

Biointensive grapes: Transitioning to biopesticides in a perennial crop - Paul Brock, Silver Thread Vineyard/Finger Lakes Community College, Geneva, NY

Paul Brock

In 2017 Silver Thread Vineyard started managing 1/3 of our vineyard with the goal of becoming 100% biologically based for both disease and insect management. After a challenging 2017 where non-biological materials needed frequent use, 2018 was considered a success. In 2018 the Riesling from our bio intensively managed vineyard outperformed late season disease resistance of the more conventionally managed Riesling. These differences were also noted in at least two other nearby vineyards farmed by other growers who also compared bio intensive management to their conventional approaches.

When comparing 2018 vs. 2017 (beside completely different weather) there was two major differences: In 2018 we had access to more biologically based materials; and in 2018 we implemented biological practices and materials early and applied more frequently. Keys to successfully implementing bio intensive pest management at Silver Thread have includes knowledge of what is available, willingness not to rely on one solution in any one application, and not treating biopesticides like traditional pesticides. In 2019 we will be expanding our bio intensive management into the other 2/3's of our farm.