



CONTROLLING POWDERY MILDEW

Lamorinda Winegrowers Association

By Gerard van Steyn 5-4-2020

• First Thing.. It's a Drought Year: Turn Your Water On Now?!

- This was a drought year in the AVA
- Vines and grapes will suffer if they are water stressed
- ... particularly early on through bloom and fruit set
- Most irrigation should be turned on now or earlier already
- Look for signs of under or over watering
- Review the irrigation presentation on the Lamorinda Winegrowers Website:
<https://lamorindawinegrowers.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Vineyard-irrigation-ppt-meeting-6-2-2019-1.pdf>

First Thing.. Visual Signs of Water Needs

- Look at tendrils near the growing tip
 - are they dry or green and dancing upwards
 - Are angled they sideways or horizontal
 - Are they dried out, or not present (too little water)
- Look at overall rate of grow and distance between leaves
- Look at the growth of laterals
- Look at lower leaves: are they dry or turning yellow prematurely?
- Review the Irrigation Presentation for pictures and much more information

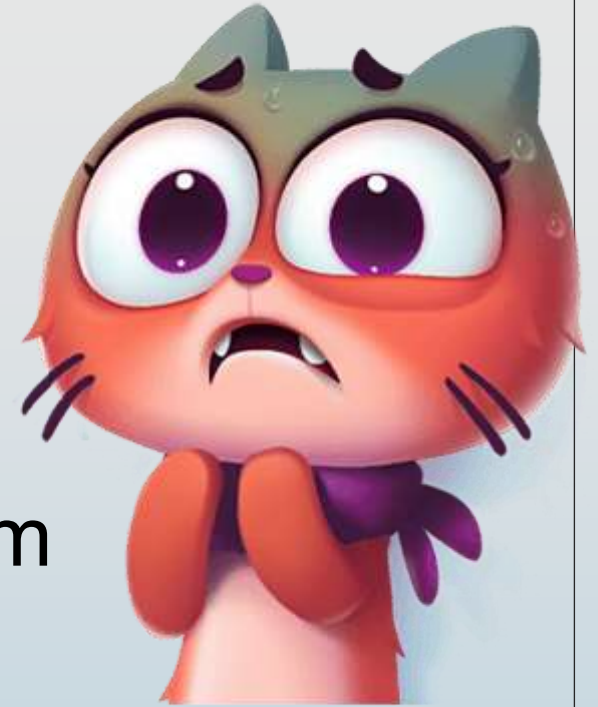
What's the Fuss about Powdery Mildew?



- It's the number one, two and three most damaging disease for grapes and grapevines
- PM on leaves eats away the green growing tissue and creates yellow or white scars
- PM on canes and stems causes tissue damage
- And if PM infects grapes it can destroy your crop, or lead to suboptimal ripeness and flavors

Powdery Mildew in da AVA!

- In the Lamorinda AVA, powdery mildew is everywhere,
- ..is constantly trying to infect and overwhelm your grapes and vines
- ... and multiplies like crazy when the temperatures are moderate and slightly damp
 - Oh, and it will destroy your vegetables and other plants as well..



Okay Then, How Do We Find It?



