

# **The Texas Wine Industry**

**Presented at Cat Spring Meeting**

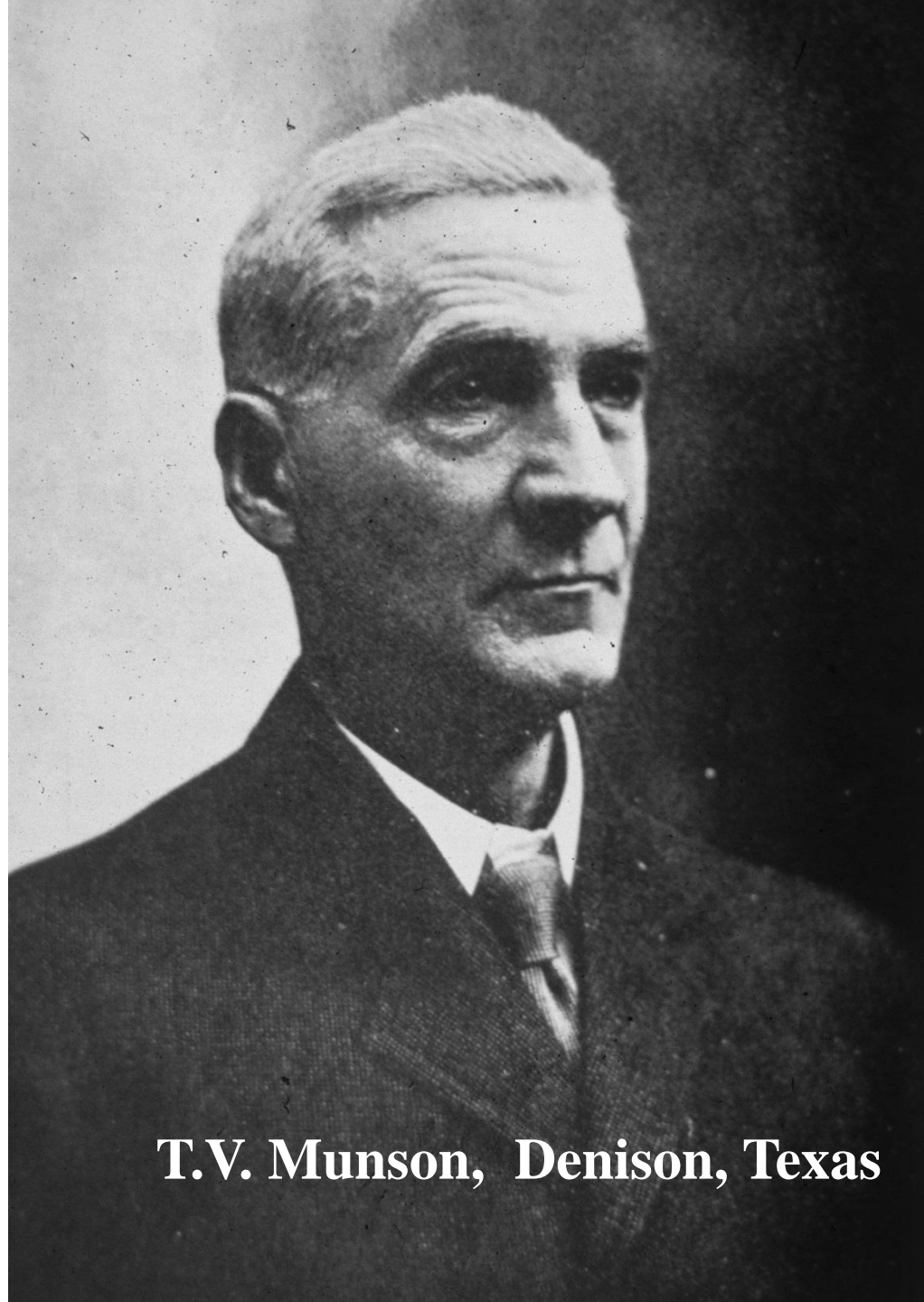
**George Ray McEachern**

**Professor of Horticulture**

**TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY**

**College Station, Texas 77843-2134**

**January 31, 2025**



**T.V. Munson, Denison, Texas**

TEXAS  
AGRICULTURAL  
EXPERIMENT STATIONS  
BULLETIN No. 88

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HORTICULTURE SECTION, JUNE, 1906

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LENGTH OF LIFE OF VINES OF VARIOUS SPECIES AND VARIETIES  
OF GRAPES; PROFITABLENESS; AND BY WHAT  
DISEASES SERIOUSLY AFFECTED.

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By T. V. MUNSON, D. Sc.





