



Virginia
Commercial
Grape Report
2004





Growing Season

The 2004 grape production season began with a mild winter, with some growers experiencing bud and cane/trunk injury that may have resulted from the previous winter. Spring brought above average temperatures and timely showers which assisted growth. As the season progressed hurricanes Bonnie and Charley left Virginia wet and cold. Temperatures quickly recovered back to normal, but heavy rains persisted throughout the growing year. Growers contended with downy mildew pressure and other disease due to the timing and frequency of rain along with the limited amount of sunlight during the growing season. Remnants of hurricanes Gaston, Frances, Ivan, and Jeanne hurt fruit quality for growers who were unable to harvest early. Some varieties fared better than others, but producers who sprayed fungicide on a regular basis, pruned back their vines, and harvested early maturing varieties before the hurricanes swept through the state were able to combat some of the issues faced during the 2004 growing season. Overall, yields were similar to last year. The 2004 season, like 2003, was another challenging one, but Virginia's grape growers still managed to produce a quality crop.

GRAPE PRODUCTION AND PRICE BY VARIETY, 2004

Variety 1/	Tons Produced	Utilized Tons	Price Per Ton
Chardonnay	885	816	\$1,348.00
Cabernet Franc	481	450	\$1,384.00
Merlot	435	428	\$1,479.00
Vidal blanc	331	327	\$818.00
Cabernet Sauvignon	262	203	\$1,345.00
Viognier	197	163	\$1,745.00
Chambourcin	143	143	\$853.00
White Riesling	80	80	\$1,230.00
Sauvignon Blanc	29	29	\$1,727.00
Virginia 2/	3,700	3,400	\$1,300.00

1/ All other grape varieties were not published to avoid disclosure of individual operations. 2/ State price and production based on all reported varieties. Price based on all reported sales.

Grape Production Increases in 2004

Grape production in Virginia increased in 2004 with the production of the Vinifera varieties accounting for the majority of the overall production. Producers harvested a crop valued at \$4.8 million, receiving an average price of \$1,300 per ton.

Survey Highlights

Virginia ranked 10th nationally in commercial grape production and 9th for bearing acreage.

Virginia's grape producers harvested 3,700 tons of commercial grapes in 2004, up nearly 3% from the 3,600 tons produced in 2003.

Virginia acreage (bearing and non-bearing) has increased from 1,418 acres in 1995 to 2,360 acres in 2004, a 66% increase over that time span.

The Chardonnay variety made up 31 percent of Virginia's total Vinifera production harvested in 2004. Also, Virginia's most popular variety accounted for 29 percent of all the Vinifera variety bearing acreage and 20 percent of the total vineyard acreage statewide.

Chardonnay, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, and Vidal Blanc represented the top four varieties produced in the Commonwealth in 2004. Chardonnay producers harvested 134 tons less in 2004, but still remained first in production. Cabernet Franc producers harvested 15 tons more in 2004, and Merlot producers harvested 118 tons more in 2004. Also, Vidal Blanc producers harvested 72 more tons in 2004 compared to 2003.

GRAPE PRODUCTION AND ACREAGE BY VARIETY, 2003-2004 ^{1/}

	Tons Produced		Bearing Acres		Non-Bearing Acres	
	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004
VINIFERA						
Chardonnay	1,019	885	480	426	30	47
Cabernet Sauvignon	329	262	226	209	37	41
Cabernet Franc	466	481	200	200	82	79
Gewurstraminer	18	10	16	10	7	4
Merlot	317	435	163	188	65	58
Pinot Noir	48	57	30	27	9	8
Sauvignon Blanc	48	29	20	15	7	3
White Riesling	112	80	80	51	6	9
Viognier	206	197	92	116	57	31
Other White Vinifera	137	133	72	72	22	26
Other Red Vinifera	263	297	130	143	41	52
HYBRID						
Seyval	71	70	42	39	4	3
Vidal Blanc	259	331	137	142	16	15
Chambourcin	89	143	45	64	27	18
Other White Hybrid	46	59	44	54	22	33
Other Red Hybrid	10	12	8	12	1	1
AMERICAN						
Norton	82	89	37	65	43	20
Seedless Table (all)	26	3	14	5	1	1
Other Red/Black						
American	25	34	42	33	3	*
Other White American	29	93	18	28	*	11
STATE TOTAL	3,600	3,700	1,900	1,900	480	460

^{1/} 2003 data revised. *Some variety totals are not published to avoid disclosure of individual operations or may have no data.

