



About Us

Colorado Wine Industry Development Board

Colorado-A Beautiful State of Wine

While Colorado is known for mountains, the fertile valleys and vineyards are equally enticing. Colorado's abundant sunshine, warm days, cool nights and low humidity provide the perfect conditions for wine grapes that feature the complex character and chemistry required to craft award-winning wines. Colorado's many wineries, all small family-owned estates, have earned a well-deserved reputation for creating a variety of premium wines. From robust Merlots to expressive Chardonnays, luscious fruit and honey wines as well as deep ports, to elegant Rieslings and Cabernets, Colorado wines consistently win top national and international awards.

The History of the Colorado Wine Industry Development Board

Few Coloradans realize that the state's winemaking industry goes back over a century. Settlers on the Western Slope found the Grand Valley area, between Grand Junction and Palisade along the Colorado River, to be ideal for fruit and grapes. By 1899 the U.S. Department of Commerce was reporting a Colorado grape harvest of 586,300 pounds and wine production of 1,744 gallons. The razing of vineyards during Prohibition proved to be a major setback for the industry—although it was the advent of peaches in the ideally suited Grand Valley area--and the industry did not reappear until the 1960s and 1970s.

In 1977 the Colorado General Assembly enacted the Colorado Limited Winery Act to permit small "farm wineries" and paved the way for more commercial wineries to open in the next 10 years. By 1990 the industry had developed to the extent that the General Assembly passed further legislation, the Colorado Wine Industry Development Act, to create the Colorado Wine Industry Development Board under the authority of the Colorado Department of Agriculture.

The 2010 Board

Colorado Wine Industry Development Board is comprised of nine members who are appointed by the Governor. Five are from wineries divided by region: Grand Valley American Viticultural Area, Front Range, and Western Slope outside Grand Valley AVA—Delta and Montrose counties, Rocky Mountains, and Four Corners. One member represents grape-growers, two are wine wholesalers, one retailer, three ex-officio members from the general public, the Colorado Tourism Office Board and Colorado State University. The position is volunteer.

Board Chair- Guy Drew, Guy Drew Vineyards

Terry Cekola-Elite Brands, Denver

Corky Douglass-ex-officio representative

Kenn Dunn- Hermosa Vineyards, Palisade

Jim Durr- Surface Creek Winery, Eckert

Monty Haltiner- Crossroads Wine and Spirits, Grand Junction

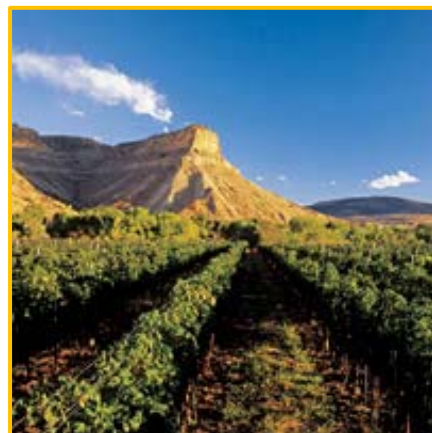
Paul Hilbink- Desert Moon Vineyards, Centennial

Janet Johnson- Southern Wine and Spirits, Grand Junction

Sue Phillips- Plum Creek Cellars, Palisade

Mike Thompson- Boulder Creek Winery, Boulder

Bob Witham- Two Rivers Winery, Grand Junction





Fast Facts About Colorado Wine

Colorado Wine Industry Development Board

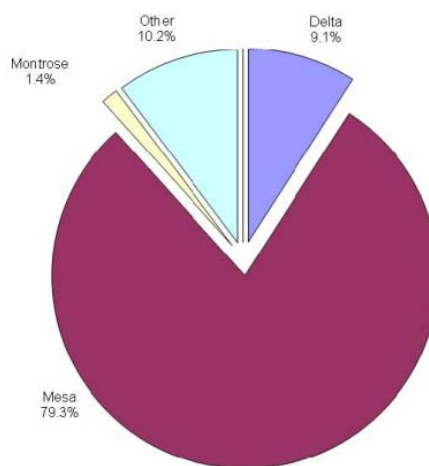
Our wine industry is older than you might think

The first recorded wine production in Colorado was 1899. It was Colorado Governor George A. Crawford, the founder of Grand Junction in 1881, who first saw the Grand Valley's potential for grape production. He planted 60 acres of wine grapes and other fruit on Rapid Creek above Palisade, now the site of the state's largest annual wine festival, Colorado Mountain Winefest coloradowinefest.com the third weekend of every September. Colorado is currently home to nearly 100 licensed wineries.

