
Blanc Du Bois



A FLORIDA BUNCH GRAPE FOR WHITE WINE

JOHN A. MORTENSEN



AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION

INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, GAINESVILLE

J. M. DAVIDSON, DEAN FOR RESEARCH

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A Florida Bunch Grape for White Wine

J.A. Mortensen

Dr. Mortensen is a professor with the University of Florida, Central Florida Research and Education Center, Leesburg, Florida.

'Blanc Du Bois' is being released by the University of Florida as a vigorous and long-lived variety of Florida hybrid bunch grape for use in making white wine. It is early ripening, is resistant to Pierce's disease (PD), and grows and fruits well on its own roots.

The name is in honor of Emile DuBois, who came to Florida from France in 1882. An accomplished grape grower and winemaker in the Tallahassee area, DuBois spearheaded efforts in the state for 20 years. He planted over 150 varieties of grapes and made a wide variety of Florida wines, receiving numerous medals at the Paris Exposition in 1900. In his honor the name 'Blanc Du Bois' was suggested by Lafayette Vineyards & Winery.

Origin

Blanc Du Bois originated from the grape breeding program at the Central Florida Research and Education Center in Leesburg. Blanc Du Bois was one of 19 segregants from a 1968 cross between Florida D6-148 and Cardinal. Florida D6-148 was a PD-resistant selection with purple fruit selected from 95 seedlings of a self-pollination of Florida A4-23 (Fig. 1). Blanc Du Bois was transplanted to the vineyard in 1970, first fruited in 1973, and was selected in 1974 and propagated for further test as Florida H18-37.

Vine and Fruit Characteristics

Blanc Du Bois grows vigorously, with a semi-erect branching growth habit. Leaves average 9 cm long × 12 cm wide, and are pentagonal. Lower leaf surfaces are dull green with sparse hairs, and upper surfaces are dark green and moderately rugose. Petioles are shorter than the main vein of the leaf blade, and the petiolar sinus is open. Teeth

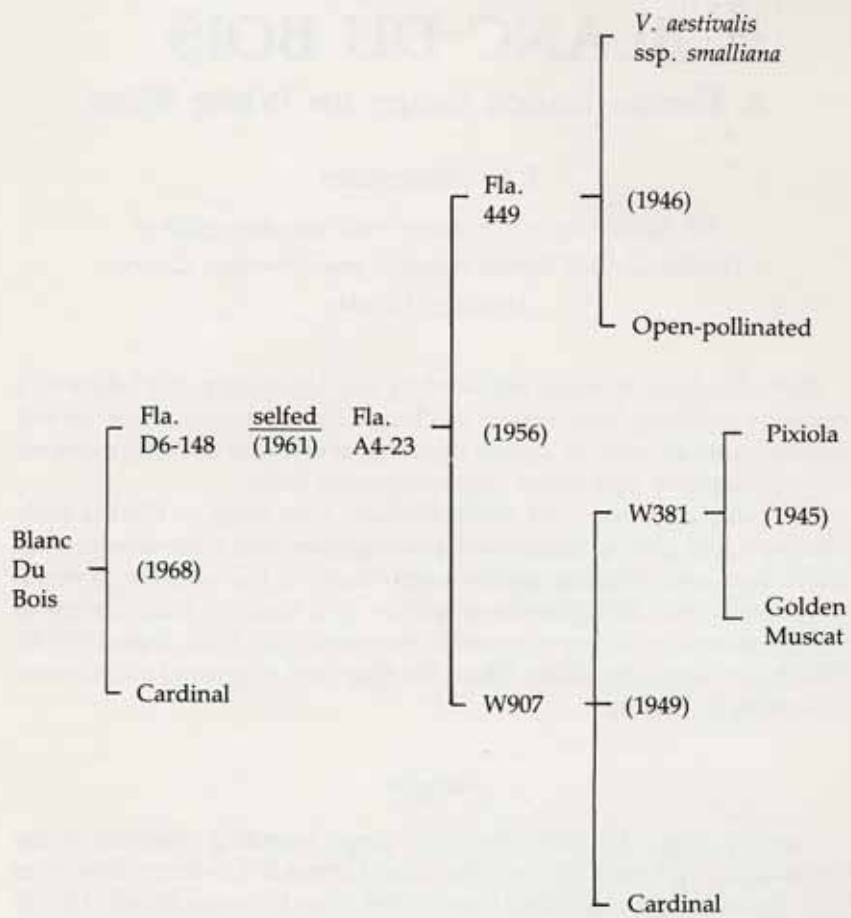


Figure 1. Pedigree of Blanc Du Bois with year of pollination in parentheses.

