







# Variety Focus Semillon

## A Road Down Memory Lane

Chik Brenneman  
In collaboration with Rex Johnston

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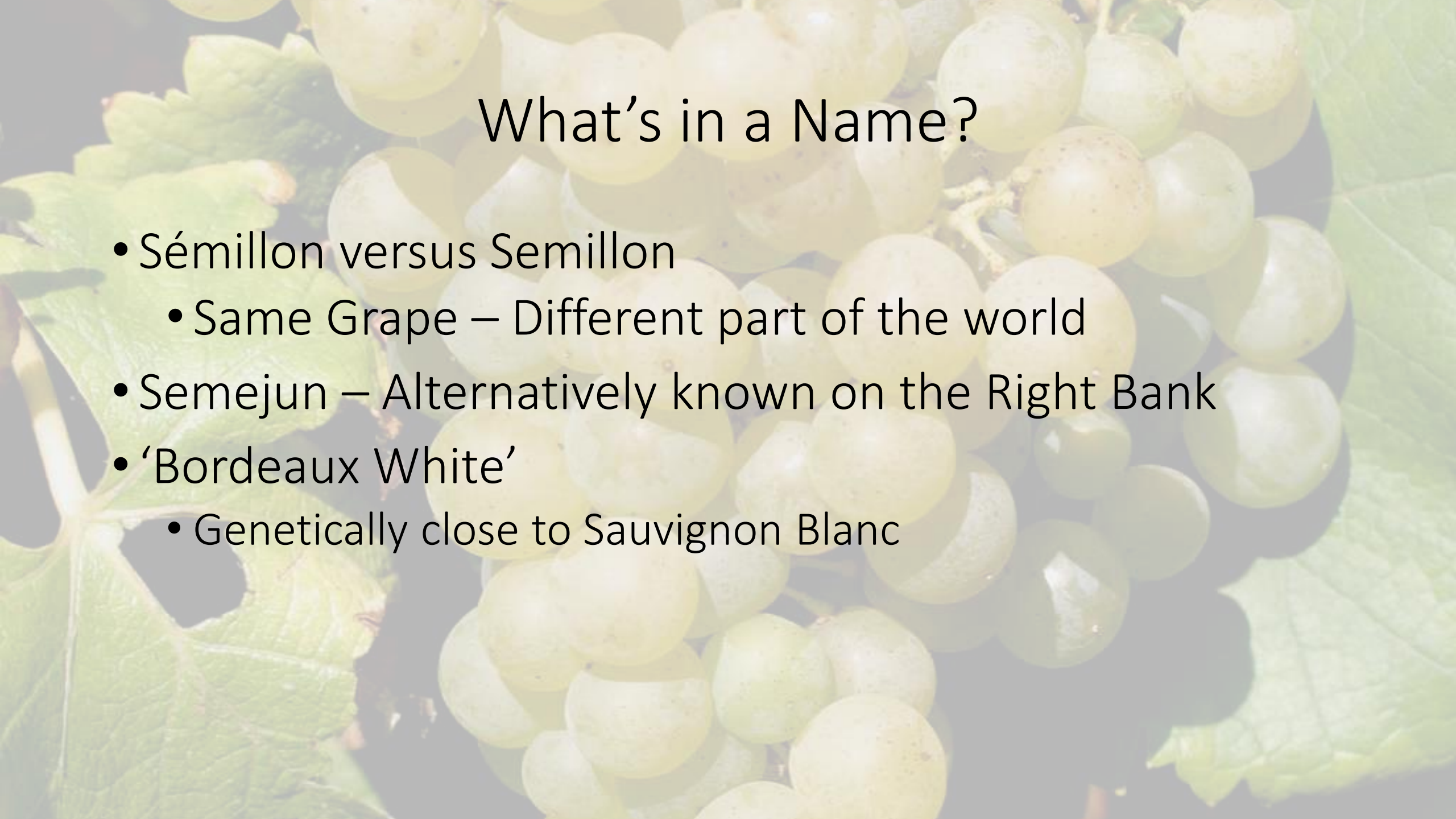
# About Rex Johnston..

