

There is no doubt that we have a very good growing year. The foliage is growing faster than we have seen several years. Even with water turned off the growing tips are healthy and active.

### **Downey Mildew Control**

I hope you are spraying for Powdery Mildew continuously through the season. Each vineyard is more or less susceptible, but almost all may have an attack as the moisture/fog/rain conditions fluctuate throughout the year. If you wait til you see it, it's too late. It is always present in the atmosphere here.

Last year in June several vineyards reported Downey Mildew for the first time. It was seen mostly on Grenache variants and Aglianico. Grangetto's said it was showing up throughout the county on many type of crops and nursery plants. If you see it, start a program immediately.

Eventually really bad DM turns white and looks like this on a leaf and on the cane. Grape clusters look like they have been sprayed with whipped cream.



### **Insect Control**

Don't forget to include **Dipel** to each acre's spray program. Dipel stops the very youngest Western Grapeleaf Skeletonizer caterpillars before they can start their destruction. Watch for the early signs of 1st & 2nd instar feeding and look for the butterflies fluttering around the vineyard. The 3rd instar starts to get the stripes and poisonous hairs, they are too big for Dipel and voracious, don't let them get going.



## Sunshine

Most of the work in June is aimed at getting the right amount of sunshine onto your grape clusters and onto the leaves. A couple of rules: it takes 10 - 15 leaves to ripen a cluster of grapes, grape clusters need dappled sunshine to develop the best flavors. Here in Ramona we are lucky to have great sunshine most days of the summer, especially during ripening season from late June through harvest. We are farther south than all the European wine regions and we have altitude. Both factors make it most unlikely that we need to do leaf thinning around our clusters. I only do leaf thinning in a couple of small areas where the vines get uncontrolled water from nearby nursery rows or landscaping runoff.

This time of year you want to avoid "California Sprawl" that is common for table grapes in the Central Valley. Here are pictures of the same rows of Cabernet that have been thinned and trained for sunshine control. It does not take too many weeks for the growth to continue and eventually these will have to be hedged so that the tops of the canes do not roll over to create their own shade zones.