VAL VERDE WINERY  
DEL RIO  
1974



Louis Qualia  
Val Verde Winery  
Del Rio, Texas







**John Mortensen, U. Florida  
Breeder of Blanc du Bois**

**Ernest Mortensen  
A&M Research Crystal City, Tx**





**U.A. Randolph  
A&M Research Center  
Montague, Texas**



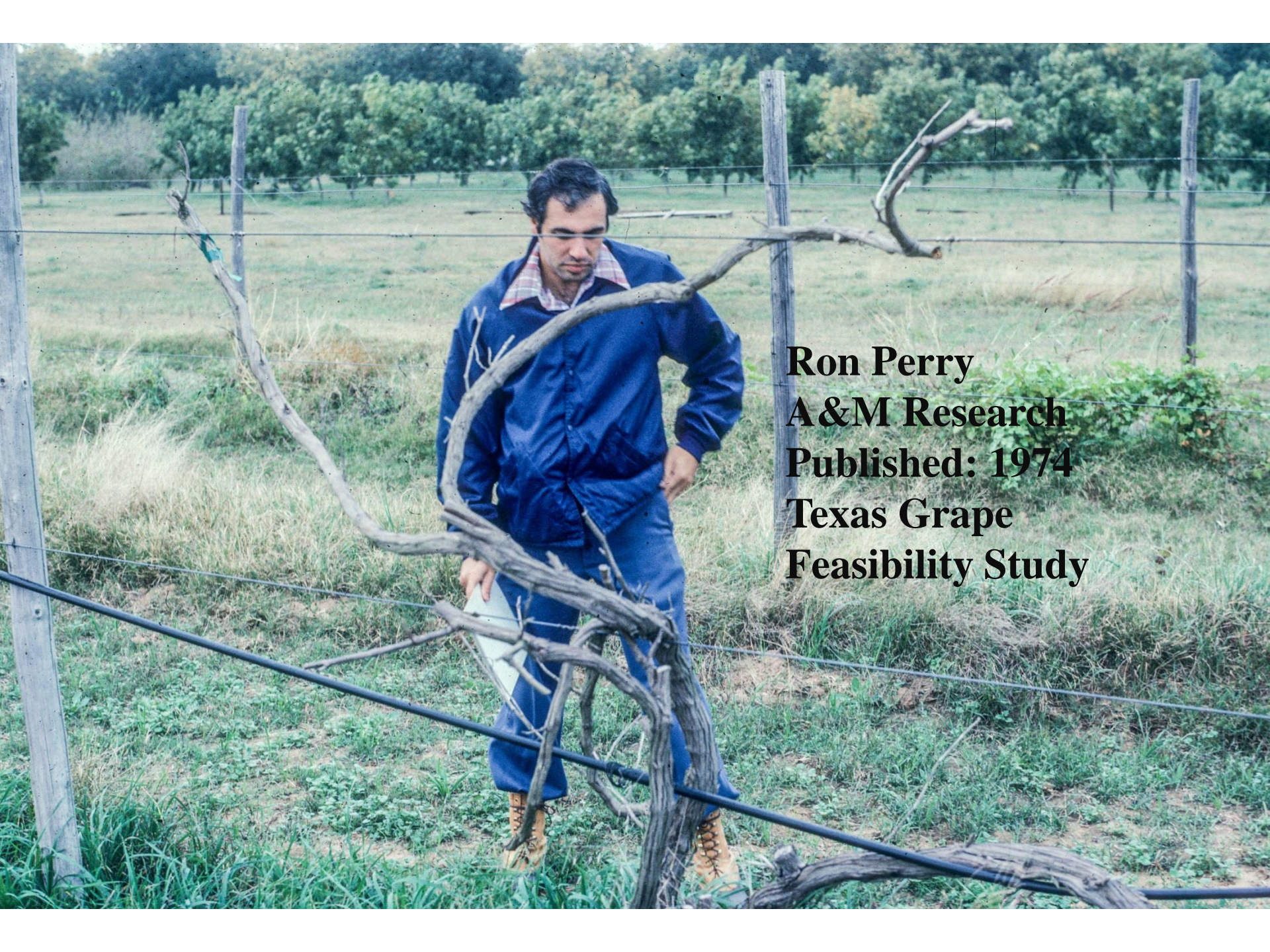




Bill Lipe A&M Viticulturist at Lubbock Research Center.







**Ron Perry**  
**A&M Research**  
**Published: 1974**  
**Texas Grape**  
**Feasibility Study**



**George Ray McEachern**  
**A&M Extension Horticulturist**





A color photograph of a man standing in a vineyard. He is wearing a light-colored, patterned long-sleeved shirt, khaki pants, and a baseball cap. He is positioned between two rows of grapevines, which are covered in green leaves. The ground is covered in grass. In the background, there are more trees and a clear sky. The text "HUGO PAPE VINEYARD", "SEGUIN", and "1978" is overlaid in white at the bottom center of the image.

HUGO PAPE VINEYARD  
SEGUIN  
1978



A color photograph of an elderly man, C.O. Forester, Jr., standing in a vineyard. He is wearing a light-colored short-sleeved button-down shirt, grey trousers, a brown belt, and glasses. He has a white name tag on his left chest. He is leaning his right arm on a vertical metal post of a grapevine trellis, which is covered in bare, brown grapevines. His left hand is on his hip. In the foreground, there is a black plastic pot with a small plant. The background shows a grassy field, more vines, and a large stadium light tower under a cloudy sky.

**C.O. Forester, Jr.**  
**Grape Breeder**  
**Lower Rio Grande Valley**



A photograph of two men in a vineyard. In the foreground, a man with grey hair, wearing a white short-sleeved shirt and khaki pants, stands on a dirt path, holding a light-colored hat. Behind him, a younger man with dark hair, wearing a yellow and white striped shirt and blue jeans, stands near a large, leafy vine. The vine has a thick, dark, gnarled trunk. The background shows a field with other vines and a clear sky.

