



Brenna Wiegand/For the Capital Press

Tim, Pierre and Pete Paradis operate Paradis Vineyard near Silverton, Ore. The 60-acre vineyard is leased by Adelsheim Winery in Newberg.



Thirty-year grower Chris Deckelman talks about the ins and outs of wine grape production. Deckelman, owner of Meridian Estate Vineyard and Vitis Ridge Winery, manages a total of 250-280 acres in the Silverton, Ore., area.

Vineyards need to be 'tucked in' for winter

By **BRENNA WIEGAND**
For the Capital Press

It's all about the vines, Willamette Valley vineyard operators say.

"To ensure a great spring in the vineyard it's important to have good vine health through the growing season," Pete Paradis of Paradis Vineyard in Silverton, Ore., said. "This year water has been a critical issue and we have utilized our drip irrigation system more than ever before."

Next is vine nutrition. The soil is monitored annually and a nutrient balance is achieved by adding recommended amounts of custom-blended fertilizer. Vine petiole analysis is commonly done to determine the vine's nutrient uptake.

"Third and likely the most important thing is using fungicides to protect the vines from ever-persistent disease pressure," Paradis said.

"In the vineyard industry there's not a lot of getting winter prepared," Chris Deckel-

man, of Meridian Estate Vineyard & Vitis Ridge Winery in Silverton, said. Including his own 100, Deckelman manages 250-280 acres of wine grapes in the Silverton area.

"When you're all through picking — it can be the end of October some years — you wait until the plants go completely dormant, normally around Dec. 1-15, and then you start pruning and training again. It's a labor thing, too; you're trying to keep your labor force active 12 months of the year."

For Phil Kramer of Alexeli Vineyard & Winery, the additional task of making wine means no off season.

"Right when I'm done making wine, I need to bottle the vintage from a year ago," he said. "As soon as I'm done bottling I have to prune the vineyard and then finish the wine from the current vintage."

After that the growing season's on its way and Kramer's running the tasting room and continually distributing

his wine. "You can't leave home in the summer because you have to spray every two weeks and I have labor doing work. ... It's at least 10 hours a day generally and there are a lot of long days."

The vines have done their work, too.

"After harvest the vines are tired; you would be too if you had to do what they do," Paradis said. "We like to say they go to sleep after a cold spell in November. They have worked hard and we have taken care of them well. It's time to rest."

"If we have done our job well they will rest well, allow us to trim their branches and arise renewed and ready for the next year."

Last year Adelsheim Winery of Newberg, Ore., began leasing Pete and Donna Paradis' entire 60-acre vineyard. Though their son Pierre still acts as field manager, he's been focusing more on his off-site equipment contracting, Rainbow Valley Enterprises.

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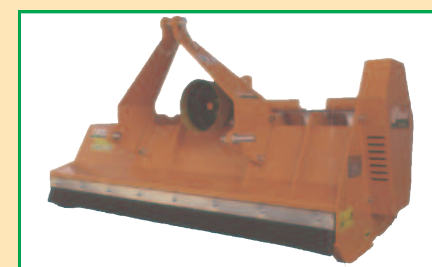
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