

*Virginia* 2006  
*Commercial Grape Report*





# VIRGINIA COMMERCIAL

## 2006 Growing Season

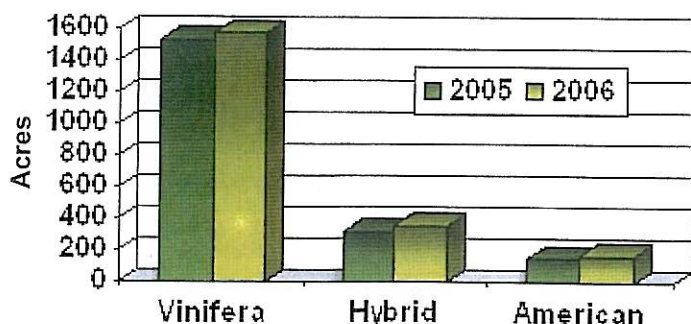
The 2006 growing season started with a mild winter with little or no indication of any winter injury for the majority of vineyards. Several areas received rain in May, but remained relatively dry up through July. Some producers south of the James River and in Southeast Virginia experienced problems with poor fruit set in June due to stress brought on by the hot and dry weather during bloom. There were also complaints of wildlife and bees damaging crops more than usual in 2006. In late August, Tropical Storm Ernesto was a problem for some producers that were expecting a quick, dry harvest. The precipitation from Ernesto, along with the frequency of rains in September and October, made it difficult for some producers growing late maturing reds, but overall reports of fruit quality were very high across the state. Despite the problems growers encountered, the 2006 growing season surpassed 2005 with the largest crop produced in Virginia grown on the largest amount of bearing acreage.

### Grape Production and Price By Variety, 2006 <sup>1/</sup>

Variety 1/	Tons Produced	Utilized Tons	Price Per Ton
Chardonnay	1,089	1,012	\$1,478.00
Cabernet Franc	795	657	\$1,552.00
Cabernet Sauvignon	478	358	\$1,924.00
Chambourcin	214	193	\$910.00
Merlot	682	584	\$1,744.00
Seyval	128	119	\$1,052.00
Vidal Blanc	467	464	\$963.00
Viognier	370	353	\$1,873.00
<b>Virginia 2/</b>	<b>6,200</b>	<b>6,000</b>	<b>\$1,440.00</b>

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.

### Bearing Acres By Variety



### Grape Production and Acreage by Variety, 2005-2006 <sup>1/</sup>

	Tons Produced		Bearing Acres		Non-Bearing Acres	
	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006
<b>VINIFERA</b>						
Chardonnay	1,145	1,089	420	411	72	87
Cabernet Sauvignon	448	478	212	197	40	61
Cabernet Franc	751	795	242	259	69	59
Gewurztraminer	19	23	11	10	*	*
Merlot	731	682	203	208	57	64
Pinot Noir	61	79	26	27	3	9
Sauvignon Blanc	52	87	18	24	5	4
White Riesling	103	106	48	46	7	7
Viognier	276	370	124	131	30	28
Other White Vinifera	249	331	79	88	36	48
Other Red Vinifera	461	634	148	174	75	64
<b>HYBRID</b>						
Seyval	152	128	47	47	8	7
Vidal Blanc	431	467	124	130	25	18
Chambourcin	192	214	71	77	35	32
Other White Hybrid	111	206	58	75	44	46
Other Red Hybrid	34	54	19	30	10	5
<b>AMERICAN</b>						
Norton	173	220	78	88	33	31
Seedless Table (all)	9	7	4	5	1	1
Other Red/Black Am.	111	124	36	34	2	3
Other White Am.	91	106	32	39	8	6
<b>STATE TOTAL</b>	<b>5,600</b>	<b>6,200</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>2,100</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>580</b>

<sup>1/</sup> 2005 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, 2006

Rank <sup>1/</sup>	State	Tons Produced	Rank <sup>2/</sup>	State	Bearing Acres
1	CA	5,766,000	1	CA	797,000
2	WA	316,000	2	WA	55,500
3	NY	155,000	3	NY	31,000
4	PA	82,000	4	MI	14,200
5	OR	34,400	5	OR	12,600
6	MI	32,500	6	PA	12,100
7	TX	7,100	7	TX	2,900
8	VA	6,200	8	OH	2,200
9	NC	4,580	9	VA	2,100
10	MO	4,170	10	MO	1,300
11	OH	3,100	10	NC	1,300
12	GA	2,900	12	GA	1,100
13	AR	2,300	13	AR	700
14	AZ	900	14	AZ	400

<sup>1/</sup> Ranked by 2006 production. <sup>2/</sup> Ranked by bearing acreage.



# GRAPE REPORT 2006

## Grape Production Increases in 2006

Grape production in Virginia increased in 2006 with the production of Vinifera varieties accounting for the majority of the overall production. Producers harvested a crop valued at \$8.6 million, receiving an average price of \$1,440 per ton.

## Survey Highlights

Virginia ranked 8<sup>th</sup> nationally in commercial grape production and 9<sup>th</sup> for bearing acreage.

Virginia's grape producers harvested 6,200 tons of commercial grapes in 2006, up 11% from the 5,600 tons produced in 2005.

Virginia bearing acreage increased from 2,000 acres in 2005 to 2,100 acres in 2006, a 5% increase over that time span.

