



April 2011:

The launch to the 2011 growing season left a cool and wet impression. Indeed, the month of April brought much higher rainfall than normal. In comparison to the 30 year normal, however, the month of April brought surprisingly near normal temperatures. In fact, accumulated growing degree days for the month hit the 30 year normal values on the mark (Fig 1)! The impression of a cool spring is likely due to the fact that both April 2010 and April 2009 brought above normal temperatures. The significantly warmer than normal April of 2010 brought over twice the normal accumulation of growing degree days.

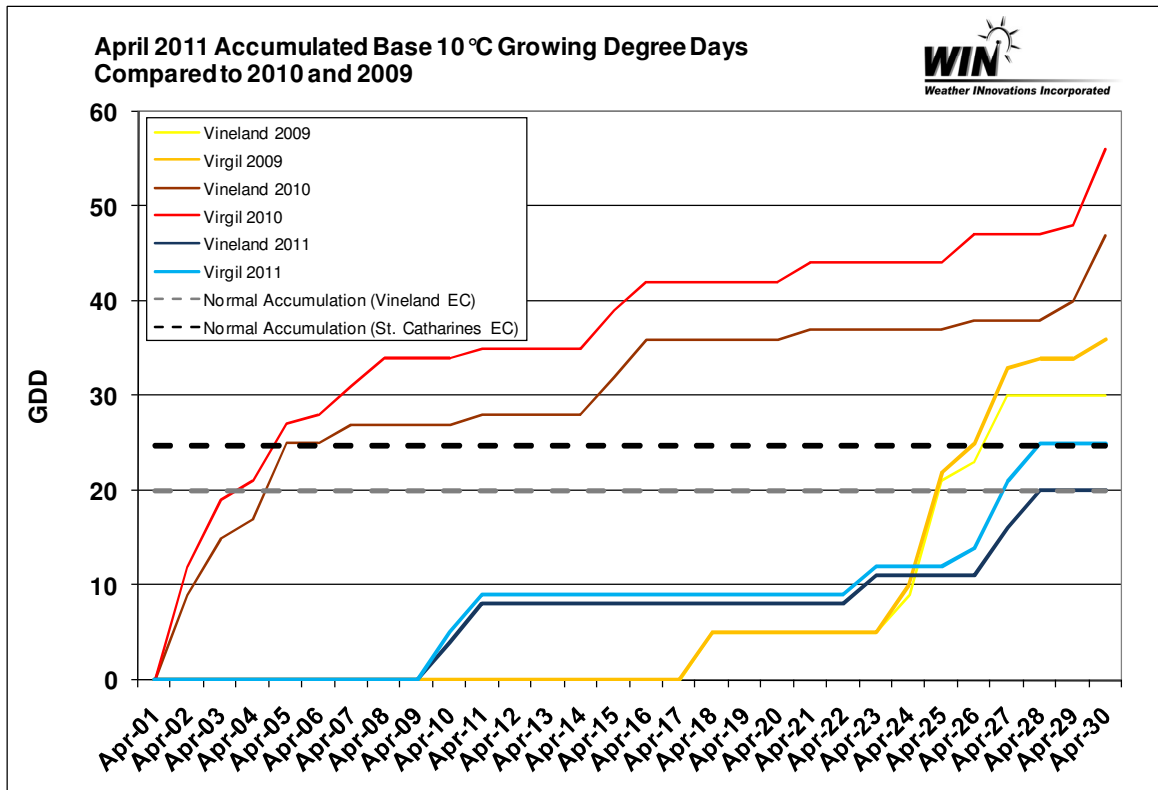


Figure 1: Growing Degree Days

April brought significantly wet conditions. All stations received 1.5 to 2 times the normal rainfall accumulation for the month (Fig 2 and 3). The month of April had higher than the normal number of days when rain events occurred, in addition to higher rainfall accumulation. Most stations received 4-7 more days with rainfall than normal (Fig 4 and 5).