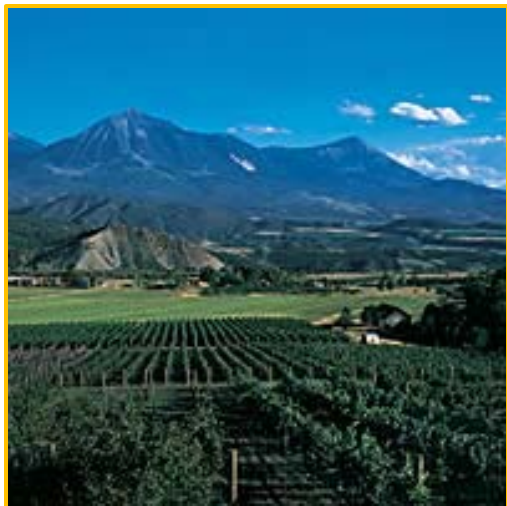
Two AVAs and five total distinct wine regions

Colorado possesses two federally designated American Viticultural Areas (AVAs): the **Grand Valley** along the Colorado River between Palisade and Grand Junction and the **West Elks** along the North Fork of the Gunnison River between Paonia and Hotchkiss. Together these regions produce 90% of the wine grapes grown in Colorado. The Front Range, Delta and Montrose Counties, Rocky Mountains, Grand Valley and the Four Corners (Montezuma County) make up the five distinct wine regions in Colorado.

2010 Colorado grape production by county



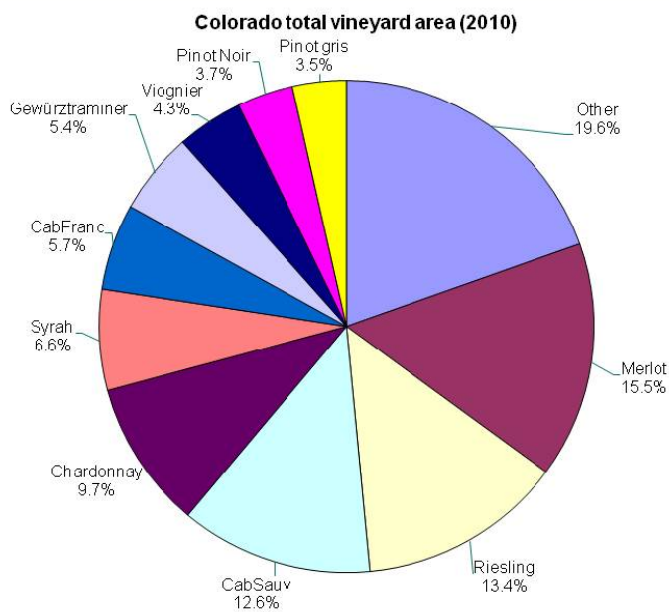
Vineyards with an altitude



Colorado's grape growing regions range in elevation from 4,000 to 7,000 feet and are the highest in the Northern Hemisphere, and among the highest in the world. Nevertheless, our growing conditions are not that different than Napa Valley or Washington State.

Our portfolio of varieties

Premium *vitis vinifera* varieties account for virtually all of the vineyard acreage in the state.



