

Vine Garden (solution)

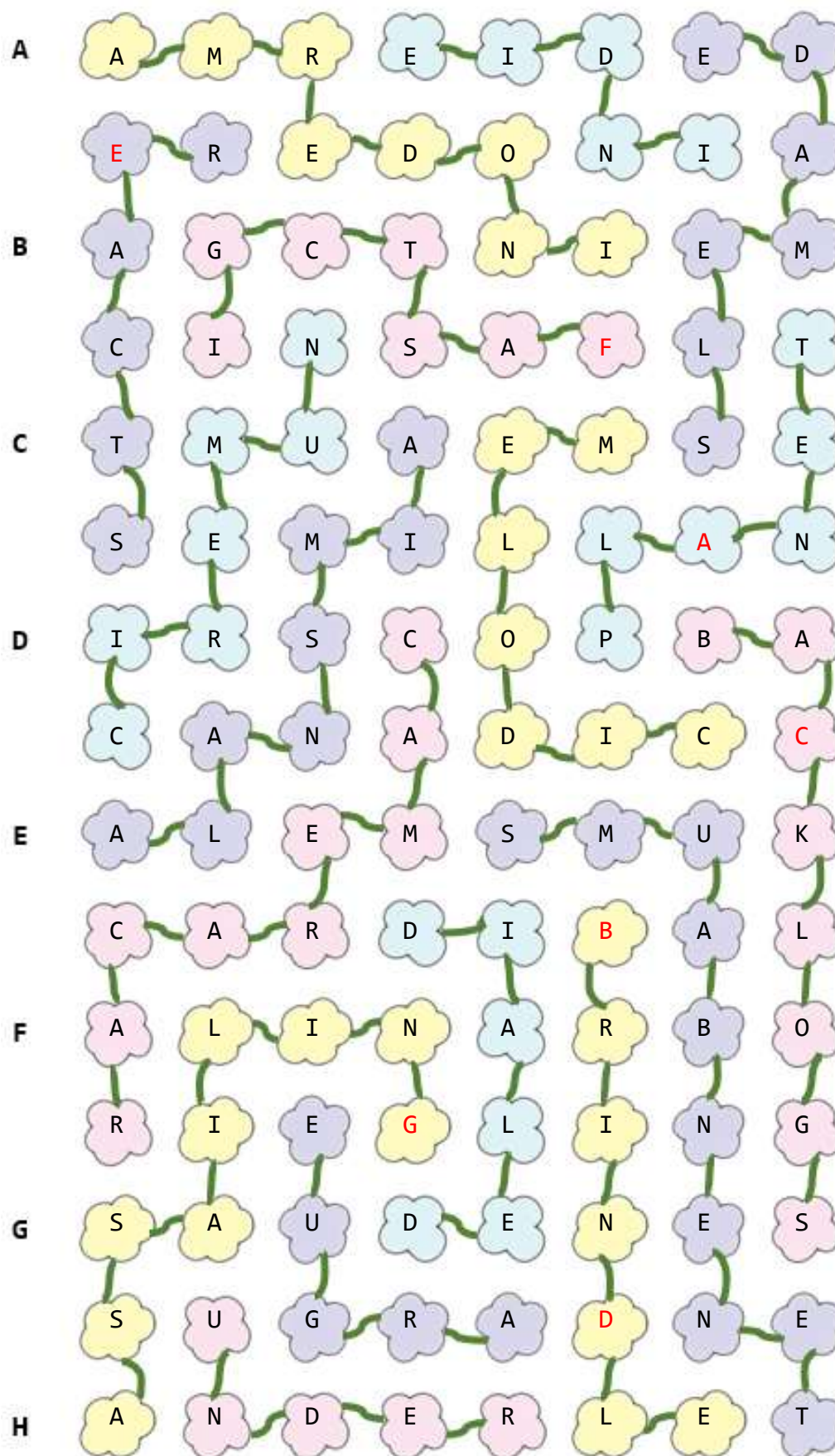
by Ong Kah Kien

The given Row and Vine clues can be solved as answers that fit into the provided grid. Row answers fill the respective lettered rows, in the numbered position order shown on the leaves of those rows. Vine answers are in alphabetical order of the clues, and fill one of the connected vines in the grid of one color. The vine answer length will help narrow down which connected vine could fit the answer, although the exact position and which direction still needs to be determined. Like a typical crossword, each letter in the grid is doubly-crossed by both sets of answers, so that allows the vine answer placements to be unique. The tables below summarize the Row and Vine clues and answers:

Row Clues	Row answers
A: Stayed behind	REMAINED
B: Powerfully attractive	MAGNETIC
C: Former name of Japanese alternative idol girl group ZOC	METAMUSE
D: Describing an environment rich in dead or decaying organic matter, often inhabited by microscopic fungi	SAPROBIC
E: Slave-kings, of the <i>Forgotten Realm</i>	MAMELUKS
F: Impressive in appearance, or relating to a lower noble	BARONIAL
G: Neighbors of Egyptians	SUDANESE
H: Adorned like reindeer	ANTLERED

Vine Clues	Vine answers
A genus of grammitid ferns	ALANSMIA
To quarrel	ARGUE
Attacking violently	ASSAILING
Unfilled orders	BACKLOGS
Streaked tawny color of animal fur	BRINDLE
Google vehicle (2 wds.)	CAMERACAR
Called on an old phone	DIALED
Glossy varnishes	ENAMELS
A binary protocol for interfacing interactive programs with a web server	FASTCGI
Sundance film	INDIE
A genus of lichen-forming fungi in the family Arthoniaceae	INODERMA
Pleasing on the ear	MELODIC
Expressed in digits	NUMERIC
Celestial body	PLANET
Responds to stimulus	REACTS
Dysfunctional family in 2001 film	TENENBAUMS
Beneath or below	UNDER

The image below shows the filled grid, with changed letters in red:



The 7 alternating unclued rows each spell the names of grape varieties (including both table and wine, red and white), with a letter changed to a unique one from A-G. The following table summarizes these:

Alternating unclued rows	Grape varieties	Changed letters	New letters
EREDONIA	FREDONIA	F	E
CINSAFLT	CINSAULT	U	F
SEMILLAN	SEMILLON	O	A
CANADICC	CANADICE	E	C
CARDIBAL	CARDINAL	N	B
RIEGLING	RIESLING	S	G
SUGRADNE	SUGRAONE	O	D

Using the new letter as an alphabetical ordering, the changed letters spell the clue phrase ONE OF US. So the thematic answer to this puzzle is **GRAPE**.

Constructor's notes:

This puzzle is a keyed-order crossword variety (called Vine Garden by Foggy Brume), which is chosen as it is thematic to this puzzle's answer. The vine leaf images are reused from those created by Suzanna Roberts for a Mystery Hunt 2022 puzzle of this type. Concept-wise, I had the idea to hide the grape names in the unclued rows of the grid, as that would fit the theme and imagery. So hopefully the identification of these were intuitive, and not too difficult with the inclusion of some well-known grape varieties.