on leaf margins are bilaterally convex in shape. Internodes vary from 4 to 10 cm in length, and tendrils are discontinuous and branched. Fruit is normally borne on the second and third nodes of the shoot. Flowers are self-fertile. Fruit clusters are of medium compactness, with enough looseness for good spray penetration. Clusters average 133 g each, and berries 2.9 g, with 45 to 55 berries per cluster. Berries are round, light green, slipskin, juicy, with muscat flavor. Seeds per berry average 3.2. Blanc Du Bois ripens its wood to a brown color, and roots readily from dormant cuttings. Budbreak occurs early from a relatively high percentage of buds, affording yields of 5.3 tons per acre (11.9 MT/ha) (Table 1).

Disease Resistance

Blanc Du Bois is resistant to PD, rarely showing symptoms. It is also resistant to downy mildew [*Plasmopara viticola* (B & C) Berl. & de T.], *Isariopsis* leaf blight, and grape leaf folder (*Desmia funeralis* Hubner). It is susceptible to anthracnose [*Elsinoe ampelina* (de Bary) Shear], black rot [*Guignardia bidwellii* (Ell.) Viala & Ravaz], and ripe rot [*Glomerella cingulata* (Stonem) Spaulding & Von Schrenk] but can be managed by spraying preventively with fungicides. Blanc Du Bois is tolerant of nematodes, so grafting is needed only for vineyards with calcareous soils.

Wine Characteristics

Blanc Du Bois makes a spicy white wine which was rated very good in formal wine taste panels at Lafayette Vineyards & Winery. On the 20-point scale and evaluation form used by the American Wine Society, (with 9-11 average, 12-14 good, 15-17 very good, and 18-20 excellent) 'Stover' wine rated 15.2, 'Suwannee' 15.7, and Blanc Du Bois 15.9. The delicate sugar:acid balance plus the presence of muscat-like flavor in

Table 1. Characteristics of Blanc Du Bois compared with four other PD-resistant bunch grapes.

Cultivar	Yield (t/a) ²	Bunch wt(g)	Berry wt(g)	Date ripe	Sol. solids (%)	Color
Blanc Du Bois	5.3	133	2.9	7/3	17	lt. green
Lake Emerald	5.1	184	1.8	7/30	20	green
Orlando Seedless	4.1	139	1.4	7/1	22	lt. green
Stover	4.6	117	2.3	7/10	18	lt. green
Suwannee	5.0	113	3.0	7/7	16	lt. green

²t/a = tons per acre; multiply by 2.24 for metric tons per hectare.

Table 2. Processing data for Blanc Du Bois grapes grown at 2 locations in Florida (courtesy J. Burgess, Lafayette Vineyards & Winery, Tallahassee).

Year	Location	Harvest date	Sol. solids (%)	Total acidity (g/100 ml)	pH
1984	Leesburg	June 30	17.4	.92	3.3
1984	Tallahassee	July 9	18.9	.78	3.2
1985	Tallahassee	July 12	16.5	.83	3.5
1986	Tallahassee	July 7	18.1	.92	3.4

the juice have given Blanc Du Bois a prominent place among Florida's wines (Table 2). Blanc Du Bois also received a bronze medal in the 1986 Eastern International Wine Competition held in New York and a gold medal at the 1986 North Florida Fair Wine Competition. While many bunch grape cultivars lose character during the warm nights and hot days of ripening on the vines, Blanc Du Bois maintains its fruity quality through fermentation and into the bottle.

Uses and Limitations

Blanc Du Bois is recommended as a premium white wine cultivar for the South. Special precautions must be made to spray regularly with fungicides and to follow vineyard sanitation procedures such as weed control, removal of all fruit from the vines, and burning of prunings. Contact your local county agent office for updated spray recommendations. The trellis system should promote maximum light penetration into the canopy for reduction of fruit rot and achieving best quality fruit.

Principal Advantages

The principal advantages of Blanc Du Bois are resistance to PD, high quality fruit for premium wine use, good yields and vine vigor without grafting, and earliness of ripening. Economic potential appears good because of lower plant costs, since Blanc Du Bois does not require grafting.

Availability

Inquiries regarding the availability of Blanc Du Bois should be directed to Florida Foundation Seed Producers, Inc., P.O. Box 309, Greenwood, Florida 32443. A current list of nurseries selling Florida recommended grape varieties may be obtained from any IFAS County Extension Service office.



This publication was produced at a cost of \$1,433.35, or 17.9 cents per copy, to provide information about a Florida bunch grape for white wine.

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ISSN 0734-8452