**Crites Vineyard  
Diley, Texas  
Final Vines from T.V. Munson  
Collection.**





**Giant Mustang Grapevine  
South Texas.**





**Charles McKinney and Roy Mitchell**  
**Texas Wine Pioneers at University of Texas**  
**Department of Lands, Texas Tech University,**  
**and Grayson County College.**



A color photograph of a man, Larry A. Stein, standing in a vineyard. He is smiling and holding a large bunch of green grapes in his right hand. He is wearing a short-sleeved, button-down shirt with vertical stripes in shades of blue, red, and white. The background is filled with lush green grapevines and leaves, with some sunlight filtering through. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

**Larry A. Stein and U-Ark 1400  
Tablegrape Variety Trial  
A&M Research Station, Stephenville, Tx**





**Greg Cobb, Enology Instructor  
TAMU College Station, Tx.**





**Justin Scheiner A&M Extension Viticulturist  
and Assistant Professor at College Station, Tx**



H.P. Olmo said; “Texas must grow *V. vinifera*”.





# Cat Spring Grape Meetings







**Cozette & Jerry Watson  
Austin County Vineyards  
Cat Spring, Tx**



# Raymond Haak, HAAK Vineyards and Winery





Andy Scott, Rio Farms, Lower Rio Grande Valley, Tx







**Neil Newsom, Plains, Tx ....Annual High Plains Grape Field Day**



**Jim Kamas ....Hill Country Horticulturist  
Fredericksburg, Tx.**





