

'Delaware'



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Pedigree: Differences of opinion. Some consider it a hybrid between *V. vinifera*, *V. labrusca*, *V. cinerea* and *V. aestivalis* (7). Others believe it is of *V. labrusca* x *V. bourquiniana* origin with a slight mix of *V. vinifera* (7).

Origin: Frenchtown, New Jersey. Taken from the garden of Paul Provost (7).

Cross/Select/Test: It was propagated and disseminated from Delaware, OH beginning in 1849 (6); introduced in 1851 (2); and placed in the American Pomological Society Grape List Fruit Catalog in 1856 (7).

Type: *V. labrusca* hybrid (see pedigree).

Color: Red

Berry: Hedrick et al. (7) describe the 'Delaware' berry as small and round; light red and firm. They noted the skin is thin and moderately tough, adhering somewhat to the pulp. Also, there is no pigment and is slightly astringent. Pulpy and fragrant (6). Rain during harvest can cause the tender skins to crack (10).

Cluster: Small to medium size; cylindrical-conical, usually shouldered and compact (7). Average cluster weight is .16 lb (11).

Viticultural Characteristics: Domoto (4) described the vine as having low to medium vigor and a procumbent growth habit. He indicated that cluster thinning is not required. It does best on fertile, well drained soils (11). One hundred days from bloom to harvest (3).

Disease/Pests: 'Delaware' is rated as being highly susceptible to downy mildew and Phomopsis cane and leaf spot(1, 3, 4, 11) moderately susceptible to black rot, powdery mildew (1, 3, 4, 11) and Botrytis bunch rot (3, 4, 5, 11) ; and slightly susceptible to crown gall and Eutypa dieback (1, 3, 4, 11). Bordelon et al. (1) and Domoto (4) also consider it moderately susceptible to anthracnose. Double A Vineyards (5) considers it moderately susceptible to downy mildew and highly susceptible to powdery mildew. Bordelon et al. (1) rated it as slightly susceptible to Botrytis bunch rot. It is not sensitive to sulfur but copper applied under cool, slow-drying conditions may cause injury (1, 3, 4). Galet (6) noted that is very prone to phylloxera. Hedrick et al. (7) say it is attractive to birds. Domoto (4) warned it is very sensitive to 2, 4-D drift.

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Wine Quality and Characteristics: May be used to make dry, sweet and sparkling wines. Also used for ice wines and for blending. According to Bradt et al. (2), wine made from 'Delaware' is pale green yellow and useful in the production of sparkling wines. As a skin fermentation it has an orange color and makes an interesting rosé. Less foxy than many other *labrusca* varieties. Based on 2006 harvest data from the University of Minnesota research vineyards, soluble solids for Delaware tend to be moderate while pH and titratable acidity run somewhat low (8).

Season: Midseason (September 20th in Minnesota) (8)

Cold Hardiness: Hardy (-15 to -20° F) (3)

Use: Table, juice, wine (including dry, sweet, sparkling and ice wine) (4)

Notes: Once prized for champagne production in New York, it is now being replaced by several of the interspecific hybrid and *V. vinifera* varieties. However, 'Delaware' remains one of the highest quality American varieties for white wine (10). It has been compared to some *V. vinifera* grapes in its more delicate aroma (9).

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