

## Hand Harvesting At Night On The Fortress Vineyard



Fortress Vineyards began a new, night hand-harvest program for the 2007 harvest. This allows for the grapes to be picked in a cool environment and remain fresh when delivered to the winery for an early morning crush.

The picking begins at dusk and ends around one a.m. A custom-made, state-of-the-art light system was developed for this project. The

lights are mounted on a 50-foot light bar, and provided full light across 8 rows of vines. This allows two crews to hand pick grapes simultaneously.

Because the vineyard is located at 2,000 – 2,400 feet elevation, the temperatures drop quickly and significantly, and the average nightly temperature is 60° F. The grapes arrive at the wineries in the morning, fresh and chilled by the mountain's natural refrigeration. This new system ensures delivery of top-quality wine grapes and allows wineries to begin crushing first thing in the morning.