**GRAPE PRODUCTION AND BEARING
ACREAGE, ALL TYPES ^{1/}**

Rank ^{2/}	State	Tons Produced		Bearing Acres	
		2003	2004	2003	2004
1	CA	5,770,000	5,360,000	819,000	800,000
2	WA	344,000	267,000	52,000	53,000
3	NY	198,000	145,000	31,000	31,000
4	PA	85,000	80,000	12,000	12,000
5	MI	94,500	62,500	13,200	13,900
6	OR	24,000	23,400	10,700	11,300
7	TX	6,000	8,800	2,900	2,900
8	OH	8,100	4,800	2,100	2,100
9	AZ	8,000	4,000	2,100	1,000
10	VA	3,600	3,700	1,900	1,900
11	NC	2,800	3,500	950	1,100
12	GA	3,100	3,300	1,100	1,100
13	MO	3,030	3,300	960	1,000
14	AR	2,400	3,000	1,100	900

^{1/} Estimates for 2004 are preliminary. ^{2/} Ranked by 2004 production.

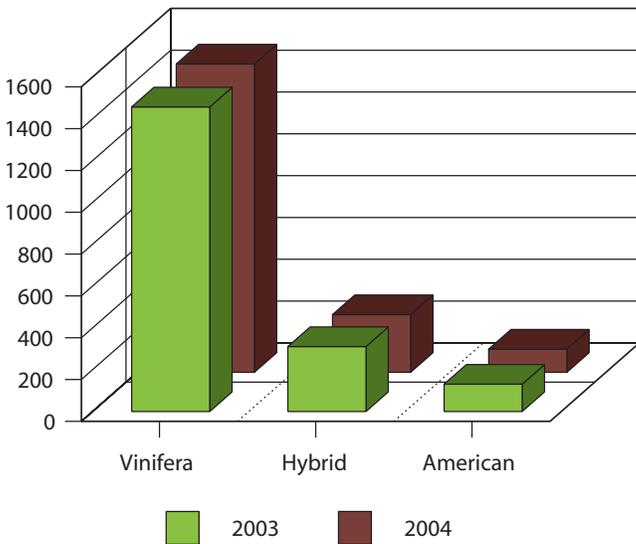
**GRAPE PRODUCTION AND ACREAGE BY
DISTRICT AND COUNTY, 2003-2004 ^{1/ 2/}**

County	Tons Produced		Bearing Acres		Non Bearing Acres	
	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004
NORTHERN						
Culpeper	59	45	36	26	14	6
Fauquier	146	148	138	173	26	24
Loudoun	426	283	253	203	55	65
Madison	122	53	49	34	8	4
Rappahannock	86	74	50	60	9	4
Rockingham	49	31	20	20	5	*
Shenandoah	124	87	67	58	14	21
Warren	30	26	21	12	4	10
Other Counties	28	13	46	23	21	13
District Total	1,070	760	680	609	156	147
WESTERN						
Botetourt	95	101	42	37	5	4
Roanoke	20	62	29	30	*	*
Other Counties	95	127	54	53	10	15
District Total	210	290	125	120	15	19
CENTRAL						
Albemarle	680	827	330	361	105	115
Amherst	44	56	29	30	11	12
Bedford	25	26	15	19	17	13
Greene	41	47	30	29	5	3
Louisa	16	18	20	20	2	*
Nelson	209	219	74	96	50	26
Orange	559	516	172	154	13	7
Other Counties	96	91	90	85	27	25
District Total	1,670	1,800	760	794	230	201
EASTERN						
Essex	40	45	28	39	4	4
King George	50	44	31	32	*	*
Westmoreland	99	110	62	60	7	14
Other Counties	191	221	82	93	23	38
District Total	380	420	203	224	34	56
SOUTHERN						
Patrick	127	214	46	54	9	6
Other Counties	53	76	24	26	11	11
District Total	180	290	70	80	20	17
Other District Total						
	90	140	62	73	25	20
State Total	3,600	3,700	1,900	1,900	480	460

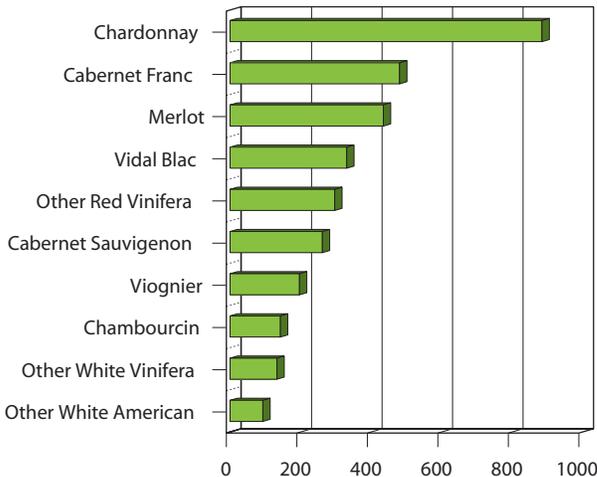
^{1/} Some county totals are not published to avoid disclosure of individual operations. Production and acreage are included in district and state totals. ^{2/} 2003 data revised.

* Some variety totals are not published to avoid disclosure of individual operations or may have no data.