**Ste. Genevieve, 1,000 acres at Fort Stockton, Tx**





**Jean Louis Haberer, Wine Master  
Ste Genevieve Vineyards and Winery at Fort Stockton, Tx.**

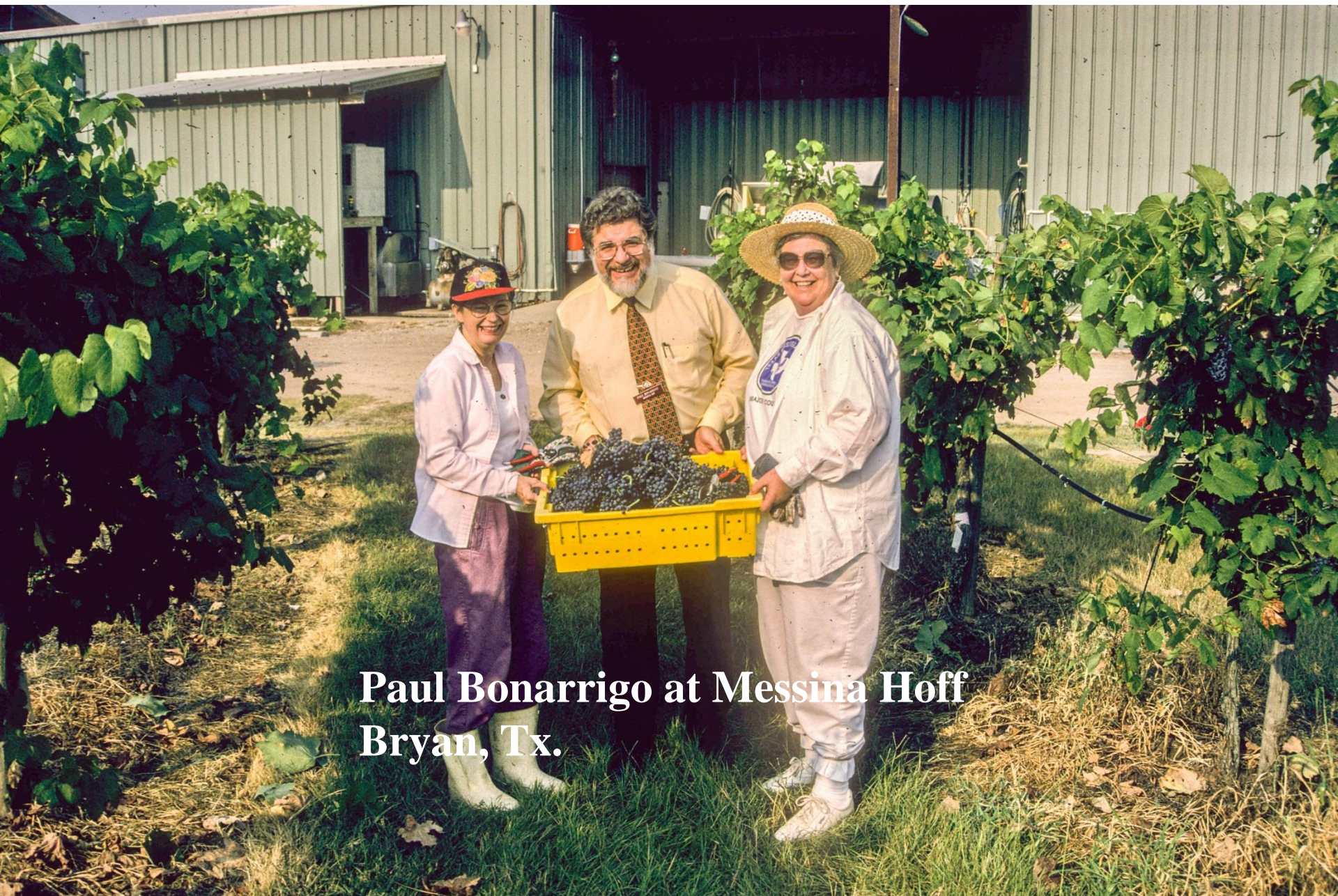




**Fall Creek Vineyards and Winery at Tow, Tx  
with Ed and Susan Auler.**



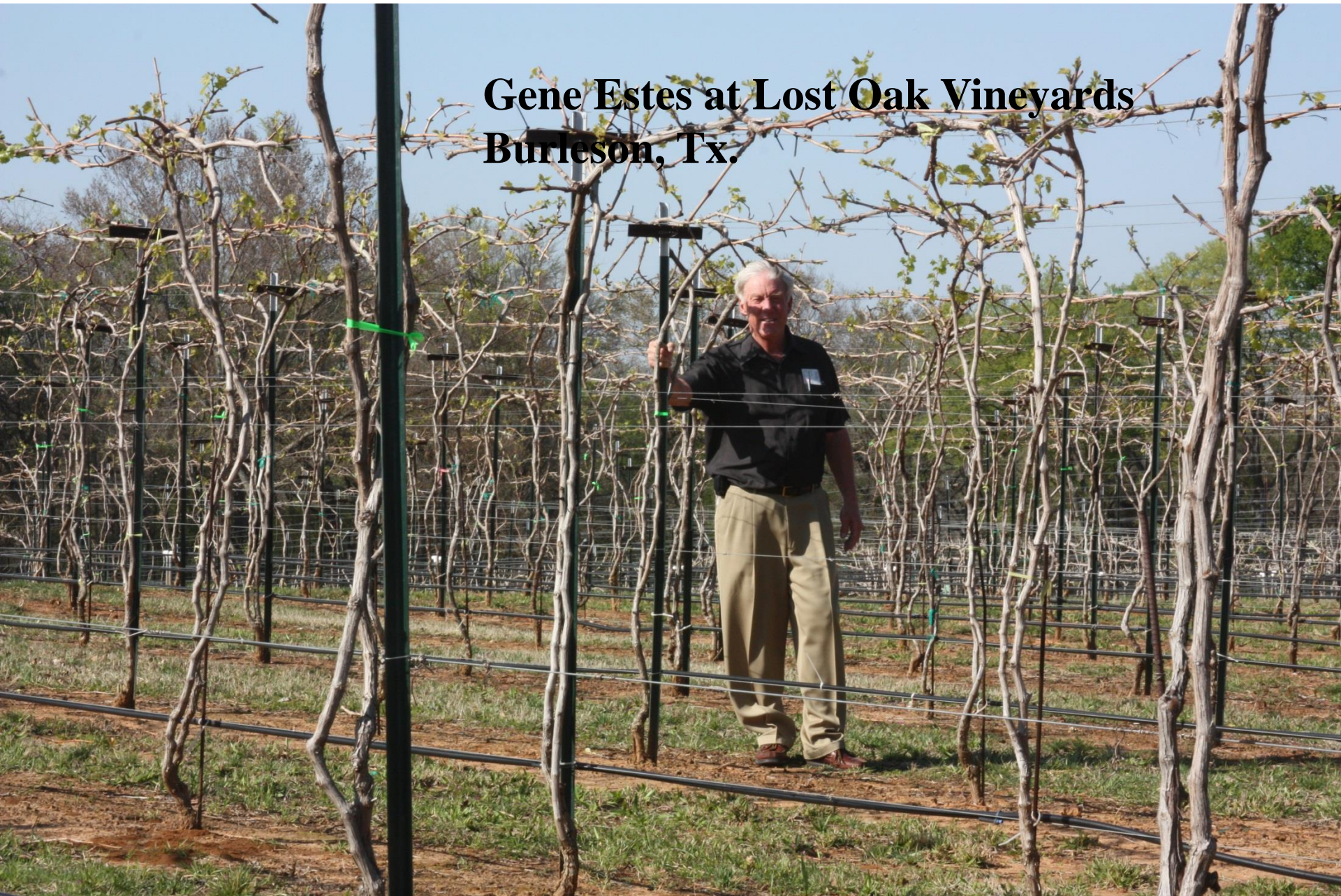




**Paul Bonarrigo at Messina Hoff  
Bryan, Tx.**



**Gene Estes at Lost Oak Vineyards  
Burleson, Tx.**





A photograph of the Grayson County College Viticulture & Enology Center in Denison, Texas. The image shows a large, two-story building with a dark roof and a prominent chimney, situated behind a well-maintained vineyard. The vineyard consists of several rows of grapevines supported by wooden posts, with green leaves and clusters of grapes visible. The foreground is a grassy field. The text "Grayson County College Viticulture & Enology Center Denison, Tx. Began in 1979 continues today." is overlaid in white on the image.

**Grayson County College Viticulture & Enology Center  
Denison, Tx. Began in 1979 continues today.**



A photograph of Roy Renfro, a man with glasses wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and patterned tie. He is standing behind a table covered with a white cloth, which has two large yellow folders on it. In the background, a Hilton logo is visible on a wall. The text "Roy Renfro, Director Grayson Co College Viticulture & Enology Program" is overlaid in white on the lower half of the image.

