

Vineyard produces rootstock for other vineyards



Chris Shown of Brigadoon Wine Co. The winery is named after the 1954 movie "Brigadoon."

By ALIYA HALL
Capital Press

JUNCTION CITY, Ore. — Brigadoon Wine Co. is more than just a vineyard. The Shown family-owned business also produces scion wood and rootstock for other vineyards.

Established in 1992, Brigadoon opened with the encouragement of the eldest Shown son, Matt, who graduated from Oregon State University in horticulture. He worked at a winery in New Zealand before taking more classes at Chemeketa Community College. Now he's the family winemaker.

"He was looking for something that would offer both a mental and physical challenge, and thought that winemaking might provide that," Chris Shown, Matt's father, said.



A grafted rootstock. Vineyard owner Chris Shown was born into the wine business. His father operated a winery in the Napa Valley of California.

Chris was born into the wine business. He worked

for his father's Rutherford Vineyard in California's Napa Valley, and has applied that experience to Brigadoon, even though it is smaller and produces primarily Pinot noir instead of Cabernet.

The name of the winery came from the 1954 movie of the same name, in which a small village in a valley appeared only every 100 years.

"First time we saw the property it was January. It was cold and foggy out in the valley; we drove up the driveway in our old soccer-mom van, an old Dodge Caravan. As we got up the driveway we got above the fog, and basically had a beautiful, little valley open up to us. It was Brigadoon," Chris Shown said.

Initially, the Showns bought their plant material from Oregon State University, but have now switched to Washington State University.

They buy what is called "foundation block," which is what the start of rootstock

is grounded on. This is monitored carefully and screened for viruses on a regular basis.

Once the plants are in the ground, they are considered a mother block. These blocks are tested twice a year by the Oregon Department of Agriculture to ensure that the winery is selling only clean and virus-free material.

"When we started, I thought it would be interesting to grow the rootstock on a trellis. It was a good idea, but prohibitively expensive. We made the decision to start with a small area, cut the trunks and let the vines grow into the ground. That's how 75 percent of the world does it, and what a difference," Chris Shown said.

There was a definite learning curve for Shown in the beginning because of the expense and the lack of knowledge about which rootstock would grow well in the Willamette Valley. Shown described the process as akin to "throwing mud on the wall and seeing what sticks."

After the trial-and-error approach, the Showns could pick out which plants worked for them and what the market was seeking.

However, Chris Shown said the most important thing they have to offer is isolation.

"We're surrounded on three sides by timber, and the disease pressure and insect pressure is less than so many other vineyards and nurseries. We benefit from that," he said.

One rewarding aspect of selling rootstock was when Chris Shown discovered that plant material he grew was being planted in a vineyard owned by musician Dave Matthews.

"It was so cool," he said. "That's what makes you feel good."



SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL
WILLAMETTE VALLEY

AG EXPO

TUE • WED • THU
NOVEMBER 14 • 15 • 16, 2017

OVER 350,000 SQ. FT.
OF DISPLAY SPACE
ADDED 20,000 SQ FT OF
INDOOR HEATED SPACE
LIMITED VENDOR
SPACE AVAILABLE!
CALL TODAY!

1-800-208-2168

www.wvaexpo.com

Linn County Fair & Expo
Center • Albany, OR



Equipment Show



Ag Show Season Kickoff

