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WINE & SPIRITS**Vineyard lets you see grapes rot online**

Fans of sweet dessert wines love to root, root, root for grapes to rot, rot, rot on the vines at this time of year. And now Dolce, makers of one of America's top nectars, is giving oenophiles a bird's-eye view of the decadent decaying process.

In July, the Oakville, Calif., winery installed a



By Greg Allen, Dolce Vineyard

Oh, rot: See it on the Dolce Vineyard Webcam.

Webcam in one of its Napa Valley vineyards and focused it on a few clusters of semillon grapes, used to make the \$75-a-half-bottle wine. Several times daily, pictures are beamed to the Web site, www.dolce-farniente.com, allowing viewers to track the grapes as they ripen. When nature cooperates, the grapes are attacked by the fungus *botrytis cinerea* — the so-called "noble rot" — that shrivels the fruit, darkens the skins, concentrates the juice and produces ambrosia-like flavors and honeyed aromas.

The crop looks "very encouraging," says winemaker Greg Allen. Harvesting began Oct. 15 and will probably continue to the end of the month.

— Jerry Striver