

# Vineyards Lead the Way for a Cleaner, Greener Oregon

## **Sustainable Vineyards Rapidly Becoming the "Growing" Standard for Oregon Wine Industry.**

**Veneta, OR- June 6, 2005-** The sustainable certification organization Low Input Viticulture and Enology, Inc. (LIVE, Inc.), held it's annual event featuring certified sustainable and Salmon Safe wines at Willamette Valley Vineyards on May 26th. A panel with many of the Oregon wine industry's leading professionals discussed sustainable certification and its importance as part of Oregon's message.

Panel moderator was **Stirling Fox**, LIVE President and General Manager of Oregon Grape Management in Newberg. He manages estate vineyards for **Rex Hill, Bergstrom, Maresh, Chehalem**, and more.

Highlights from the panelists discussion included the following:

**Allen Holstein** is the executive vineyard manager for Oregon wineries such as **Argyle, Stoller, and Domaine Drouhin**. He recently enrolled almost 500 acres in the LIVE program citing that he didn't have to change many of his management practices and realized consumers appreciate the message of sustainability. He estimates around 80-90% of the new Dundee Hills appellation will be certified sustainable.

**Jim Bernau**, President and founder of **Willamette Valley Vineyards**, added, "Brand Oregon has established a message of environmentally green standards which are recognized internationally by retailers and consumers alike." Bernau explained how surveys have shown a body of consumers, growing exponentially, value messages of health and safety.

**Pat Dudley** of **Bethel Heights Winery** has used the LIVE and Salmon Safe message on her wine labels since 1997 and is one of the original members of LIVE. She spoke about how LIVE's international third party certification sets their wines apart in a competitive marketplace.

**Susan Sokol Blosser**, President of **Sokol Blosser Winery** and long time supporter of sustainable agriculture, stated "we are on the cutting edge of exciting opportunities for marketing and education. LIVE makes us all better farmers." She continued to speak of how sustainable practices make her feel more connected to the land: "Sustainability goes beyond caring about the insects, beyond the biodiversity, and beyond protecting the longevity of grape plants in the vineyard; sustainability even goes beyond leaving an economically viable vineyard operation for my children."

**Maria Ponzi**, Marketing Director for **Ponzi Winery**, said "Having the LIVE logo on our bottle of wine means our wines have reached the highest standards in the world." She continued with what Ponzi is doing to support sustainability, "Luisa Ponzi [as winemaker] put her foot down and made the decision: our winery will not process one grape that is not certified sustainable."

**Dan Kent** has been the director of **Salmon Safe** since the program's inception in the mid 1990's. He expressed the growing consumer response to unified industries and how the Oregon wine industry has a great opportunity to stand unified as a sustainable industry. All LIVE-certified grapes meet Salmon Safe requirements.

**Toni Ketrenos**, the wine buyer for the expanding Portland based chain of natural grocery stores, **New Seasons Market**, expressed how consumers look for sustainability logos on wines. Even without knowing all or any of the details of what the logos represent, the consumer assumes it means good things. She encouraged the industry to continue repeating promotion of the sustainable message due to growing consumer interest.

At the Annual Meeting that followed the panel, new LIVE Board members and officers were elected. The new Board members are Allen Holstein, and Brant Dutton of Dylan's Run Vineyard who is also a long time LIVE volunteer and supporter.

*LIVE, Inc. is a non profit organization providing vineyards and wineries with official certification for using sustainable farming practices based on international standards of Integrated Pest Management. As of June, 2005 the LIVE programs total acreage is 2,258, the program grew 25% from 2004 to 2005 and has acquired 799 new acres since January, 2005*

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