The violent and widespread wind storm that occurred on 28th is also noteworthy for April 2011. Wind speeds in many areas across the Niagara region reached sustained 15-minute averages of 80-85km/hr at the peak of the storm. Maximum wind gusts would have exceeded 100km/hr.

Fortunately, a cool and wet spring is not necessarily a precursor for the remainder of the growing season. There is still an equivalent likelihood that the remainder of the growing season will bring sufficient heat and desirable moisture to each designated viticulture area.

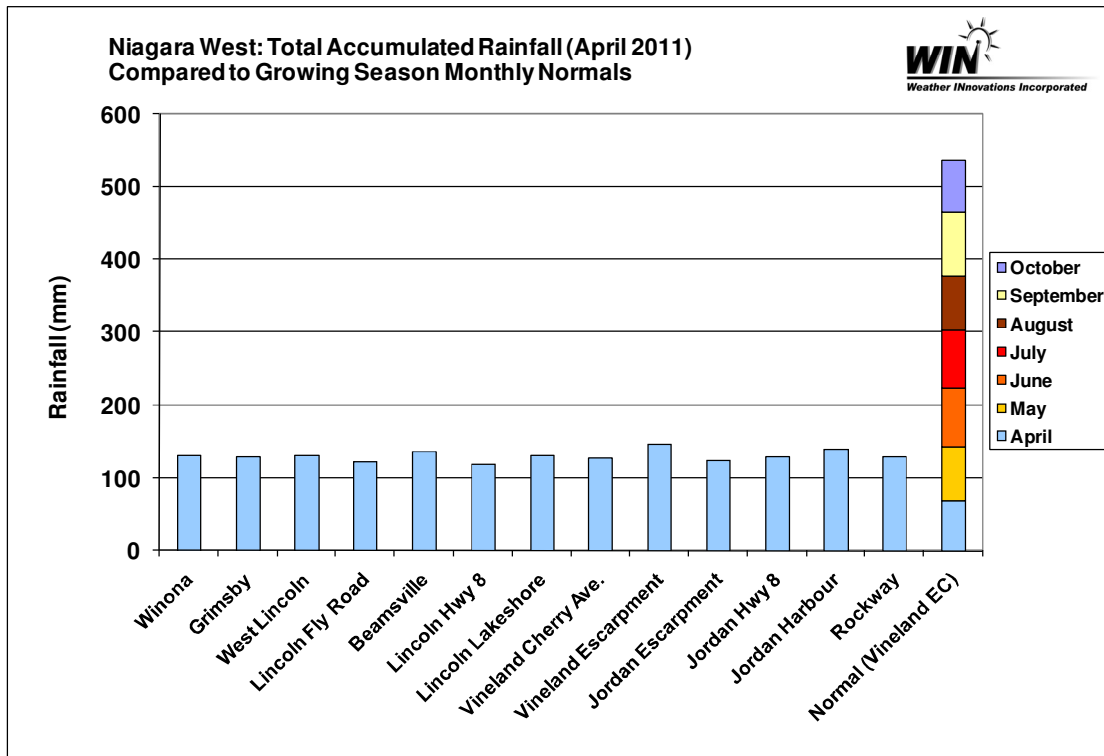


