

WATERLOGGED GRAPE REMAINS (*VITIS VINIFERA* SSP. *VINIFERA* L.) FROM A BYZANTINE WELL AT SUPERSANO, SOUTHEAST ITALY: REMAINS OF WINE MAKING?

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Wine making is amply attested by written sources in Italy for the entire Middle Ages, but the archaeological and archaeobotanical evidence turns out to be sporadic because of its difficult interpretation and little research on it.

Recent archaeological investigations carried out in the Byzantine (7th – 8th century AD) settlement of Supersano, southeast Italy, have identified a well with waterlogged and charred plant materials. The composition of the collected samples includes large numbers of *Vitis vinifera* remains such as pips (often fragmented), grape skins and pedicels that strongly suggest grape processing for making wine. In order to identify the varieties employed, we have also undertaken outline shape analysis of pips in association with ancient DNA studies.

The results show indirect evidence of ancient winemaking in the Byzantine settlement and the analysis of varieties has demonstrated cultural and/or commercial contacts with eastern Mediterranean areas.

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