

# Grapes in Latvia:

**Girts Miķelsons** *ASSOCIATION OF LATVIAN VINEGROWERS AND WINEMAKERS*, Latvia  
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## Climate challenges and restrictions in Latvia:

- **Maritime climate:** short summer, frequent thaws in winter.
- **June:** cool/ rainfalls, frosts until mid of June,
- **July:** possible rainfalls, often cloudy,
- **August:** growth ceases, cool nights,
- **September:** killing frosts at the first decade
- Vegetation period about 120 days and DDC around 800. **Ripening and wood hardening for outdoor grapes in August is very important!**
- Varieties based on *V.labrusca* are feeling more or less OK: Zilga, Guna, Supaga, but we want more...



G. Vesmins, breeder, G.Dobelis, president



Kaspars & Ieva Skujins, Abava valley

# Zilga - old, still grown, known in northern countries

Breeder: Pauls Sukatnieks, Latvia

Cross: Smugljanka x Dvietes Zila + Jubilejnij Novgoroda

## advantages:

- very productive
- hardy with cold resistance up to -32 °C, can be uncovered on winter
- early wood hardening (August)

## disadvantages (as a wine grape):

- sugars often low (Brix~15, but in 2009 Brix 19 ),TA  $\geq$  1%  
or more
- strong foxy, wine usually non-accepted
- low resistance to Peronospora



# Hasanskij Sladkij – old, well known now thanks to Baltics, but not developed in Baltics

Breeder: K.Bous, Russia, Far East

Cross: OP of 'Dalnevostocnij Tihonova'

## advantages: something for wine

- early – middle September
- hardy (about as Zilga, ~ 30 °C)
- quite resistant to mildews
- Brix  $\geq$  20%
- TA 0.7-0.8%

## disadvantages:

- low crops on young vines
- small clusters
- wine simple, only for blends





# Liepājas Dzintars - new high quality muscat

Breeder: Gunvaldis Vēsmiņš, Moldova/Latvia

Cross: (S65 x Muskat Jantarnij) x (S5-6-3 x Pearl of Szaba)

[S65 = Halili Belij x *V.amurensis*; S5-6-3 = Nimrang x SV 20-473]

## advantages:

- ripens in August
- productive
- high vinifera type quality, (muscat flavor)
- good wood hardening
- Brix 20-23%
- TA 0.7%
- cold resistance better than for viniferas

## disadvantages:

- female
- coverable on winter,
- new variety, field tests only started
- no wine yet from open grown vines



# Ciravas Agra - new high quality muscat

Breeder: Gunvaldis Vēsmiņš, Moldova/Latvia

Cross: (S90 x Raniņ VIRA) x (S5-6-3 x Pearl of Szaba)

[S90 = Irshai Oliver x *V.amurensis*; Raniņ VIRA = Chaus x Kish Mish Chornij;  
S5-6-3 = Nimrang x SV 20-473]

## advantages:

- ripens in August
- productive
- high vinifera type quality, muscat flavor
- good wood hardening
- Brix 18-20%
- TA 0.7%, hopefully a wine grape

## disadvantages:

- coverable on winter, cold resistance – 24 °C
- new variety, field tests only started



# Dovga - new high quality muscat

Breeder: Gunvaldis Vēsmiņš, Moldova/Latvia

(S68 x Chiljaki Belij) x (S3-4-5 x Pearl of Szaba)

[S68 = Halili Belij x *V.amurensis* clone M; S3-4-5 = Koroljeva Vinogradnikov x SV 20-473;  
Koroljeva Vinogradnikov = King Elizabeth x Pearl of Szaba]

## advantages:

- ripens in August
- good wood hardening: 90 %
- Brix 18-20%
- TA 0.6-0.7%

## disadvantages:

- new variety, field tests only started
- cold resistance – 24 °C
- unstable productivity ?



## Summary of top most early varieties

Variety	Ripening in September	Flavor/taste	Resistance	Wood hardening	Cold resistance	Yield	Brix max	TA
Zilga	Middle-end	Hybrid/foxy	DM - low PM - OK	Good	High	High	19	0.80-1.25
Hasanskij sladjij	Middle - end	Simple	DM - good PM - good	Good	High	Good	22	0.70-0.80
Liepajas Dzintars	Early, late August	Muscat	DM -good	Good	Medium	High	23	0.70
Ciravas Agra	Early, late August	Muscat	DM - good	Good	Medium	Good	20	0.65-0.75
Dovga	Early, late August	Muscat	DM - good	Good	Medium	Good	20	0.60-0.70

# Varieties in Latvia 2009, taste and sugar

Place	Variety	Taste score	BRIX
1	Maiga	4.97	19-22.9
2	Liepājas agrā	4.95	23.6
3	Liepājas dzintars	4.94	21--23,1
4	Cīravas agrā	4.9	18-20.8
5	Ukrainka	4.88	23
6	Dovga	4.85	18,5-21,1
7	Zilga	4.77	21.5
8	Reliance Pink Seedless	4.75	19.5
9	Eva	4.75	18.6
10	Elga	4.75	18.5
11	Phoenix	4.75	19
12	Osobaja	4.73	18.7
13	Solovjova 58	4.72	15.5
14	V 4-5-2	4.7	18,3-21,3
15	Skandia	4.7	20
16	Sommerset Seedless	4.68	17.5
17	Soloveinaja	4.68	21
18	Moldovaja	4.65	21.4
19	Skujiņa 583	4.64	16.4
20	Rusven	4.61	15
21	Kuzminskij sinij	4.6	18

