

# Hear! Hear! Texas wines fight cancer growth

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Like their counterparts in other growing regions, Texas wines -- made from grapes like these -- have been proven to fight cancer. Credit: US Department of Agriculture-Agriculture Research Service.

It's happy hour for Texas wineries. Research now shows that wines produced in the Lone Star State share the anti-cancer traits known to exist in wines from other producing regions.

Extracts from two Texas red wines decreased cancer cell growth in a comparable magnitude as other wines previously studied, according to Dr. Susanne Talcott, Texas AgriLife Research food and nutrition scientist.

Her study, which concluded in May, showed decreased growth of colon and breast [cancer cells](#) treated with port and syrah (or shiraz) wine. It was the first such study of the health components of Texas wines, she said.

"These results could definitely be projected to all Texas wines containing similar amounts of bioactive compounds," Talcott said. "And this will be the basis for a continued intensive study of all the health benefits of wines made in this state."

Talcott presented her findings at the recent Texas Viticulture and Enology Research Symposium.

She said the findings suggest that people who consume regular, moderate amounts of Texas wine daily -- up to a glass and a half -- may profit from similar health benefits ascribed to wines from other regions.

"In general, studies show that wine may either prevent cells from mutating into cancer cells, or stop existing cancer cells from growing and causing them to die," Talcott noted.

The scientific reasons behind her findings don't exactly make easy party talk, so think of it this way: wines interact with a newly discovered class of molecules in cancer cells, called micro RNAs, a type of nucleic acid associated with chemical activities in a cell. Some of those micro RNAs are involved in causing cancer. Compounds in wine can go after these molecules like cops chasing criminals down a dark alley.

In general, cancer cells merrily proliferate unregulated until the wine compounds interact and "arrest" the cancer cells, causing them to die, Talcott explained.

The compounds also may work to prevent cancer, she said.

The study of the health aspects of Texas wines may coincide with an anticipated continued rise in consumption, according to marketing analysts.

Total wine consumption increased in Texas by 1.25 percent in 2007, according to Natalia Kolyesnikova, at the Texas Wine Marketing Research Institute at Texas Tech University. In the U.S., wine consumption is expected to increase from 292.1 million to 321.5 million cases by 2012.

"If Texas follows this pattern, Texas wine consumption should expect to see similar growth patterns," Kolyesnikova reported.

Talcott now will begin a more intense study of the health components of Texas wines, including clinical trials and benefits on other ailments such as cardiovascular disease.

"We will not be short in study participants," she noted.

She also plans a monthly news briefing on the health of Texas wines to the state's 177 wineries and is available to speak at events and [wine](#) tasting rooms to share information on [health benefits](#) of wines and specifically Texas wines with the public.

Source: Texas A&M AgriLife Communications

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