‘Rubaiyat’: An Old Cultivar with New Potential

Eric T. Stafne

Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078

In 2005, 212 ha of grapes were grown in Oklahoma and more than 30 licensed wineries were in operation. With this increase in grape growing and wine making comes the necessity to evaluate commercially appropriate cultivars. ‘Rubaiyat’ was a cross between Seibel 5437 and ‘Bailey’ made at Oklahoma State University by Herman Hinrichs in 1952. The overall genetic constitution of ‘Rubaiyat’ (based on disomic inheritance) is 37.5% *V. lincecumii*, 31.25% *V. vinifera*, 18.75% *V. labrusca*, 6.25% *V. rupestris*, and 6.25% *V. riparia*. ‘Rubaiyat’ is a dark blue-black grape that ripens in mid-August. The berries are medium-sized and round. The clusters are medium in size with a long shoulder. The shank is short to medium in length. The vine has medium vigor and good to very good disease resistance. The juice is very dark red with about 19% sugars and tartaric acid levels of 0.63%, and quality is best when clusters are left to hang for sugar accumulation. The wine is fruity and has good balance. A slight “foxy” flavor from the *V. labrusca* is sometimes evident in wine made from ‘Rubaiyat’. Currently, other hybrid grape cultivars such as ‘Chambourcin’ are more popular for use as red wine varietals than ‘Rubaiyat’. However, in observational trials in Oklahoma, ‘Rubaiyat’ compares favorably to ‘Chambourcin’ in quality and may outyield it. Perhaps the greatest potential for ‘Rubaiyat’ is as a teinturier since it has the attribute of red flesh derived from its progenitor ‘Alicante Bouschet’, a parent of ‘Alicante Ganzin’. ‘Rubaiyat’ is not widely grown, but potential exists for it to become an important cultivar for Oklahoma and surrounding states.