

'Swenson White'



Iowa State University

Synonyms: E.S. 6-1-43 (5, 6).

Pedigree: ('Edelweiss' x E.S. 442 [MN #78 x S.11803]) (7).

Origin: Osceola, Wisconsin. Bred by Elmer Swenson (6, 7, 8).

Selected: 1988 (8).

Release: 1994 (3).

Type: Interspecific hybrid (including *V. labrusca* and *V. riparia*) (7, 8).

Color: White

Berry: Plocher and Parke (5) described the berries as yellowish in color and large (average berry weight is 4 g). They added that the skin is thick and the berries are able to hang on the vine well into the fall season, without insects being a problem. The fruit has a pronounced floral aroma, reminiscent of St. Pepin. Swenson noted that it has firmer flesh than its parent, 'Edelweiss' and does not develop the strong foxiness of 'Edelweiss' (7).

Cluster: Medium to large (4); somewhat loose (7). Average cluster weight taken at four Iowa State research sites in 2007 was .32 lb (2).

Viticultural Characteristics: Swenson (7) described the vine as vigorous and Domoto (1) noted that it has a procumbent growth habit. He reported that bud break occurs midseason; that there is low productivity on secondary buds and cluster thinning may be needed. He cautioned that it is very susceptible to damage from 2,4-D and dicamba and added that it's unknown if the vine is sensitive to injuries from sulfur or copper applications.

Disease/Pests: 'Swenson White' is rated as moderately susceptible to downy mildew (1, 3), powdery mildew (1, 3) and anthracnose (1); slightly susceptible to black rot and Botrytis bunch rot (1, 3); and it's uncertain if it's susceptible to crown gall, Eutypa dieback or Phomopsis cane and leaf spot. The Minnesota Grape Growers' Association (4) considers it slightly susceptible to anthracnose. It's uncertain if sensitive to injuries from sulfur (1, 3) or copper applications (1).

Wine Quality and Characteristics: Plocher and Parke (5) report that wines have a pronounced flowery nose and there may be a slight labrusca flavor if wine is made from very ripe fruit. They added that due to its ability to hang well on the vine and good aromatics, this selection may be a good candidate for late harvest or ice wine.

'Swenson White'

Season: Late. Struggles to make 22° Brix by October 1st in east central Minnesota (5). However, the 2007 harvest dates for the four Iowa State University research vineyards, ranged from mid-August at the southern sites to mid-September at the most northern site (2).

Cold Hardiness: Very hardy (below -20° F) (1).

Use: Table, wine.

Notes: Lon Rombough wrote, "I sent cuttings of a selection of grapes to a friend in Colorado for testing. He took a job at a nursery in Boulder and took some cuttings with him. A garden writer, visiting the nursery, tasted a grape from a vine and fell in love with it. She saw it tagged as 'Swenson White' and wrote it up in Horticulture magazine that way. She didn't know the tag was shorthand for "A white grape from Swenson". Once the name was in print in a national magazine that made it an "official release" (6).

Literature Cited

1. Domoto, P. 2008. Grape cultivars for consideration in Iowa. *On:* <http://viticulture.hort.iastate.edu/info/pdf/cultivars08.pdf> .
2. 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. – 2007 for 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>.
3. Double A Vineyards. 2007. Catalog; and Grapevine variety characteristics chart. *On:* www.rakgrape.com.
4. Minnesota Grape Growers Association. Varieties. *On:* http://www.mngrapes.org/?page_id=13.
5. Plocher, T., and B. Parke. 2001. Northern Winework. Northern Winework, Inc. Hugo, MN.
6. Rombough, L. 2002. The Grape Grower: A Guide to Organic Viticulture. Chelsea Green Publishing, White River Junction, VT. p. 192.
7. Swenson, E. 1990. Elmer Swenson's grape selections. *In* 1990 Annual Report of the Minnesota Grape Growers Association.
8. Swenson, E. 1991. The Minnesota #78 grape-lady of mystery. *Fruit Varieties Journal* 45(1):6-8.
9. Swenson, E. 1985. Wild *Vitis riparia* from Northern U.S. and Canada-breeding source for winter hardiness in cultivated grapes-a background of the Swenson hybrids. *Fruit Varieties Journal* 39(1): 28-31.