phenolic compounds like terpenes. The berries are yellow-amber, and resist splitting even in wet years. Some berries do fall (shell) prior to harvest which should be considered by growers choosing to plant this grapevine. The fruit of La Crescent is often used to produce off-dry or sweet white wines.

## HARDINESS

This variety is very hardy and can survive -20 to -35 °F with some bud death. La Crescent is less hardy than Frontenac, which may be linked to its high vigor as well as susceptibility to downy mildew. Management of this disease, even late in the season, can help this vine survive winter.

## VIGOR

La Crescent is a high vigor variety.

## BUD BREAK AND HARVEST TIMING

In Minnesota bud break for all varieties are relatively early and condensed. La Crescent has an early bud break too, just slightly after Marquette. The ideal harvest time for this variety is in late September. Clusters weigh approximately 0.32 pounds each. La Crescent is known to shatter, or drop berries when they are ripe. Preparing for this when mechanical or hand harvesting is important to maximize yields. Backyard grape growers may want to place bins under vines to capture fruit that fall off during picking.

## HARVEST PARAMETERS

An acceptable sugar content for harvest for La Crescent is between 22-25 °Brix and typically occurs in late September in Minnesota. The target pH is between 2.9-3.2. Titratable acidity at harvest should be between 11-15 g/L. Although higher in acidity, wines can be balanced by residual sugars and the production of off-dry and sweet wines.

## TRAINING SYSTEMS

Single High Wire or Vertical Shoot Positioning (VSP) can both be used as training systems for La Crescent. Bull canes (thick shoots that grow as suckers or elsewhere from the vine) should not be retained for fruit production as they are prone to winter injury and are less fruitful. However, vigor management with bull canes as a “kicker shoot” can direct excess vigor in such a way to not impact the fruit zone or productivity.

## PRUNING AND CANOPY MANAGEMENT

Fruit zone leaf removal and shoot thinning can both be used to promote a balance between vegetative and reproductive growth, and expose fruit to sun to enhance ripening. La Crescent berries with good sun exposure will have better color than those facing away from the sun or in the shade, even within the same cluster.

## PEST SUSCEPTIBILITY

La Crescent has shown resistance to downy mildew on its fruit but is highly susceptible on the leaves, especially late in the growing season and after harvest. This variety has moderate susceptibility to black rot and powdery mildew; low susceptibility to Botrytis bunch rot, crown gall, Eutypa dieback and Phomopsis cane and leaf spot. It also has susceptibility to foliar phylloxera.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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