

## Viticulture Report on Rio Grande do Sul: some indicators of the wine and grape growing in RGS

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The Viticulture Report on Rio Grande do Sul, done since 1995, has been incorporated to the viticulture culture in Rio Grande do Sul. It is an important tool to support inspection, wine and grape growing research and, in special, the development of the sector. Its last edition, launched in December, presents new detailed information about vineyards in Rio Grande do Sul, referring to years 2005, 2006 and 2007.

In 2007, the viticulture area in the state totaled 38,505.23 ha according to the Viticulture Report. In comparison to the first year it was held, 1995, there has been a growth of 58.33% in the total area of vineyards in the state, which represents an annual growth of 4%. For *Vitis Viniferas* cultivars, used to make fine table wines and sparkling wines, the growth totaled 63.61%.

The cities with the largest vineyard areas are Bento Gonçalves (5,920.36 ha), Flores da Cunha (4,716.12 ha), Farroupilha (3,892.26 ha) Garibaldi (3,178.16 ha) and Monte Belo do Sul (2,242.76 ha).

It is worth pointing out the inclusion of new grape grower cities during this period, such as Candiota (2005), Encruzilhada do Sul (2002), Bom Jesus (2001), Cristal do Sul (2005), Monte Negro (2002), Rosário do Sul (2007). The maps presented below provide a view of the expansion of the viticulture from 1995 to 2007.

The traditional hybrid cultivar, Isabel, covers more than one fourth of the grape growing area in the state – 10,692.10 ha in 2007. This cultivar has three purposes: juice, table wine and for the consumption of the fruit. Isabel Precoce was originated from this cultivar and in only 5 years of cultivation it already takes up 201.84 ha.

The second largest area of cultivar in 2007 is Bordo, with 6,725.93 ha. Although it has three purposes, its main importance is for juice and table wine production. This cultivar has had a growth in its area, going from 2,522.25 ha in 1995 to 6,725.93 ha in 2007. In third place is cv. White Niagara, used for consumption and to make table wine; it covers 2,389.44 ha and its mutant cv. Rose Niagara has 1,951.82 ha, holding the 5<sup>th</sup> place.

Cv. Concord, whose flavor is very much appreciated by Brazilians, is used specially for the production of grape juice and holds the 4<sup>th</sup> place with 2,477.35 ha.

The *Vitis viniferas* cultivars – used to produce fine table wines – that stood out in 2007 by order are: Cabernet Sauvignon (1,868.48 ha), Merlot (1,089.45 ha), Moscato Branco (776.84 ha), Chardonnay (642.08 ha), Tannat (421.38 ha), Cabernet Franc (352.57 ha) and Riesling Itália (335.46 ha). It is interesting to observe that out of 112 cultivars of the *Vitis viniferas* group, registered from 1995 to 2007, 14 cultivars were eliminated, not being grown in any area in 2007, 26 cultivars presented an area smaller than one hectare and 26 cultivars had an area between 1 and 10 hectares, what can be an indication of the dissatisfaction with the traditional cultivars or the search for a differentiation of the products made.

Another point to take into consideration and which is worth a deeper analysis is the reduction of the *Vitis viniferas* white grape area, considering the market trend and the skill that exists in Serra

Gaucha to produce high quality sparkling wine. There has been an increase in the area where red grapes are grown to the detriment of white grapes, which are suitable for making sparkling wine. *Vitis viniferas* cultivars had an expressive growth in their area, going from 4,606.45 ha in 1995 to 7,536.21 ha in 2007; however, white and rose cultivars that belong to this group, had their area reduced from 3,062.84 ha in 1995 to 2,774.58 ha in 2007. Cv Riesling Itálico, which in 1995 took up a 648.94 ha area, in 2007 was reduced to 335.39 ha. In that year it was the main cultivar of the *Vitis viniferas* group in the state. Cv. White Moscato that used to have 611.03 ha, had a slight growth, totaling 776.84 ha in 2007 and cv. Trebbiano that in 1995 had 492.93 ha had its area reduced to only 172.62 ha, in 2007 and cv. Chardonnay grew from 245.96 ha in 1995 to 642.08 ha in 2007.

Considering the red table wine surplus and the growth in the demand for sparkling wines, the trend is to increase the cultivation of white *Vitis viniferas* grapes to produce sparkling wines, which not only please the Brazilian palate but are also enjoyed by experts in viticulture all over the world.

As for *Vitis viniferas* red grapes, the situation is worrying. They might be eradicated from the vineyards, unless a public policy is implemented resulting in an expressive reduction in wine imports.

This information, combined with other data available, will provide essential background for decision making in the private and public scopes, on behalf of the development of the wine and grape growing in the state of Rio Grande do Sul.

Paraguay – Argentina – Atlantic Ocean – Uruguay – Santa Catarina

Up to 10 ha  
 10 to 15 ha  
 50 to 100 ha  
 .... (colocar TO no lugar de A)

More than 5,000 ha

Distribution of the viticulture in 1995. Distribution of the viticulture in 2007.

