Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service – Viticulture and Enology Team (Texas A&M University) is looking for a full time Master's Student to join our group for a two-year research project with a main focus on Enology and with an important Viticulture component. The position is funded, and it involves living and studying in College Station (main campus) as well as travelling and performing research a few times a year in Lubbock, TX.

**Start Date**
January 2022

**Project Title**
Verjus: A natural method to improve wine acidity and increase the profitability of grape production in Texas

**Project Summary**
Verjus, the acidic juice produced from unripe grapes, has a very long history of culinary use. Researchers at the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Texas Woman’s University seek to evaluate the potential of using verjus to naturally acidify Texas wine, addressing a common winemaking challenge of high pH, while simultaneously providing grape growers with an additional source of income for the fruit that is normally removed prior to harvest, but discarded. The goals of the project are:

1) assess the feasibility of verjus production by cluster thinning using a mechanical harvester.

2) determine the impact of verjus on white wine chemical composition and flavor quality.

3) perform a fundamental economic analysis of all recommended practices relative to current standard viticulture and enology practices in the industry.

4) disseminate the results with Texas grape and wine industry members and other interested parties through workshops, presentations, newsletters, and journal article publications.

The trial will be conducted in a commercial vineyard in Brownfield, Texas. Grapes will be processed to verjus and resulting wine. The verjus and wine quality and flavor properties will be characterized using instrumental analysis and sensory evaluation; and economic analysis will be conducted from field grapes to final wines.

The outcomes of this project will help improve Texas wine quality and serve to enhance the competitiveness and longevity of grape production in the state.

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