**Where is the best place to perform cold maceration or cold soaking of red grapes?**

The temperature needed for cold maceration is ideally between 40°F to 50°F. The typical available places for home winemakers are outside, in an inside cool location such as a basement, or a refrigerator. The answer depends on access to a refrigerator, the outside temperature, or ability and willingness to monitor and manually control the must temperature.

A refrigerator offers the best option for ease, precise temperature setting, and control. It is however, expensive and may take up space you don’t have.

In Minnesota, outdoor temperatures could reach the desired range. If choosing outside, the winemaker needs to ensure the must is covered, protected, and in a safe place without direct sunlight. A garage, porch, or shed are good locations. At any point, if the outside temperature exceeds 50°F, the winemaker may want to monitor the must temperature and watch for fermentation activity. Consider indoor cooling techniques if the must temperature could rise above 50°F.

Indoor cold maceration probably requires the most preparation and attention. The basement is often the coolest and a convenient place at home to cold macerate. Since home temperatures are usually 55°F or warmer, the winemaker will need to manually chill the must. Pre-freezing bags, plastic bottles, or jugs of water and placing them in the must to cool it down to the desired temperature is a practical and effective option. These frozen containers require sanitizing before putting them in the must. The winemaker should monitor the temperature regularly and may have to rotate containers two or more times per day and stir to maintain a uniform must temperature in the desirable range.