



Viticulture, enology and marketing  
for cold-hardy grapes



## News You Can Use

### *Itasca – New White Grape from the University of Minnesota*

*April 2016*



*Itasca grape.*

*Photo: David Hansen*

The University of Minnesota recently released its fifth cold-hardy wine grape, named ‘Itasca.’ Itasca arose from a 2002 cross made by Peter Hemstad between Frontenac gris and MN 1243, and was identified in 2009 as an elite seedling.

Matthew Clark, assistant professor and grape breeder at the University of Minnesota, said “Itasca offers many benefits to wine grape growers over some of the currently available varieties. This is because it has much lower total acidity, disease resistance, phylloxera resistance, and can withstand cold temperatures. It appears to be even more cold-hardy than Frontenac. Itasca berries and wine are flavorful with notes of melon, pear, quince, and minerality.”

Data provided by Clark show that at harvest, titratable acidity in Itasca averages close to 10 g/L, while La Crescent is 14.5 g/L and Frontenac gris is 15.5 g/L. After the Polar Vortex winter of 2014, Itasca had over 60% primary bud survival, while other white cultivars had less (Frontenac gris, 20%; Frontenac blanc, 35%; La Crescent, 30%).

Licensed nurseries will begin selling Itasca in 2017.

Below are links to other articles and videos about Itasca.

University of Minnesota press release: <http://discover.umn.edu/news/food-agriculture/university-minnesota-releases-its-latest-cold-hardy-wine-grape>

CBS Minnesota: <http://minnesota.cbslocal.com/2016/04/04/u-of-m-white-wine-grape/>

Wines and Vines article: <http://www.winesandvines.com/template.cfm?section=news&content=167366>

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