**Roy Renfro, Director  
Grayson Co College  
Viticulture & Enology Program**

Russ Russell 2005



**Roy Mitchell, Enology Instructor at Grayson Co College  
1979 to 2005.**





**George Ray McEachern, Viticulture Instructor  
at Grayson Co College 1979 to 2001  
Followed by Justin Scheiner.**





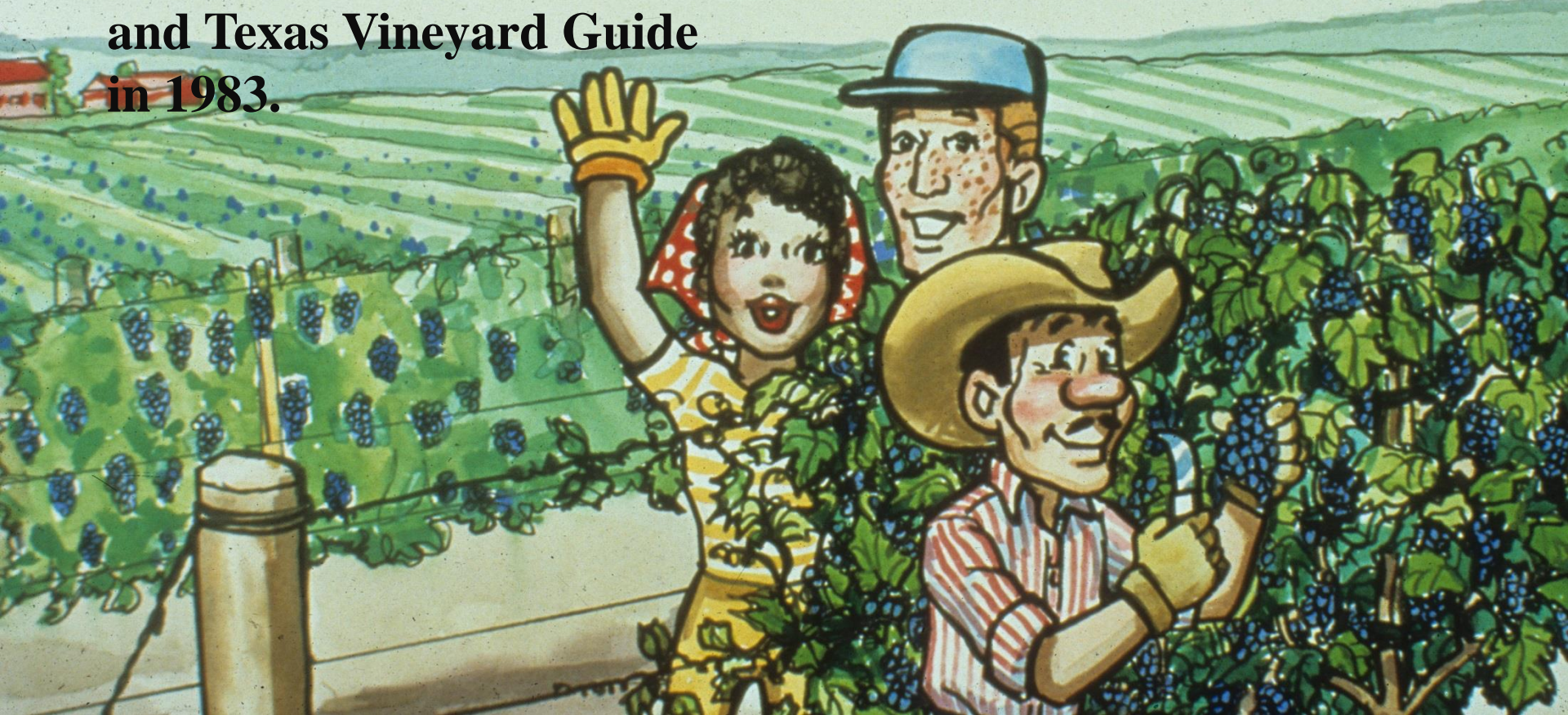
Many top Texas Wine leadership  
trained in viticulture and enology  
at Grayson County College.





George Ray McEachern  
and Larry Stein published  
Growing Grapes In Texas  
and Texas Vineyard Guide  
in 1983.

# Growing Grapes In Texas







PIERCES DISEASE



### Vine Disease

A disease that caused dying back from the tips of the vines was first recognized about 1940. Some of the earlier plant losses may have been due to this disease. The symptoms are similar to those in California of Pierce's disease, a virus disease coming from alfalfa where it is known as alfalfa dwarf (13). This disease can be quite destructive to vinifera varieties but does not seem to affect the varieties of Texas origin. It probably would be best to avoid growing alfalfa or sweetclover near any plantings of varieties such as Thompson Seedless (Sultanina), Cardinal and similar varieties. No effect of this disease has been observed on Black Spanish, Herbemont or Barlinka, which are of the *V. bourquiniana* relationship.

**1940 Pierce's Disease recognized in South Texas by  
Ernest Mortensen and USDA Disease Scientists**



**In the 1950's over 1,000 acres of *Vitis Vinifera* wine grape varieties were planted south of San Antonio, Texas in the Winter garden area. The plantings were supported with funding from the railroads serving south Texas. The plan was to produce early ripening "table-grapes" which would then be shipped to northern markets before California varieties were on the market. The O.P. Leonard Corporation of Fort Worth was one of the three major planters. Unfortunately, the vineyards failed due to Pierce's Disease, freeze, Black Rot, or other factors. Dr. H.P. Olmo of UC-Davis was asked to evaluate the failure; but no firm reasons were determined. Thus, the modern Texas grape industry had a negative beginning.**