The Chardonnay variety made up 23 percent of Virginia's total Vinifera production harvested in 2006. Also, Virginia's most popular variety accounted for 26 percent of all the Vinifera variety bearing acreage and 20 percent of the total vineyard acreage statewide.

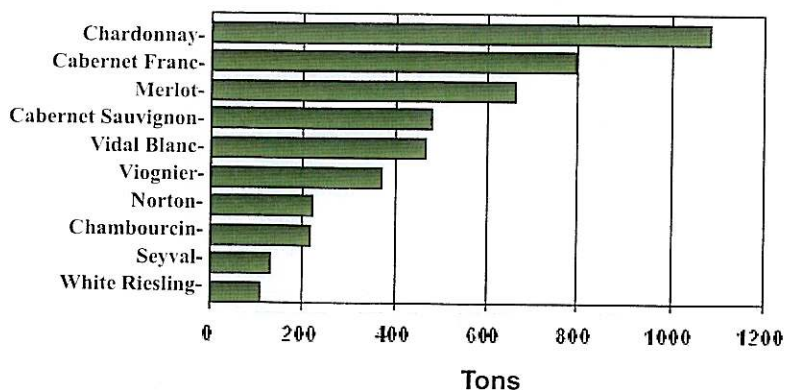
Chardonnay, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, and Cabernet Sauvignon represented the top four varieties produced in the Commonwealth in 2006. Chardonnay producers harvested 56 tons less in 2006 compared to 2005. Cabernet Franc producers harvested 44 tons more in 2006, and Merlot producers harvested 49 tons less in 2006. Also, Cabernet Sauvignon producers harvested 30 more tons in 2006 compared to 2005.

GRAPE PRODUCTION AND ACREAGE BY  
DISTRICT AND COUNTY, 2005-2006 <sup>1/2/</sup>

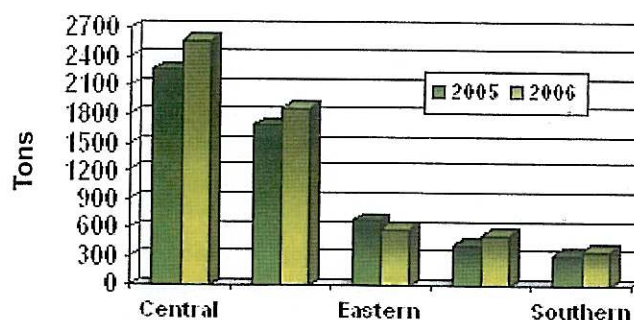
County	Tons Produced		Bearing Acres		Non-Bearing Acres	
	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006
<b>NORTHERN</b>						
Culpeper	53	69	15	25	13	10
Fauquier	418	405	176	197	37	28
Loudoun	718	836	259	290	89	58
Madison	107	128	33	37	24	30
Rappahannock	129	128	58	50	21	20
Rockingham	21	41	11	18	*	*
Shenandoah	155	162	68	72	18	17
Warren	36	49	12	16	3	4
Other counties	50	53	28	22	18	5
<b>District total</b>	<b>1,687</b>	<b>1,871</b>	<b>660</b>	<b>727</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>172</b>
<b>WESTERN</b>						
Botetourt	109	141	35	48	4	4
Roanoke	60	85	30	28	*	*
Other counties	248	302	53	65	8	16
<b>District total</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>CENTRAL</b>						
Albemarle	904	1,116	355	364	135	189
Amherst	64	91	31	38	11	9
Bedford	36	41	26	23	8	*
Greene	83	77	35	41	5	2
Louisa	40	56	18	27	1	8
Nelson	372	400	106	110	36	40
Orange	600	642	138	134	5	17
Other Counties	167	143	80	64	24	23
<b>District Total</b>	<b>2,266</b>	<b>2,566</b>	<b>789</b>	<b>801</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>288</b>
<b>EASTERN</b>						
Essex	97	93	27	25	5	1
King George	75	79	30	25	*	*
Westmoreland	239	191	68	70	14	15
Other Counties	270	230	85	83	31	47
<b>District Total</b>	<b>681</b>	<b>593</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>SOUTHERN</b>						
Patrick	226	222	54	57	7	1
Other Counties	90	143	50	48	19	28
<b>District Total</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Other District Total</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>State total</b>	<b>5,600</b>	<b>6,200</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>2,100</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>580</b>

<sup>1/</sup> Some county totals are not published to avoid disclosure of individual operations. Production and acreage are included in district and state totals. <sup>2/</sup> 2005 data revised. \* Some variety totals are not shown to avoid disclosure of individual operations or may have no data.

## Production of Top Ten Grape Varieties



## Production By District



**Vinifera:** Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Gewurztraminer, Merlot, Pinot Noir, Sauvignon Blanc, White Riesling, 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-Blanc) - 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-Blanc) - Aromas compare to green apples. Light to medium bodied. Crisp and very dry.

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

**Viognier** (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 Franc) - 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.

**Norton** - The deeply pigmented, aromatic characteristics of the fully ripe fruit used to create this historically interesting full red wine are said to include coffee and spice-like flavor with little or no "foxy" aroma providing problems with both high pH and high titratable acidity are appropriately addressed.

## SPECIALTY WINES

**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 Blanc) - 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.



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

**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 2006 through January 2007 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.