Figure 2: Niagara West - Rainfall

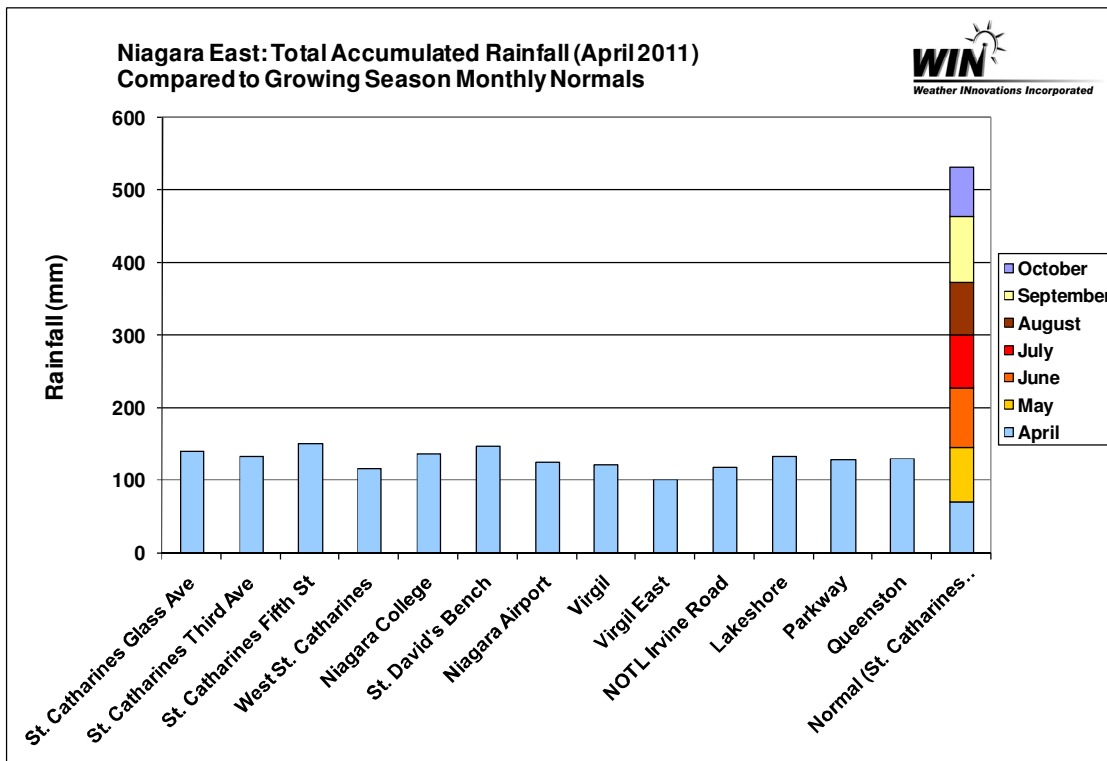


Figure 3: Niagara East - Rainfall

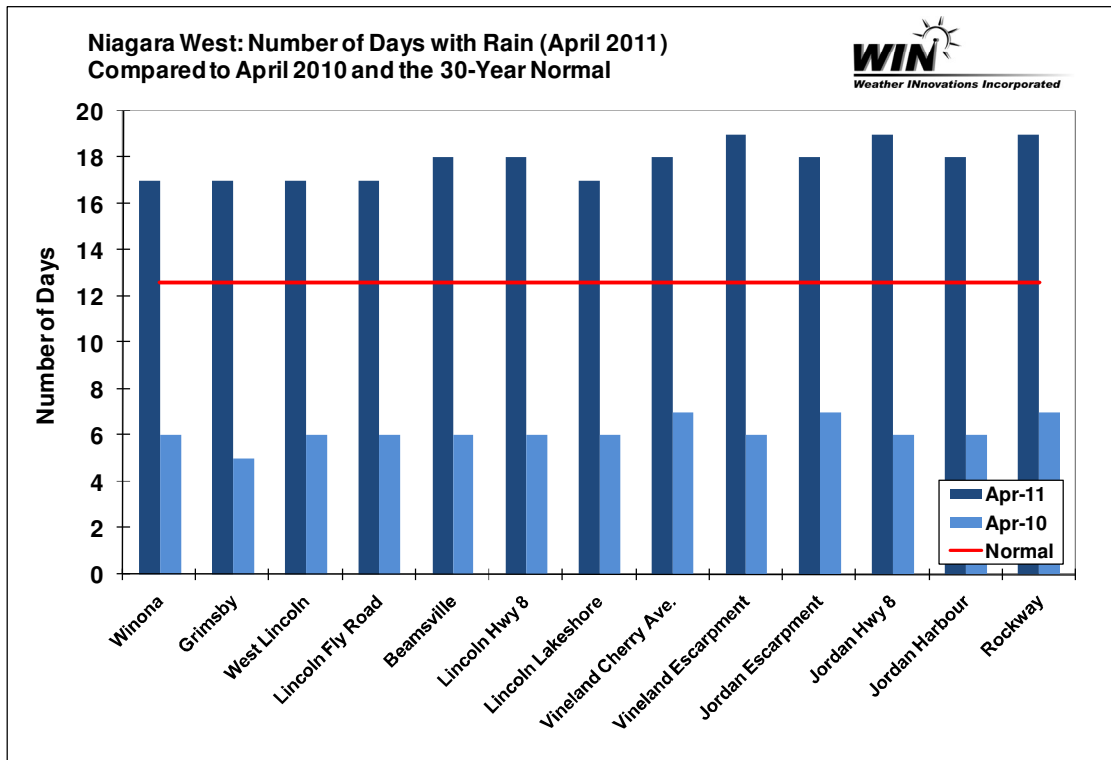


Figure 4: Niagara West - Number of Days with Rain

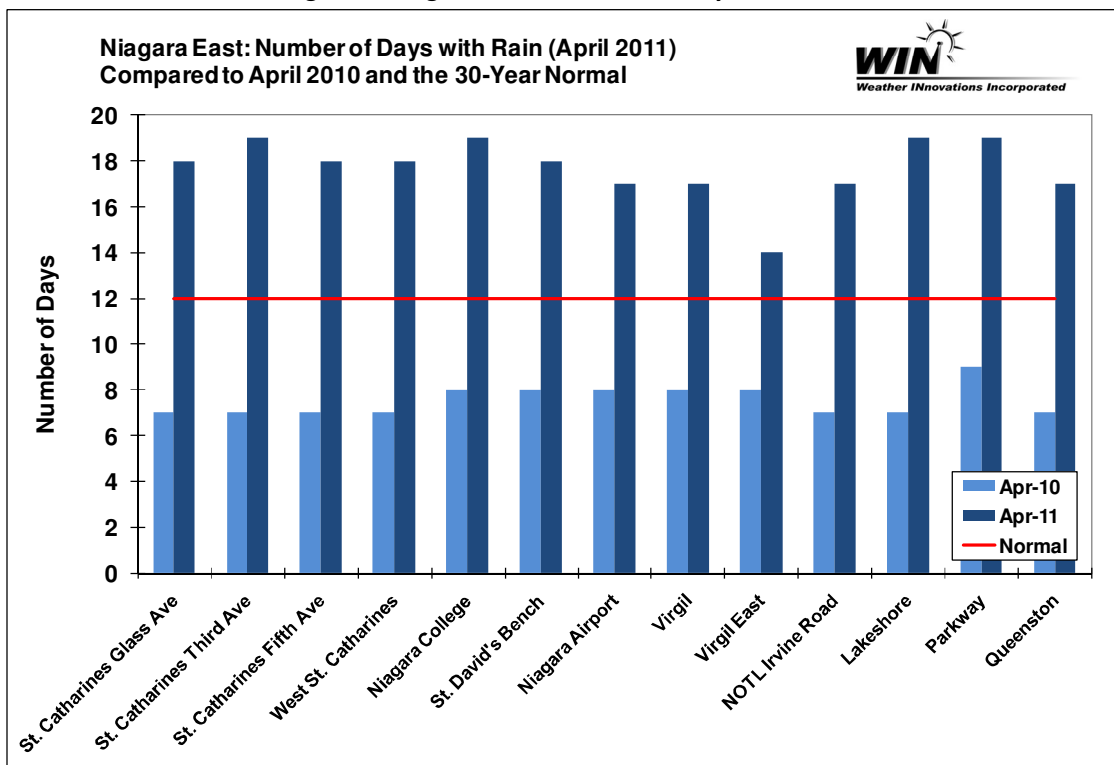


Figure 5: Niagara East - Number of Days with Rain