Powdery Mildew Damage on New Shoots

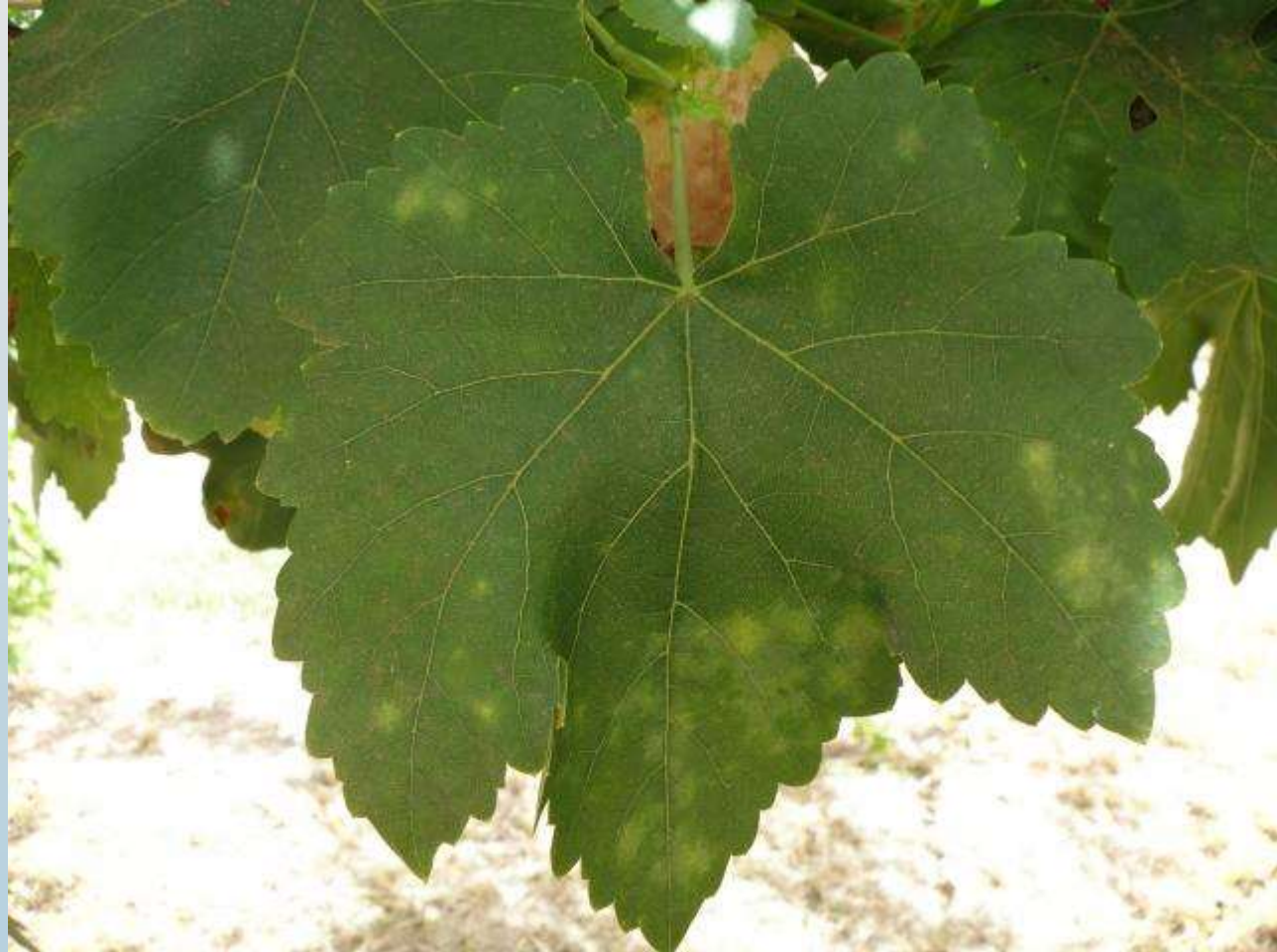


PM Curling Edges of Leaf



Look for Yellow Spots

Move the leaf into direct sunlight to better see the powdery mildew!



Brown/Black Damage to Stems



White Powder on Clusters Before Bloom



PM on Grapes Before Verasion



PM on Grapes at Verasion



Okay, It's Bad.. So What Do You Do??



- Walk your vineyard, at least once per week:
 - Look for powdery mildew, on leaves, canes, clusters and fruit
 - Let your vineyard manager know asap if you think you see it.. Spray asap
 - Look at growth and vigor too, and signs of under or over watering
 - Post your questions to the Lamorinda Winegrowers website viticulture forum

Spraying for Powdery Mildew

- Lamorinda vineyards should be sprayed for powdery mildew at least every 14 days, from mid-May through beginning of August
- If you are using organic products, like stylet oil or sulfur, you may need to spray every 7 to 10 days
 - Keep track of your vineyard spray schedule!
 - PM grows rapidly when temperatures are in the 70s and 80s..
 - Look for PM more often during nice weather!