- Merlot is the most widely planted variety, accounting for 15.5 % of the state's acreage.
- Cabernet Sauvignon complements our Merlot, a Bordeaux pair, at 12.6%.
- Add Cabernet Franc, another Bordeaux cousin, at 5.7% and the "Meritage" grapes make up (including Malbec and Petit Verdot) make up more than one-third of plantings.
- Riesling, the most widely planted variety for the past four years running at 13.4%, has surpassed Chardonnay.. Together, the warm-climate, Rhone Valley varieties of Syrah, Viognier, Mourvedre, Cinsault and others make up more than 12%

Our terra and terroir

Colorado's soils, similar to the soils of Europe, are generally more alkaline than the acidic soils of California. Consequently, Merlots often taste more like Bordeaux here than in California, and Syrahs are more like Rhone Valley reds than like Australian Shiraz. The extremely dry climate keeps pest and disease pressures very low, so applications of pesticides and other chemicals are almost unnecessary, unlike more humid climates.

Double-digit growth

Colorado has an estimated 120 grape growers tending nearly 1,000 acres of vineyards, and more than 90 licensed commercial wineries and wine tasting rooms, which **generated right at \$17 million of retail value during the the last three fiscal years**. Colorado wine production has increased almost 70% over the last five years and more than ten-fold since fiscal year 1991-1992, when the Colorado Wine Board began keeping records.

Award winning wines

Colorado wines continue to win top awards at international, national and regional competitions including:

- Two 2010 Jefferson Cup winners in categories Red Vinifera and Dessert Wine.
- Gold and Double Gold at the 2010 Indianapolis International Wine Competition
- Double Gold at the 2010 International Eastern, where Colorado also took top honor at the 2004 World Riesling Championship and the Best in Style in 2006.
- Double Gold medals at both the 2008 and 2009 Tasters Guild International Wine Competition.
- Best of Class at the 2008 Jerry Mead International Wine Competition.
- Gold medals at the 2008 International Eastern and the Finger Lakes International.



Executive Biographies

Colorado Wine Industry Development Board

Doug Caskey, Executive Director

Caskey was tapped in 2000 to be the Executive Director of the Colorado Wine Industry Development Board. His mission is to oversee the promotion of Colorado's wine and grape products in Colorado and beyond.

Caskey is a 30-year wine industry veteran, with experience in the restaurant and retail wine industries. As a well-rounded devotee of the Dionysus, the Greek god of theatre and wine, he has degrees in Theatre and English from the University of Denver and the University of Colorado at Boulder. Before joining the Board, he managed the wine department at Boulder Liquor Mart, one of Colorado's largest retail liquor stores in Boulder. Prior to that, he was wine director for the former Rattlesnake Club in Denver. He has also been a wine education instructor at Boulder's Culinary School of the Rockies and is currently chair of WineAmerica's State Agencies Council.



Dr. Stephen Menke, Associate Professor of Enology and State Enologist

Menke grew up on a four-generation, irrigated, mixed production farm in the Platte River Valley in central Nebraska. He earned a B.S. in agriculture from the University of Saskatchewan in 1980, and a Ph.D. in biochemistry/molecular biology from the University of Wyoming in 1992. He did postdoctoral work on Pierce's disease in grapes at the University of Arizona, and subsequently left academia to be manager/assistant winemaker for several years at Sonoita Vineyards in Elgin, Ariz.

Menke rejoined academia in 1999 as enology specialist in the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition at the University of Illinois, funded as the first Illinois state enologist by the Illinois Grape and Wine Resource Council. There, after a comprehensive initial industry survey, he set up and administered both outreach and research programs, and taught classes on wine/food interactions. Most recently, Menke was the first statewide extension enology educator for Penn State University, where he focused on the establishment of tight linkages between grape vineyard quality, winery processing quality and market definitions of quality.



Dr. Horst Caspari, Professor and State Viticulturist

Dr. Caspari joined Colorado State University in July 2000 as an associate professor and state viticulturist. Born and educated in Germany, he studied Agricultural Science at the University of Bonn, Germany, and has a Diplom Agrar Ingenieur (equivalent to Agricultural M.S. degree) and Doctor of Agriculture (equivalent to PhD) from Bonn University.

He was a visiting scientist at the Department of Horticultural Science at Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand from 1990 to 1993. He held the position of Post-Doc (1994) and Research Scientist (1995 - 2000) with the Horticulture and Food Research Institute of New Zealand.



For more information about Colorado wines or the Colorado Wine Industry Development Board visit coloradowine.com, or call executive director Doug Caskey at 720.304.3406.