



COLORADO WINE INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT BOARD
2645 5TH STREET, BOULDER, COLORADO 80304- 3203
720.304.3406 / FAX: 720.304.3405 /
WWW.COLORADOWINE.COM

News Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kuvy Ax
The Fresh Ideas Group
(303) 449-2108, ext. 14
Kuvy@fresideasgroup.com

Colorado wine industry enjoying its 'teen' years *WineBoard 14 years old, Colorado wine industry growing at 16.75%*

DENVER, Colo. (March 20, 2006) - Although wine grapes were first cultivated in Colorado as early as 1890, the contemporary wine industry in this Rocky Mountain state has been tracking its wine production and market share for the past 14 years through the Colorado Wine Development Industry Board (CWIDB).

Recent numbers for the 05/06 fiscal year pace Colorado wine industry growth at 16.75 percent by volume produced over the prior year, making for a nearly 900 percent growth for Colorado wines since 1991. "Our growth is not only quantitative, but qualitative as well," said Doug Caskey, executive director for CWIDB. "Many Colorado wines are winning international wine competition awards and earning critical kudos, while our industry focuses on the best varietals within each micro-climate and region."

At the 2006 Denver International Wine Competition, Colorado won the top honor in the Chardonnay category as well as two silver medals for Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon and Bronze medals for Dry Riesling and Rose. At the 2006 International Eastern Wine Competition in New York, Colorado wines walked away with Double Gold Medal for Merlot, Ruby Port and Cabernet Sauvignon, as well as two additional gold medals for Cabernets, a gold for Syrah and a gold for Claret. And a Colorado Riesling was one of the category finalists and a gold medal winner in the World Riesling Cup at the same competition.

Colorado has 64 wineries in five distinct wine regions, two of which have achieved their own federally designated American Viticultural Areas: the Grand Valley AVA, along the Colorado River between Palisade and Grand Junction, and the West Elks AVA along the North Fork of the Gunnison River between Paonia and Hotchkiss. The state's viticultural landscape is diverse, from the nation's highest elevation vineyard at 6,417 feet above sea level in Paonia growing Riesling, Gewürztraminer and Pinot Noir, to the hot valley floor along the Colorado River near Palisade where Syrah and Viognier thrive in the Rhone Valley style. Distinctive, expressive Merlots, elegant Cabernet Francs and Sauvignons also come from this valley. Vineyards in the Four Corners region are strewn with Anasazi pottery chards, while grapes are also beginning to grow around Cañon City and Loveland on the Front Range.

"The Colorado cuisine trend may be in its infancy, but the Colorado wine trend is now happily in its adolescence, heading swiftly toward adulthood," Caskey said.

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About the Colorado Wine Industry Development Board

The Colorado Wine Industry Development Board is an agency of the Colorado Department of Agriculture dedicated to promoting and furthering the development of Colorado's grape growers and vintners. CWIDB supports the growing efforts of more than 64 wineries throughout the state producing a growing array of premium quality wines. For additional information, visit www.coloradowine.com.