

Festival offers stompin' good time

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Don't be surprised if you see someone near Buffalo, N.D., this weekend dressed as Lucille Ball in the famous grapestomping scene from the television show "I Love Lucy."

They're probably just headed to the 2007 North Dakota Wine and Grape Harvest Festival and Grape Stomp.

A Lucy look-alike contest is one of the events planned for the Aug. 25 and 26 festival at the Red Trail Vineyard, about three miles east of Buffalo.

Saturday's grape stomp pits

competitors against one another to see who can stomp the most juice out of a given amount of grapes.

"It's quite a workout," vineyard co-owner Rodney Hogen said.

The grapes are then strained for 30 seconds and the juice weighed.

It's "as scientific as we can get it," said Hogen, who is also president of the North Dakota Grape Growers Association.

There are also grape stomp competitions for children on Sunday.

However, even though Hogen

admits the grape stomp is a highlight of the festival, he adds that it isn't the only event.

The second annual festival also features hayrides, a caricature artist, three bluegrass concerts, a magic show, food vendors, crafts and, of course, a wine and beer garden. Visi

tors also can go on a tour of the vineyard.

The event "provides a little entertainment and something to do," Hogen said.

Gates open at noon Saturday and Sunday. Individuals can sign up for the Lucy look-alike contest and grape stomp and get more information on the festival at www.redtrailvineyard.com.

The Red Trail Vineyard began growing grapes in 2003 and sold its first bottle of wine this year.

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