

TRIBUTE TO HELEN FISHER

BY ANDY RENOLD

Helen Fisher is respected internationally as a viticulturist and grape breeder. She has lived horticulture and viticulture for more than 30 years. Helen received her B.Sc. (Agr.) with a horticulture major from University of Guelph in the early 1970's, and then earned her M.Sc. from Guelph as well shortly thereafter, with a focus on the impact of cluster thinning on yield and fruit composition of de Chaunac grapes.

Helen then worked in extension in Essex County until 1978 when she was hired as Research Scientist in charge of viticulture, grape breeding and peach/apricot breeding at the Horticulture Research Institute of Ontario, Vineland.

Two years later, Helen embarked on PhD studies at Cornell while simultaneously fulfilling her responsibilities at Vineland. Helen has conducted research over the past 20 years on a plethora of topics, including grapevine training systems, row and vine spacing, rootstocks, and more recently soil management.

She has also released several grape varieties, including Vanessa Seedless, and is "sitting on" some very exciting germplasm—particularly seedless table grape material. She is a guru on pretty well every aspect of agriculture in Ontario, particularly grapes, but just about everything else too. Helen also spends a significant portion of her time teaching—some at Niagara College, some at University of Guelph, and some at Brock University, where she holds an Adjunct appointment. What more can be said?

Helen Fisher is without question Canada's viticulture expert!

READ BY MAGARET APPLEBY