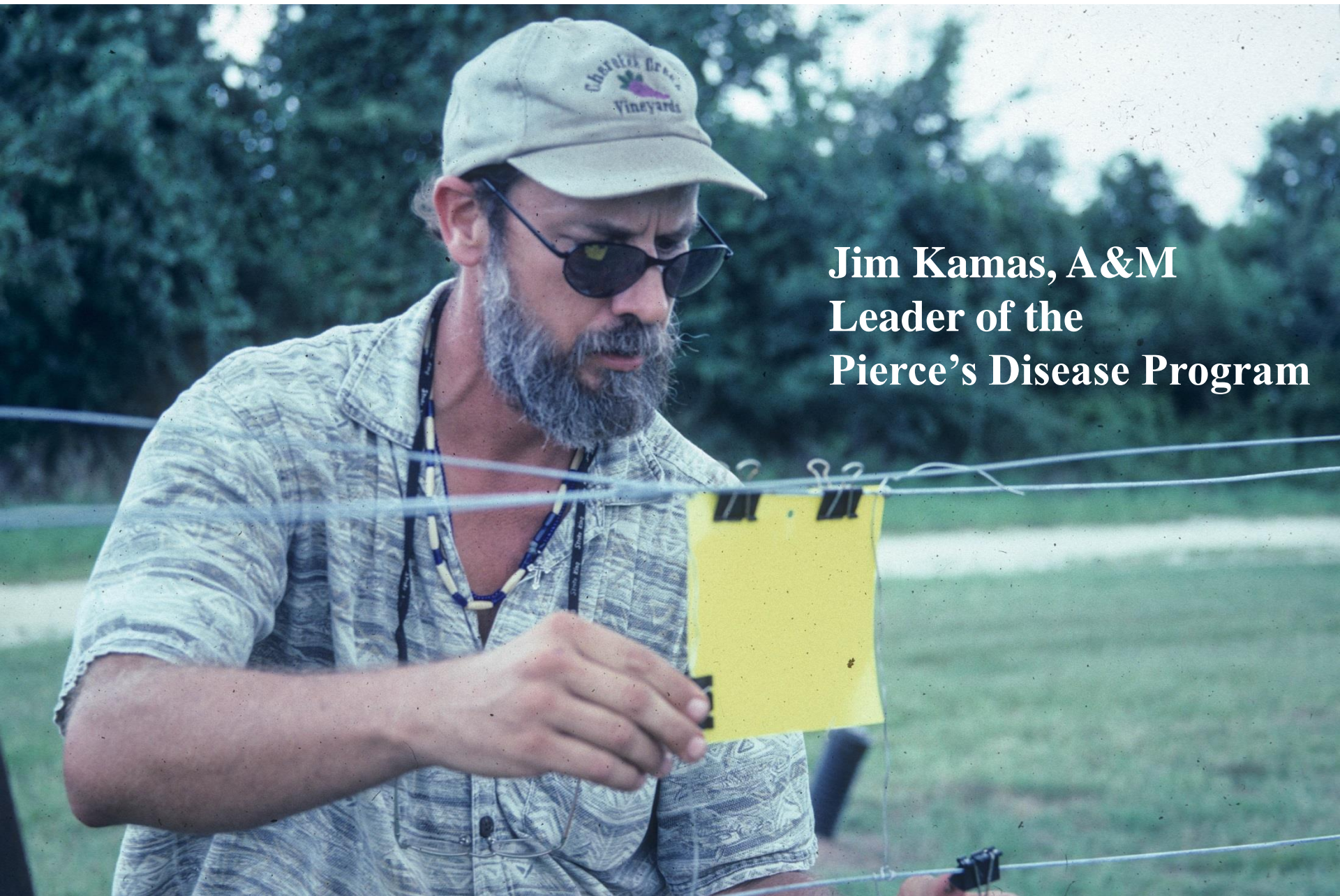
Early A&M team to study Pierce's Disease in Texas.



**Glassy Winged Sharpshooter major vector of Pierce's Disease.**







**Jim Kamas, A&M  
Leader of the  
Pierce's Disease Program**



**Jim Kamas Progress in Texas with PD:**

**Native grapes are tolerant, not resistant.**

**Glassy-winged sharpshooter + 34 others.**

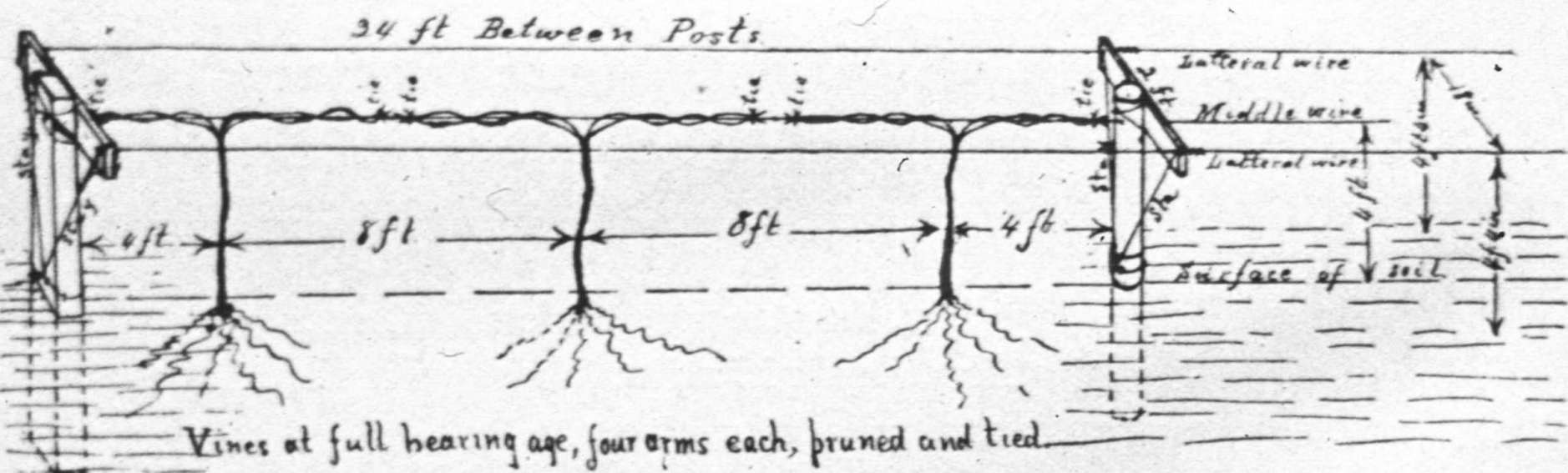
**Winter water & hosts; and weeds in vines.**

