

About Us

The California Association of Winegrape Growers

Established in 1974, the California Association of Winegrape Growers (CAWG) is an advocate for farmers, providing leadership on public policies, research and education programs, sustainable farming practices and trade policy to enhance the California winegrape growing business and our communities.

Objectives

- Represent growers before legislative bodies, government agencies and the news media.
- Provide an open forum to exchange ideas.
- Resolve issues related to growing and marketing. Encourage cooperative efforts among grape growers.
- Support the continued production of quality winegrapes. Work to stimulate consumption of grapes for wine and other grape-based products.
- Collect and disseminate information on production and marketing to members.
- Provide industry leadership on the development and implementation of best practices.

The importance of winegrapes to California's economy

California has a rich history of winegrape production, dating back to 1778 with the Spanish Missions. Today, the winegrape industry contributes to California's economy in diverse ways. It generates jobs, exports, tax revenues, tourism, and of course, outstanding wines. It is also the center of intense global competition that may seriously affect the future of these benefits. The industry's future success will hinge on public and private policies that facilitate rather than impede responses to new competitive conditions.

- California's winegrape community had an economic impact of \$51.8 billion on the state last year. This economic activity pumps more than \$1.9 billion annually into state and local coffers from sales, excise, income and property tax revenues.
- Winegrapes are grown in 46 of California's 58 counties covering 513,000 acres and ranking among the state's top 10 agricultural products. There are 2,275 commercial wineries in the state, and most are family owned and operated.
- The wine industry directly generates nearly 309,000 jobs in California. Annual wages paid are \$10.1 billion.
- Winegrape production enhances the environmental beauty of the state, preserves highly valued open spaces and rich agricultural heritage. It is an important attraction for the 19.7 million people who visit California's wine producing regions each year, generating more than \$2 billion in tourism dollars.
- California is one of the world's leading grape producers, accounting for 90 percent of U.S. production and more than 9 percent of global output - fourth largest after France, Italy and Spain. Wine making and other crush products are the dominant use for U.S. grapes. The balance is used for raisins, fresh markets, and canning.