

'Prairie Star'



Iowa State University

Synonyms: E.S. 3-24-7 (1, 3, 5).

Pedigree: E.S. 2-7-13 x E.S. 2-8-1 (1, 3, 5).

Origin: Osceola, Wisconsin. Developed by Elmer Swenson (1, 3, 5).

Cross/Selection/Test: Cross made in 1980; selected in 1984, tested as E.S. 3-24-7 (1). Named by Tom Plocher and Bob Parke in 2000 (6).

Introduction: 2000 (1).

Type: Interspecific hybrid (including *V. vinifera*, *V. rupestris*, *V. labrusca*, *V. aestivalis*) (1).

Color: White

Berry: Medium sized and round; yellow, and thick skinned (1). Average weight is 2.5 g/berry (5).

Cluster: According to Plocher and Parke (5), the clusters are long, slightly loose and have a very characteristic "C" curve. They reported the average cluster weight is 177 g (or 0.39 lb) on heavy soils and on lighter or less fertile soils, weight will be less (5).

Viticultural Characteristics: Domoto (2) described 'Prairie Star' as vigorous and having a semi-upright growth habit. He added that bud break is mid-season and that secondary buds are moderately productive. Cluster thinning is not necessary. Plocher and Parke (5) stated that early in the season, young shoots may have a tendency to break off in strong winds and high cordon training systems should be avoided. They also reported that poor fruit set has been seen in some seasons and this may be due to that fact that 'Prairie Star' tends to have rampant shoot growth during flowering and fruit set. They suggest one method to counter this is to pinch off the ends of the apical shoots just prior to flowering.

Disease/Pests: Domoto (2) reported that 'Prairie Star' is moderately susceptible to black rot and anthracnose; and slightly susceptible to downy mildew and powdery mildew. It is not known if it is prone to Botrytis bunch rot and crown gall (2). Also, Domoto reported it to be moderately susceptible to injuries from 2,4-D and dicamba, and it is not known if it is sensitive to injuries from sulfur. Some growers have reported using copper without problems (6).

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Wine Quality and Characteristics: Plocher and Parke (5) described the wine as being neutral, non-foxy and having a fullness in the mouth and finish uncommon among hybrid grape varieties. They further stated that in some years it can have a delicate floral nose and capable of standing alone as a varietal wine, but in most years it is an ideal blending component to add body and finish to thin white wines. They noted that the fruit matures to excellent sugar and acidity for winemaking. Sugar content typically runs 21° to 22° Brix.

Season: Early [mid-September in St. Paul, MN (5); mid- to late-August in Iowa (3)].

Cold Hardiness: Very hardy (-20° F to -35° F). (1, 2, 4) The original seedling had more than 50% bud survival after a mid-winter low of -40° F (1)

Use: Wine, fresh eating

Notes: Plocher (6) shared that 'Prairie Star' was named at the same time as 'Louise Swenson' because the two go well together as blending partners. He added that 'Louise Swenson' has the delicate aromatics and 'Prairie Star' has the body and finish that 'Louise Swenson' lacks. Together they are better than either one alone.

Literature Cited

1. Clark, John R. 2002. Prairie Star. *In* Register of new fruit and nut varieties, list 41. W.R. Okie, editor. HortScience 37 (2):256.
2. Domoto, P. 2008. Grape cultivars for consideration in Iowa. *On:* <http://viticulture.hort.iastate.edu/info/pdf/cultivars08.pdf>.
3. Domoto, P., G. Nonnecke, D. Portz, L. Smiley, B. Havlovic, N. Howell, K. Pecinovsky, K. VanDee, and J. Hannan. 2008. Wine Grape Cultivar Trial Performance in 2007. Ann. Prog. Rept. – 2007for Hort. Res. Sta., ISRF07-36:39-45; Armstrong R&D Farm, ISRF07-12; Muscatine Island R&D Farm, ISRF07-20; Northeast R&D Farm, ISRF07-13; and Southeast R&D Farm, ISRF07-34. *On:* <http://viticulture.hort.iastate.edu/research/pdf/winegrapecultivar07.pdf>.
4. National Grape Registry (NGR) website: <http://ngr.ucdavis.edu/>. Supported by University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources, Foundation Plant Services, and National Clonal Germplasm Repository of the USDA Agricultural Research Service.
5. Plocher, T., and Parke, B. 2001. Northern Winework. Northern Winework, Inc., Hugo, MN. p. 161.
6. Plocher, T., *co-author of* Northern Winework. *Personal communication* (2008).