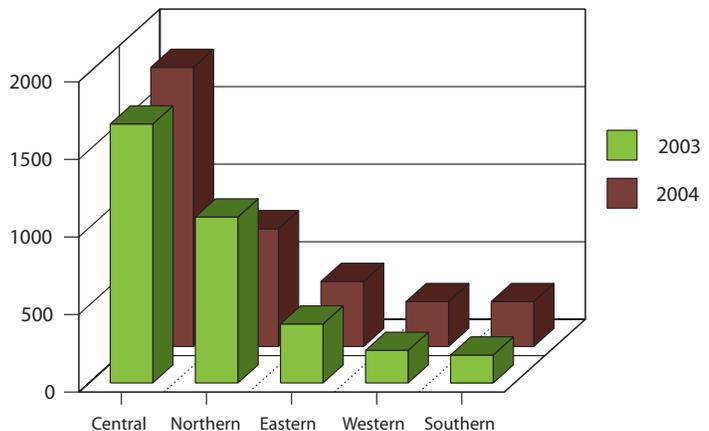
BEARING ACRES BY VARIETY



TOP TEN GRAPE VARIETIES



PRODUCTION BY DISTRICT



Vinifera: Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Gewurztraminer, Merlot, Pinot Noir, Sauvignon Blanc, White Reisling, Viognier, Other White, Other Red. **Hybrid:** Seyval, Vidal Blanc, Chambourcin, Other White Hybrid, Other Red Hybrid. **American:** Norton, Seedless Table (all), Other Red/Black American, Other White American

WHITE WINES

Chardonnay (Shard-don-a) - The most popular variety in Virginia, Chardonnay usually comes as a medium to full-bodied dry wine. It may be fruity with a hint of apples or citrus. It's versatility makes it appropriate with a wide variety of dishes ranging from seafood to lighter red meats.

Pinot Grigio (Pee-no-Gree-gee-oh) - Has a smoky bouquet with hints of spice. The taste is of ripe fruit, with hints of grapefruit or lemon, and a suggestion of sweetness in the aftertaste.

Riesling (Reez-ling) - Has a spicy and fruity bouquet, usually off-dry or semi-sweet. Light to medium bodied. Sometimes produces flavors resulting in sweet wines that smell like honey and apricot nectar.

Gewurztraminer (Geh-vertz-tram-me-ner) Spicy and floral aromas. Light to medium bodied. Off-dry to semi-sweet.

Sauvignon Blanc (So-vin-yawn-Blonc) Herbaceous, sometimes vegetal scent such as fresh herbs, cut grass or bell peppers. Range of styles from tart to ripe pineapple richness. Acidity makes them enjoyable with shellfish and seafood.

Seyval Blanc (Say-voll-Blonc) - Aromas compare to green apples. Light to medium bodied. Crisp and very dry.

Vidal Blanc (Vee-doll-Blonc) - Fruity aromas and flavors. Light to medium body and off-dry to semi-sweet.

Voignier (Vee-on-yea) - Spicy, with fruity and floral aromas.

RED WINES

Cabernet Sauvignon (Cab-er-nay So-vin-yawn) - Complex in flavors than can emerge as currants, green olives, herbs, bell peppers, or combinations of these with mint and leather. Medium to full-bodied, tannic and dry. When young, good with robust meat dishes; older Cabernets go well with roasts, steaks, and cheeses.

Merlot (Merlow) - Cherry-like aromas with hints of Cabernet's herbaceousness. Softer flavor than Cabernet Sauvignon. Medium to full bodied, dry less tannic than Cabernet. Drinkable earlier than Cabernet, yet ages well.

Cabernet Franc (Cab-er-nay Fronc) - Full bodied, dry wine with cherry flavors and violet aromas.

Pinot Noir (Pe-no-Nwahr) - Cherry aroma with rich flavors. Less tannic with less pigment than Cabernet and Merlot, so somewhat lighter. Drinkable at two to five years of age, and will improve after that.

Chambourcin (Sham-boor-san) - Rich grape aroma and flavor. Full bodied, dry.

Rose and Blush Wines - Usually blends of white wine with a small percentage of red wine, blended together to give them the blush of color. Usually light and fruity.

Cabernet Blanc (Cab-er-nay Blonc) Made from the Cabernet Sauvignon grape, these wines get their salmon color from the process of removing the grape skin early in the wine making process. Light bodied and dry.

Sparkling Wines - Made in the Methode Champenoise: A table wine is refermented in a heavy glass bottle to produce a wine that has a bubbly effervescence. Light bodied, can be dry to semi-sweet.

Brut (Broot) - A sparkling blend of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. Usually dry.

SPECIALTY WINES

Special thanks to all producers who took time to participate in this survey!



Virginia Commercial Grape Report

About the Survey: The information presented in this report was gathered through a census of all known commercial grape producers in Virginia. To be considered a commercial producer, an operator must grow one acre or more of grapes. Data were collected during the months of November 2004 through January 2005 by mail and telephone interview. Information obtained during the course of this survey is completely confidential by law; for this reason, some county, regional, and variety breakdowns could not be published to avoid disclosure of individual vineyards.