**Remove PD+ vines asap.**

**Imidicloprid works; Admire Pro in drip.**

**Weather Cycles = PD Cycles; wet & warm.**



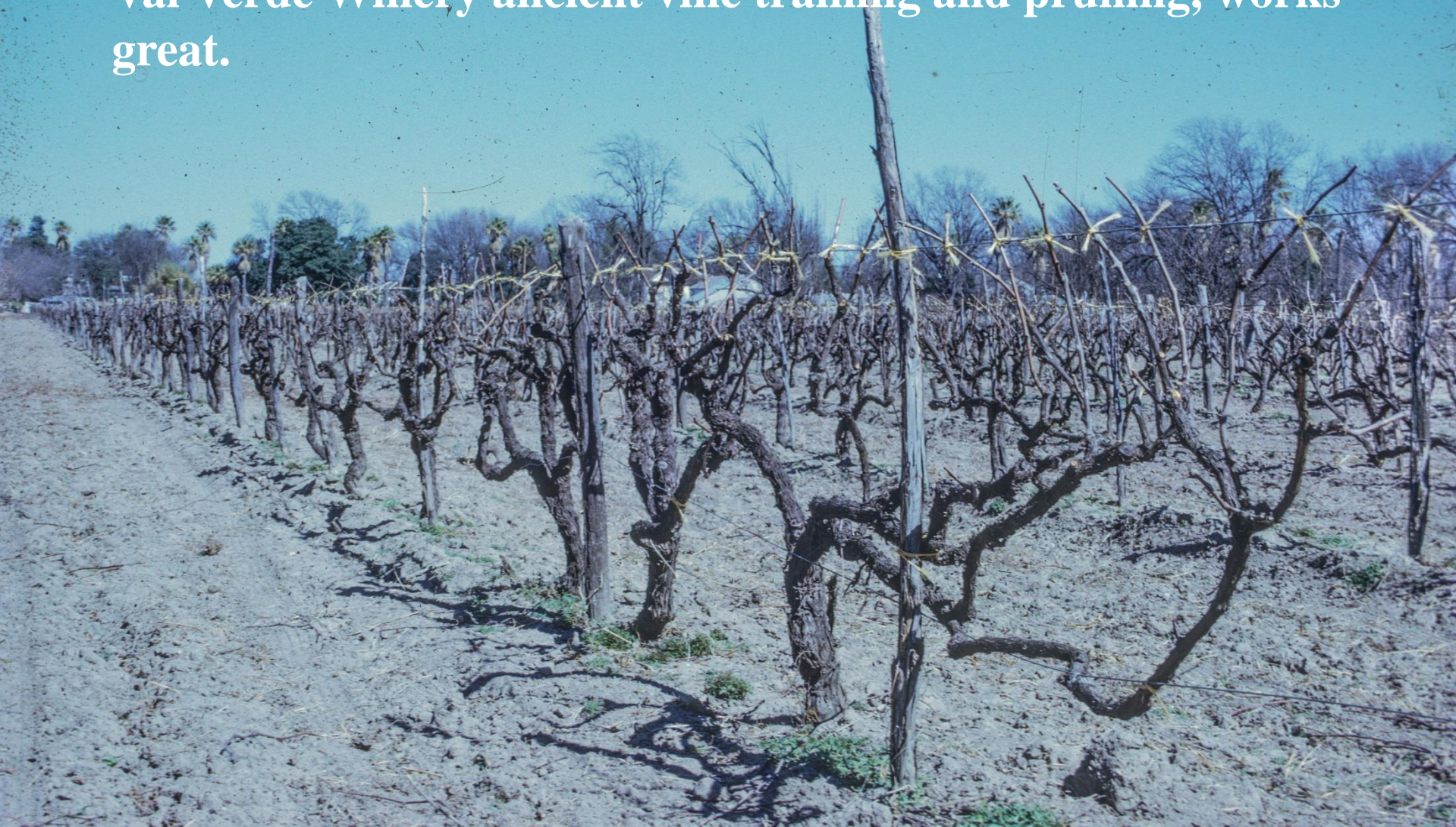


End Post 8 ft  
4 ft 6 in above  
ground.

The Munson Three-wire Trough Trellis.  
Showing its Construction.



Val Verde Winery ancient vine training and pruning, works great.

