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NEWS RELEASE

Indiana winemaking is in full swing after a successful harvest

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. - Indiana winemakers are keeping busy this time of year. Most grapes are harvested and it is time to create the wines of 2000. For many of the Indiana wineries, the harvest was complete at the end of September. However, a few wineries still have grapes hanging on the vine in the hopes of making a tasty "late harvest" sweet wine.

The 2000 grape harvest started at the normal time, mid to late August. Fruit yield was high and fruit quality good. Steve Palmer, owner/winemaker for Madison Vineyards adds, "The juice quality is equal to or superior to 1999 for some grape varieties." While southern Indiana vineyards had to tackle heavy rain during harvest time, the grape vines at Purdue University dealt with a different issue this year. "Bees, wasps, raccoons, deer, birds, etc. have taken more than their share in our research plots; maybe that is a sign of good quality," jokes Bruce Bordelon, viticulturalist.

What kind of wines will the 2000 harvest create? Jim Butler, owner/winemaker at Butler Winery in Bloomington says, "1999 was an excellent year for grapes in Indiana. The grapes this year are very similar in quality, so there is high potential for yet another year of award winning Indiana wines." The grapes are currently in the process of being made into wine, so the final analysis will have to wait until the wine is completed sometime in early 2001.

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