

SERA014 Progress Report 2005

Grape Breeding Program University of Arkansas Department of Horticulture

John R. Clark
Professor, Department of Horticulture
PTSC 316
Fayetteville AR 72701

Telephone: (479) 575-2810

Fax: (479) 575-8619

jrclark@uark.edu

Table grape improvement continues to be the primary focus of the Arkansas program. Major objectives include seedlessness, large fruit size, a range of flavors, mostly non-slip skin with crisp texture, fruit cracking resistance, and adapted, hardy plants for the region.

Seedlings evaluation in 2005 was conducted on approximately 10,000 seedlings resulting in about 40 selections. Eighteen hybridizations were made in May resulting in seeds for seedlings for 2006 planting. Currently there are approximately 200 selections in the program under evaluation. There are several advanced selections in trial for potential release. No releases are planned for the coming year.

Wine grape evaluation on a small group of selections continues, with small trials placed in vineyards of Arkansas wineries. The results of these trials will hopefully identify one or more selections for use in commercial winemaking.

Future plans include continuing the breeding effort, albeit at a reduced effort from that over the last 40 years. Continued improvement of the germplasm, coupled with a broader use of the material in testing and breeding in the U.S and world, is the goal.