



Washington Wine Country Fact Sheet 2009

Mission

Founded in 2003, Washington Wine Country is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting wine-related tourism and economic vitality by fostering collaborative regional partnerships throughout the celebrated wine growing region of Eastern Washington, where 99 percent of Washington State's wine grapes are grown. The region includes the Yakima Valley, Columbia Valley, Walla Walla Valley, Red Mountain and the newer appellations of the Columbia Gorge, Horse Heaven Hills, Rattlesnake Hills and Wahluke Slope.

Vision

Our vision is to become the recognized industry leader in championing the "regional approach" by promoting the vineyard region of Eastern Washington to tourists and culinary travelers utilizing the "Washington Wine Country" brand.

History

In 2002, a group of business and community leaders formed to consider the economic future of Eastern Washington, and recognized that the burgeoning wine industry would be the key to its success. For the region to prosper like Sonoma and Napa, the group concluded that wine-related tourism would be the main focus and economic revitalization and other related industries would follow. Therefore, in 2003, the 501(c)(3) non-profit Washington Wine Country was established, with a mission to promote economic development through wine-related tourism, by educating wine travelers about the region's unique amenities and way of life and encouraging them to travel to the region where the grapes are grown.

Programs

Now in its seventh year, Washington Wine Country's programs and initiatives have grown to include:

- **Regional Partnerships:** Developing and implementing annual marketing and public relations projects to promote wine country tourism that are collectively undertaken by two or more partner organizations in the vineyard region
- **Community Development:** Producing and distributing billboards, avenue banners and city signs for the purpose of physically identifying the region as "Washington Wine Country"
- **Events:** Producing and promoting events in order to draw tourists to the vineyard region and raise money for Washington Wine Country programs
- **Education and Outreach:** Informing industry, government, investors, and the public of new amenities, wineries, business and investment opportunities through *Juice* monthly e-zine and other publications
- **Marketing:** Utilizing strategic marketing techniques to brand the region as "Washington Wine Country"

Wine Country Celebration

Each year, Washington Wine Country hosts the Wine Country Celebration and Grand Gala, the first event of its kind to host a series of fundraisers in wineries throughout the wine growing appellations. This weekend of events attracts business and community leaders from around the state to celebrate the successes of Washington's award-winning vineyard region and raise money for Washington Wine Country. Events takes place at various locations throughout Eastern Washington and include Winemaker Dinners in the Vineyards and a Grand Gala Benefit Dinner and Auction. For more information, visit www.winecountrycelebration.com or call 206.285.0514.

Board of Directors

Al DeAtley, Chair, local business leader - Yakima, WA
Christophe Hedges, Hedges Family Estate - Seattle, WA
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Staff

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