



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Inaugural wine research seminar considered a resounding success

Attendees found WAVE seminar full of practical, useful information

SEATTLE (July 20, 2016) - The first Washington Advancements in Viticulture and Enology (WAVE), a research-focused seminar sponsored by the Washington State Wine Commission and Washington State University, was a resounding success. Based on comments from attendees, the event helped transfer research information to grape growers and winemakers for practical application to their operations.

The research seminar, held July 14 at WSU's new Ste. Michelle Wine Estates Wine Science Center in Richland, Washington, featured research projects that have been funded by the Washington State Wine Commission. A recent survey of the Washington wine industry, administered by the commission, highlighted the need for improved transfer of research information into user hands. Seminars, conferences, and workshops were rated in the survey as the most preferred format to receive such information.

During the WAVE seminar, WSU researchers presented a mix of vineyard and winegrowing topics including irrigation, powdery mildew, managing viruses, and pest management. Enology topics included tannin management, wine spoilage, and native yeasts in the vineyard. The day ended with a tour of the new \$23 million wine science facility that opened last fall, of which the state's wine grape growers and wineries committed \$7.4 million. For the first WAVE, organizers believed it important to bring growers and winemakers into the new center.

"WAVE was a great opportunity to bring industry and academia together in our beautiful new wine science center to learn and discuss current research topics," said attendee Co Dinn, owner and winemaker of Washington's Co Dinn Cellars. "The specialized knowledge we have here (through WSU researchers) gives our industry a real competitive advantage. I'll be the first to sign up every year going forward."

Dr. Thomas Henick-Kling, director of WSU's Viticulture and Enology Program, said WAVE filled a great need in delivering research information to industry. He was pleased that the diverse audience of 80 growers and winemakers filled the meeting room to capacity, and stayed for the entire day.

The event provided in-depth, research information in one setting, said Rick Hamman of Hogue Ranches in Prosser. Hamman is chair of the Wine Research Advisory Committee, which is a subcommittee of the wine commission that serves as the scientific review arm for the wine industry. "It's vital to get this research information out to help address industry needs."

"I believe the exercise was extremely important as I can't think of any other industry in which research findings can be implemented to a tangible commodity in such a small timeframe," said Javier



Alfonso of Woodinville’s Pomum Cellars. As an example, Alfonso immediately instructed some of his growers to not continue deficit irrigation after veraison, based on Dr. Markus Keller’s talk on irrigation research. “I’m sure Dr. Markus Keller thinks he has preached this so extensively that everyone must know . . . but I didn’t grasp the importance earlier because I was not dealing with fruit shrivel then.”

“Accountability is important,” Alfonso said. “A Washington State Wine Commission sponsored research seminar is needed to show the industry where their fees are going.”

WAVE provided opportunity for the wine industry to see where their research dollars have gone and see that qualified researchers are working on industry problems, said Dick Boushey of Yakima Valley’s Boushey Vineyards and the wine commission’s research committee. He noted that about 25-percent of the wine commission’s more than \$5.5 million annual budget is spent on research, including the industry’s wine science center commitment.

“WAVE helped get information out to growers and winemakers and facilitate interaction between researchers and the industry,” Boushey said. The longtime grape grower of nearly four decades added that although he’s heard countless talks on powdery mildew, he learned something new from Dr. Michelle Moyer’s talk that he can apply in his management of powdery mildew.

The program included an overview of Washington State Wine Commission activities given by President Steve Warner. Activities include two Washington wine promotional months, the “Taste Washington” event that has grown to more than 5,000 attendees, target market activities, and Road Trip, a harvest-time event that brings top national wine influencers to Washington wine country.

WAVE information and proceedings can be found here. A date for WAVE 2017 will be announced soon.

About WA State Wine

Washington State Wine represents every licensed winery and wine grape grower in Washington State. Guided by an appointed board, the mission of the WSW is to raise positive awareness and demand for Washington State wine through marketing and education while supporting viticulture and enology research to drive industry growth. Funded almost entirely by the industry through assessments based on grape and wine sales, the WSW is a state government agency, established by the legislature in 1987. To learn more, visit www.washingtonwine.org.

www.washingtonwine.org/research/meetings-and-minutes

Media Contact: Heather Bradshaw, Communications Director, (206) 326-5752,
hbradshaw@washingtonwine.org

###

