

# Paradis Vineyards: It's about the grapes

By **BRENNA WIEGAND**  
For the Capital Press

SILVERTON, Ore. — When Pete and Donna Paradis planted their first Pinot gris vines in 1990, they represented 15% of the variety grown in the state.

And that was with 12 acres.

The couple had just purchased a pastoral 100-acre property in the Abiqua Basin near Silverton, Ore. Its natural slope overlooked what would become a 60-acre vineyard that now includes 40 acres of Pinot gris and 20 of Pinot noir.

When their sons, Tim and Pierre, took over management of the vineyard in 2017, they brought into the partnership a 35-acre vineyard they'd planted near Molalla. The property adds 28 acres of Pinot noir, 5 acres of Muscat and 2 acres of Gamay to the mix.

The brothers began making wine in earnest and produced their first vintage in 2017.

"In 2017 we went all in and made 8,500 gallons, mostly Pinot gris that we made because we had surplus fruit," Pierre Paradis, the winemaker, said. "We then backed off on that and were planning on staying at 800 to 1,200 gallons."

Above all, they say, it's about the vines.

"The wine is fun; that's the experimental side and we enjoy trying different things," Tim Paradis said. "But we are farmers first and we want to produce the best product possible and get it out to other wineries."

The vineyards produce an average of 400 tons of wine grapes a year, 95% earmarked for other wineries.



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**Tim, left, and Pierre Paradis on the patio of their new tasting room. Paradis Vineyards and Winery is in the Abiqua Basin near Silverton, Ore.**

The brothers do most of the vineyard work, and they say no day is the same.

This year will be especially tricky with cool, wet spring weather delaying harvest an expected three or four weeks.

Their new tasting room, opened in March, overlooks the mature vineyard and its backdrop of forests, hills and mountains. The 1,700-square-foot facility is also home to the vineyard offices and features outdoor patio dining.

In addition to the tastings, the brothers offer special events — including outdoor movie nights; a corn hole tournament; a beer-tasting with Benedictine Brewery of the nearby Mount Angel Abbey — and host private gatherings.

"Our wine club was pretty easy to manage when

it was only 25 people and you knew everybody," Pierre said. "It's more to manage now ... with nearly 90 club members who bring other people along."

While the winery has been producing an average of 500 cases for several years, this year they are tripling production. All but 5-10% is sold on premises.

"We didn't make wine in 2020 because of the fire and based on our average sales we need to ramp up production, so it's not a terrible thing," Pierre said. "Tripling production is a little bit nerve-racking, especially since it's going to be a late harvest."

"We'd still like to expand the grape side of things; we've just got to find someplace to do it," he added. "It's kind of a crazy market for real estate right now."

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