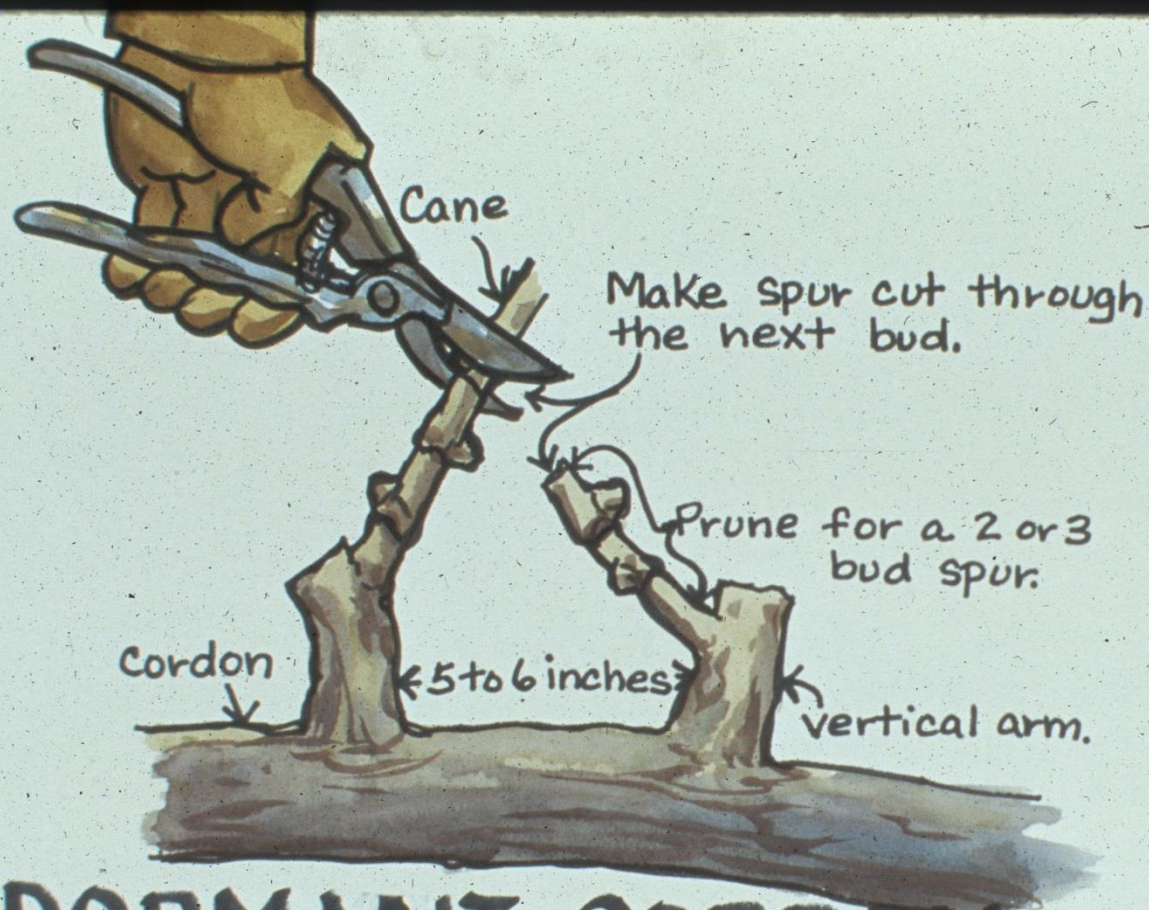




# Penny Adams' two stage cordon extension training.







# DORMANT CORDON PRUNING



Jerry Watson vine training and pruning via horizontal divided canopy.







**Bilateral Cordon with spur pruning and vertical shoot positioning or no positioning has become the standard of Texas.**





**McEachern has a perfect shoot concept to help determine the number of buds to be left after dormant pruning.**



**Texas wine success is determined  
by what we taste.**





Texas A&M now has 5 undergraduate wine and vit classes and a graduate teaching and research program. The instructors on campus, and 6 vit Extension specialists in North, West, Gulf Coast, and Hill Country.





**Texas A&M faculty have and continue to work with the Texas wine industry to evaluate and teach the quality and components of Texas wine.**





**Vine freeze prevention and management is an issue in Tx.**







**New and old varieties continue  
to be evaluated by faculty and  
growers across the state.**



# **Grape Varieties Resistant to Pierce's Disease Grown in South and East Texas**

**Black Spanish or Lenoir.....origin not well identified.**

**Champanel.....developed by T.V.Munson is a PD tolerant variety which makes outstanding jelly and jam. It was also used as a rootstock for its PD and Cotton Root Rot tolerance.**

**Herbemont.....planted without death in south Texas as early as 1889 and continued until the current *Vitis Vinifera* varieties began in the 1970's.**

**Blanc duBois.....developed in Florida and has produced well in east and south Texas. The Texas wines appear to be superior to those of Florida and have been commercially successful.**

**In recent years; UC-Davis appear to have developed PD tolerant *Vitis Vinifera* varieties and seedlings which are being tested in Texas.**





**Rootstock studies have and continue to evaluate better combinations for specific site and variety needs.**



**1990 A&M Short Course  
in Burgundy.**





# 1994 A&M Short Course in Medoc and Ste. Emilion.









**2000 A&M Short Course in Mosel,  
Alsace, and Switzerland.**

