



**Synonyms:** Ambers 06-72-4

**Pedigree:** 'Munson' (Jaeger #70) X 'Jupiter' (Ark. 1985)

**Origin:** Bred in 2006 by Clifford P. Ambers at Chateau Z Vineyard in Monroe, Virginia, through a pollination of 'Munson' (Hermann Jaeger's cross of *V. Aestivalis* var. *lincecumii* X *V. Rupestris*) with flowers from 'Jupiter' a muscat table grape from the University of Arkansas breeding program. 'Munscato' is a combination of MUNSON and musCATO. The original vine first fruited in 2009. Significant crops were harvested in 2010 and 2011 when enough fruit for wine was first obtained.

**Cross/Selection/Test:** A dozen seedlings from the cross were evaluated and the #4 seedling was selected by Ambers for naming after the evenly wet 2011 growing season in which 'Concord' proved utterly unsuitable to central Virginia conditions (cracking/uneven ripening) while the 06-72-4 vine produced a copious crop of long-hanging clusters suitable for the exact same uses as 'Concord'. Unlike 'Concord', however, 'Munscato' carries a distinct muscat fruitiness in combination with an 'America' -like post oak flavor from 'Munson'. Like its half sister 'Appomattox', 'Munscato' proves a reliable replacement for Concord although with a new fruit flavor.

**Release:** Cuttings of 'Munscato' were sent to growers in Arkansas and Alabama during the winters of 2009 and 2010. It was released to R.M. Martin of Madison Heights, Virginia in early 2011 and to Jim Raup of Wingina, VA, in early 2013.

**Type:** Table, juice, jams/jellies, cooking, wine.

**Color:** Black with blue bloom. Juice is very dark, reddish-purple.

**Berry:** Slightly ellipsoidal. Typically 5/8" diameter but ranging 1/2"-3/4" in diameter.

**Cluster:** Open, 5" long, slightly conical to cylindrical. Berries well attached to clusters.

**Viticultural Characteristics:** Like 'Appomattox', 'Munscato' is a good example of a vine having an admixture of traits from both parents in roughly equal proportions. The vine has the vigor and disease resistance of 'Munson' while also carrying the self-fertility and fruit quality of 'Jupiter', although 'Munscato' bears seeds. 'Munscato' is far better suited to central Virginia conditions than 'Concord' which commonly cracks and ripens very unevenly. 'Munscato' has better color, Brix, and acid content than 'Concord'. 'Munscato' berries cling to the clusters better and it does not attract pests with strong vineyard aroma as does Concord. 'Munscato' can be harvested over a long interval of four weeks allowing for convenient harvest, and it ripens about the time of Concord. The inclusion of *aestivalis* var. *lincecumii*, and *rupestris* genetic material through the use of 'Munson' in breeding 'Munscato' adds significant adaptation to southern conditions compared to the high *labrusca* content of 'Concord' and 'vinifera' content of 'Jupiter'.

**'Munscato' Harvest Data - Chateau Z Vineyard, Monroe, Virginia**

Date	Brix	TA%	pH
8/12/2010	18.4	0.90	3.33
9/4/2011	17.1	0.78	3.46

**Disease/Pests:** Has not shown significant susceptibility to any of the common disease or insect pests given a four spray, early season, protective spray schedule in central Virginia.

**Wine Quality and Characteristics:** Fruit chemistry shows 'Munscato' capable of producing wine-ready fruit off the vine, although minor acid adjustment and chaptalization may be desired. Fermented on the skins it produces a very dark red-purple wine with a strong, muscat aroma bearing the distinctive grape candy-like fruitiness passed on by 'Munson' to nearly all its derivatives. Finished semi-sweet to sweet, this wine is capable of providing an extremely valuable product to wineries not constrained by vinifera racism and who are in a position of needing to sell wine to average Americans who like their wine sweet and want red wine for its health benefits. Having dark color and a crisp, clean, recognizably American grapey aroma puts 'Munscato' wine right at the center of what most wine buyers want in central Virginia.

**Fruit Quality and Characteristics:** The fruit of 'Munscato' is extremely pleasing off the vine, being sweet, richly fruity, low acid, juicy, with a pleasant mouth feel to the pulp. It is capable of serving the same role in home recipes for juice, jams, jellies, pies and table use as 'Concord' with much better yields due to its persistence on the vine.

**Season:** About with 'Concord' except extending several weeks around Concord's precarious harvest.

**Cold Hardiness:** Currently unknown, but should extend north well into USDA Zone 5 given its parents' cold hardiness.

**Use:** Wine, juice, jelly, jam, cooking, table grape.

**Notes:** Enough cannot be said about the unsuitability of 'Concord' for southern growing conditions. Although the vine thrives in the Mid-South and Mid-Atlantic, summer high temperatures in these regions appear to cause uneven ripening and premature fruit degeneration. Further south the heat increases and the presence of Pierce's disease adds to the difficulty. A replacement for 'Concord' has long been sought in the South, but to little avail, even though many of T.V. Munson's varieties (especially his Extra and Delicatessen) could have long satisfied that yearning had any vine propagator really cared. In bringing forth 'Munscato' Ambers hopes to add a new flavor to the vines available for home/low spray use. In the same class as 'Appomattox', 'Munscato' offers a fresh change from pure labruscana welchiness and post oak candy flavors. It can be combined with 'Appomattox' in the primary fermentor for even more flavor variation in sweet red wines.

**Obtaining Propagation Materials:** Visit [www.newVAgapes.org](http://www.newVAgapes.org) to download the instructions page for obtaining materials.