- What to do: direct spray upwards with angled nozzle
- What not to do: wear shorts, short sleeve and no mouth or eye protection!



The Most Important Time To Be On It!

- The most critical time for powdery mildew prevention is between flowering and fruit set: generally May - June. This is when you or your vineyard manager should be using their very best mildew control products and timing!!!
- **Spray every 14 days or less!!!**

Flowering

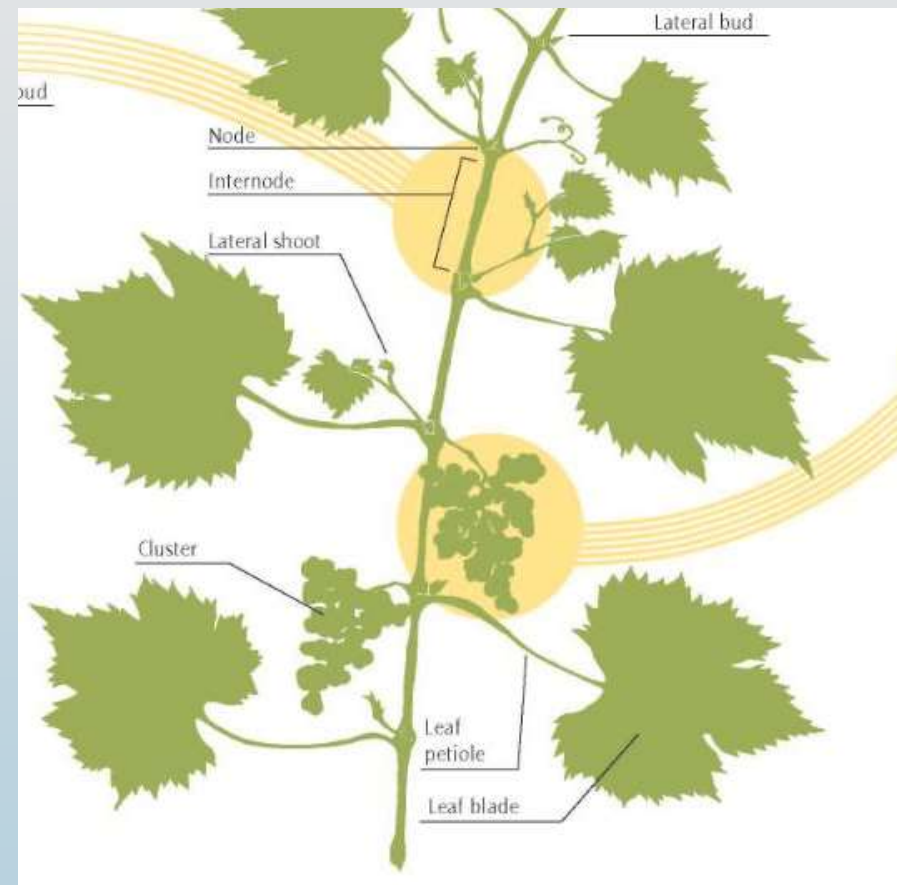


Fruit Set



Canopy Management for PM

- After spraying, the next most important thing to do is to remove laterals and leaves, to open up the grapevine canopy to airflow, which reduces powdery mildew
- **Laterals should be removed to well above the fruit zone, unless your vines don't push out excessive laterals**
- Leaves should be pulled to above the fruit, after fruit set, on the morning sun/shade side. Interior leaves should also be removed, and perhaps some on afternoon sun side as well, so that only one leaf is shading the fruit clusters



Now the Good News

- After verasion, grapes finally become resistant to powdery mildew!
- Now you can sit back, taste wine, and wait for harvest!



Wineorexia: A condition in which no matter how full a wine glass is the person believes it's not full enough.



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Need Help or Have Questions?

- Email Gerard van Steyn: gerardvs1@gmail.com
- or
- Daniel Howsepian: 5powderhounds@gmail.com

or

- Post your PM questions or post pictures that may show powdery mildew or post any other viticulture questions or issues to the Lamorinda Winegrowers Association viticulture forum:

<https://lamorindawinegrowers.com/forums/forum/viticulture-forum/>