22	Tereza	4.6	17.4
23	Timurs	4.6	18.8
24	Hasanskij sladkij	4.58	22
25	Vidzmes skaistule	4.58	20.9
26	Esop	4.54	17.3
27	Kijevskij belij	4.53	15.3
28	Rondo	4.52	17
29	Guna	4.5	14
30	Belij s Zagarom	4.49	17.2
31	Gvido	4.46	16
32	Rannij Magaracha	4.44	14
33	Ilja Muromec	4.43	20
34	Skujiņa 675	4.42	15.2
35	Jodkrante	4.42	20.1
36	Peage	4.41	16
37	Viktorija	4.41	13.5
38	Arkadija	4.4	16
39	Valiant	4.4	21.4
40	Kishmish unikalnij	4.38	18
41	Zida kekars	4.37	18.4
42	Sukribe	4.37	18.2



# Varieties 2009, continued

43	Elegant sverhrappij	4.34	15.4
44	Supaga	4.34	18
45	Reform	4.34	14.7
46	Dietlava	4.33	16.4
47	V 3-5-2	4.33	18.8
48	Russkij jantarij	4.33	18
49	AF 20-1-11	4.33	20
50	AF 15-1-14	4.32	20.5
51	Meda	4.32	14.5
52	Rodina	4.31	17.8
53	Vroege van der	4.29	20
54	Olga	4.25	13.7
55	Jadviga	4.25	17.2
56	Faze	4.23	20.5
57	AF 2-2-6	4.23	21
58	Ajošenkin	4.23	17
59	Sasla Gaiļuno	4.23	13.8
60	Nežnij	4.22	18
61	Avgustovskij fioļetovij	4.2	15
62	Varduve	4.2	12.5
63	Suveņir Voskovskogo	4.18	16.3
64	ĀBZ	4.18	19

65	Adel	4.18	18.2
66	Sukate	4.16	18.5
67	Spulga	4.16	14.5
68	Gaile	4.16	15.5
69	Samohvalovič	4.16	19
70	Širvintas	4.15	15.6
71	Madeleine Royale	4.14	22.5
72	AF 2-1-5	4.11	-
73	Žemčug belij	4.1	16
74	Jefremovskij	4.09	12.8
75	Podarok Ukraine	4.07	14.3
76	Gaiļuna saldā	4.07	13.5
77	Shyuler	4.06	13.4
78	AF 15-1-15	4.06	21.8
79	Sēle	4.05	17.5
81	Matias Jonosh	4.03	10
82	Agat Donskoj	4	13.5
83	Swenson red	4	14
84	Ziemeļu melnā	4	17.5

# Latvian wine, some hopes

Variety	Positive arguments	Problems	Solutions
Skujins 675, white	Early, high Brix, TA optimal, productive, hardy	Small clusters, vigorous, complex hybrid tones in wine	Wine of local character
Jubilejnij Novgoroda, white	Early, high Brix, TA optimal, medium hardy, aromatic	Productivity problematic, chlorosis, hybrid tones in wine	Wine of local character
Sukribe, white	Early, productive, non-strong labrusca	Foxy, winter cover needed, wine is plane	Blending with other: (Jubilejnij Novgoroda, Skujins 675)
Hasanskij Sladkij, red	Early, high Brix, TA optimal, hardy	Small clusters, wine without character	Use as a base for blending (with Varnava-2)

# Latvian Wine: some other hopes

Variety	Positive arguments	Problems	Solutions
Liepajas Dzintars, Ciravas Agra, Dovga, whites	Early, high Brix, TA optimal, good muscat aroma	No field tests yet, wine can lack body	Blending
Sele,	Productive, good size of berries and cluster, floral Gewurztraminer aromas, non labrusca	Small clusters, wine without character, low Brix, not very early	Vine management, site selection
Varnava-2	Rich color, normal TA, tannins	Productivity problematic, not particularly early, weak aroma	Blending component
Guna	Productive when pollinated. Rose wine with interesting tones	Female, not very early,	Wine of local wine

# Acidity and sugar of Latvian grapes used for wines

<b>Wine</b>	<b>pH</b>	<b>TA, %</b>	<b>Brix in juice</b>
<b>Smugljanka</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>0.7-0.8</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Varnava-1</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Varnava-2</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>0.75</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Foch</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Leon Milot</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>0.50 - 0.58</b>	<b>20.5</b>
<b>Melna Skaistule</b>	<b>3.15</b>	<b>0.89</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Zilga/Kuzm.Sinij</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>0.69</b>	<b>16/16</b>
<b>Zilga/Has.Sl.</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>16/23</b>
<b>Zilga/Guna</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>0.74</b>	<b>Zilga 16/19</b>
<b>Vino Nordica</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>15-16</b>
<b>Alpha</b>	<b>2.95</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Supaga</b>	<b>3.25</b>	<b>0.66</b>	<b>17.5</b>
<b>Toldi</b>	<b>3.25</b>	<b>1.26</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Kuzminskij Sinij</b>	<b>3.45</b>	<b>0.79</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Jubilejnij Novgoroda</b>		<b>(0.8)</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Skujina 675</b>		<b>(0.8)</b>	<b>21</b>



# Conclusions

- Latvia today is a place where variety tests are going on on large scale
- Several hybrid grape varieties were developed in Latvia in last 40 years with reliable Labruscan varieties of medium quality and breeding work is going on with many hybrids under investigation
- several new early non-Labruscan disease resistant varieties are under test

Thank you for attention!