



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# Washington reaches 1,000 active winery licenses

*Major milestone for second largest wine producing state in the U.S.*

SEATTLE (October 17, 2019) – Washington state’s wine industry reached a major milestone by surpassing 1,000 active winery licenses, according to the Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board (WSLCB).

“To think about where we started and where we are today is absolutely thrilling,” said Steve Warner, President of Washington State Wine. “From humble beginnings, the Washington wine industry now contributes more than \$7 billion to the state’s economy and generates roughly \$2.4 billion in revenue.”

In the early 1980’s, there were only 20 wineries in the state. That number grew to 74 in 2000, and has been steadily going up for the past 20 years.

“The fact is, Washington is a great place to open a winery,” Warner said. “The climate is perfect for growing grapes, plus we are a young industry full of optimism and drive. Our winemakers and farmers love to experiment, push boundaries, work together and want to see each other succeed. It’s an exciting place to be.”

As of October 2019, the WSLCB reported 1,010 active winery licenses. Number 1,000 on the list is Uva Furem, owned by Jens Hansen. Originally from Wenatchee, Washington, Hansen retired from the Air Force and moved to the Seattle area to attend the Northwest Wine Academy. He has trained under a number of winemakers, and is currently working harvest at Sparkman Cellars in Woodinville. He bought an old honeybee farm in Maple Valley, Washington to start his winery and will open a tasting room there early next year.

“I feel like the Washington wine community is a lot like the Air Force in that everyone looks out for each other,” Hansen said. “Everyone works together to get the mission done, and the mission here is to make really great wine.”

Vineyard acreage in Washington also continues to grow at a rapid pace. Twenty years ago, there were four American Viticultural Areas (AVAs) producing 24,000 acres of wine grapes and 70,000 tons of grapes. Today there are more than 59,000 acres of vineyards across 14 AVAs that produced 260,000 tons of grapes last year.

“We still have so much room to grow, both on the winery and vineyard side,” Warner said. “Washington is the New Epicenter of Wine – and truly, still just getting started.”

**#Wawine #NewEpicenter**

### **About Washington State Wine:**

Washington State Wine (WSW) represents every licensed winery and wine grape grower in Washington State. Guided by an appointed board, WSW provides a marketing platform to raise positive awareness about the Washington State wine industry and generate greater demand for its wines. Funded almost entirely by the industry through assessments based on grape and wine sales, WSW is a state government agency, established by the legislature in 1987. To learn more, visit [www.washingtonwine.org](http://www.washingtonwine.org).

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