



WASTE REPORT for May 15, 2015

Waste, Vintage 2015

It's no secret Americans are embracing wine, leading entrepreneurs to plant fields of grapes across America. Washington State has been at the forefront of this trend since winemaking first expanded beyond California's borders decades ago. In fact, according to the USDA, as of 2013, wine is a \$230 million industry in Washington alone.¹

So with such a booming, well established industry, why is the **National Science Foundation providing \$853,000 to Washington community colleges to fund winemaking programs?**² This is especially strange given that community colleges throughout the Pacific Northwest have offered wine-centric degrees for years. Two of the recipients of this grant have well established programs; The South Seattle College, started the **Northwest Wine Academy** in 2004³, and Yakama Valley Community College began its **Vineyard and Winery Technology** program in 2010⁴

The justification, according to the grant synopsis is that last year, an industry assessment (available on the Washington State University website) found the state's wine industry could be in a labor shortage, needing more than six thousand new workers by 2018. But, a closer look at this study shows, that even at the upper extreme, **only 4% of new workers will require an Associate's Degree**. The vast majority, 5990 new workers (94%), will need no degree.⁵

Most troubling, NSF is often touted as being critical to funding cutting-edge, basic research that the private market would not. Yet this grant does not fund research. Instead, it is targeted at community colleges with existing wine programs to help them "share resources and develop new online and hybrid curricula for Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degrees..."⁶

So, what wine pairing goes best with waste?

¹ USDA, National Agriculture Statistics Service, *Washington Wine Grape Release*, Washington, D.C., March 2014

² NSF, *Pacific Northwest Viticulture and Oenology Education Collaborative*, Washington, D.C., Award No. 1501522, March 2015. Web. http://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/showAward?AWD_ID=1501522&HistoricalAwards=false

³ <http://nwwineacademy.com/about/mission>

⁴ <http://www.yvcc.edu/academics/programs/Agriculture/vinewine/Pages/default.aspx>

⁵ Agri-Business Consultants, LLC. *Washington Wine Grape and Winery Employment Needs Assessment with Projections to 2018*, Prosser, WA, March 2004

⁶ NSF, *Pacific Northwest Viticulture and Oenology Education Collaborative*