- Analytical Chemist with Dow Chemical
- Home Winemaker
  - Member of SHW and formerly of the Contra Costa HW group
- Origins of WM in Michigan
  - Fruit wines
  - Dandelion Wines
- Moved to California ~1970's
  - With partners not very successful



# Rex's Second Opportunity

- Started in 1999
  - Visit to a local winery
  - Joined a local HW group and then things took off!
- 10-20 gal. batches/20-25 different varieties per season
- Numerous awards over the years
  - Winemaker Magazine
    - Seven years as the Winemaker of the year
  - California State Fair
    - Nine Golden Bears
- Over the years, Rex has enjoyed sharing his expertise with fellow winemakers in the clubs he has belonged to
- Bentlycellars.com



# What's in a Name?

- Sémillon versus Semillon
  - Same Grape – Different part of the world
- Semejun – Alternatively known on the Right Bank
- 'Bordeaux White'
  - Genetically close to Sauvignon Blanc





# The Wines of Semillon

- Still Whites - Blends of Sauvignon Blanc ~ 'White Bordeaux'
  - 70:30 (SB:SE)
- Sauternes
  - 70:30 (SE:SB) Maybe some Muscadet
  - Wines of the Noble Rot (Botrytis)
    - Chateaux Y'Quem
    - Ch. Giraud
    - Ch. Lamothe
- Sparkling



# Elsewhere...Best Examples

- Australia – Hunter Valley
- California
  - ~550 acres – 2021
  - ~3000 Tons – 2021
    - Regions 11/17
- Europe
- New Zealand

# Know 'isms'

- A good aging wine
  - With the right winemaking
  - Under the right cellaring conditions





# How to Approach Semillon

- Generally a mid-season ripener
- Acidity can be an issue
  - Tartaric Acid supplements are the norm – upwards of 3 g/L
- Aromatic Yeast
  - QA23 – Careful attention to nutrient supplements
- Inhibition of the MLF post primary fermentation
  - Sulfur Dioxide at 50 mg/L (ppm)
- *Sur Lie* aging if all the conditions are right
- Sterile Bottling (if appropriate)



# Cellaring Consideration

- Temperatures of ~55-65°F
  - In absence of this a cellar that does not have wide temperature swings
- Humidity of around 60% RH
- Protection from light
- An appropriate closure





# Rex's Wines...

- Made with Friend George Rammell
- Vertical tasting
  - 2004
  - 2005
  - 2006
  - 2007
  - 2008
- Botrytis Version v2012 – Dave Hicks
- Special Wine Sparkling 2012
  - Made by Chik Brenneman

# The Data

PICK DATE	SOURCE & AMT	Juice LAB-YEAST- TEMP	Wine 10/17/22
08-24-04	Stryker Winery Alexander Valley 15 gal	BRIX 20.5 pH 3.47 TA 7.4 g/L Premier Cuvee 55° F	Alc : 12.3% pH 3.45 TA 5.85 g/L
09-10-05	Stryker Winery Alexander Valley 30 gal	BRIX 19.6 pH 3.58 TA 6.2 g/L Premier Cuvee 55° F	Alc : 12.0% pH 3.25 TA 6.75 g/L
09-15-06	Stryker Winery Alexander Valley 30 gal	BRIX 21.8 pH 3.5 TA 6.56 g/L Premier Cuvee 55° F	Alc : 12.8% pH 3.88 TA 4.8 g/L
08-30-07	Stryker Winery Alexander Valley 30 gal	BRIX 21.7 pH 3.43 TA 5.4 g/L Premier Cuvee 55° F	Alc : 13.2% pH 3.48 TA 6.0 g/L
09-10-08	Stryker Winery Alexander Valley 25 gal	BRIX 23.5 pH 3.66 TA 5.5 g/L Premier Cuvee 55° F	Alc : 13.4% pH 3.20 TA 6.9 g/L



# 2012 Semillon – Botrytis Wine

PICK DATE	SOURCE & AMT	BRIX	pH	TA
12-06-12	Lake County 300 lbs	32.8	3.6	6.2 g/L
10/17/22		RS > 10 g/L	3.65	4.8 g/L

# Acknowledgements

- George Rammell
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- Rex!