

# Snoqualmie Winery Viticulture Internship

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## Introduction

This summer I worked as a viticulture intern at Snoqualmie Winery located in Prosser, Washington. Snoqualmie Winery is an estate of Ste. Michelle Wine Estates based out of Woodinville, Washington. Snoqualmie Winery has been producing premium wines from vineyards across the Columbia Valley since 1983. Their production of premium wines begins in the vineyard where high quality grapes need to be grown. As a viticulture intern, I spent most of my time in the field ensuring the growth of healthy grapevines.



## Internship Responsibilities

There were many tasks I performed throughout my internship experience:

- With the use of an ATV, I monitored vineyard blocks for an array of pests and diseases.
- I conducted crop estimates through cluster counting and cluster weighing.
- I monitored the phenology of the fruit from inflorescence to complete grape maturity.
- I used a Palm Pilot to enter observations of general cultural practices implemented in vineyards.



I monitored for pests such as grape mealybugs (left), leafhoppers (middle), and Western thrips (right) which can be potential disease vectors.



I recorded grape phenological stages from inflorescence (left), to veraison (middle), and finally to maturity (right) so the dates could be compared to previous years and decide when to harvest.

## Summary

This internship provided me a better understanding of the viticultural practices necessary to produce a high quality grape product. There are many aspects of grape growing that must be taken into account before grapes are used for winemaking. Pest and disease pressure must be accurately identified to determine the necessity for chemical application. Physical observations of the vines and their canopies are used to decide if the implementation of cultural practices are necessary. Crop estimates determine if thinning is needed to produce grapes with a desired sugar concentration. These are just a few key characteristics of viticulture that need to be taken into account to produce a premium wine. I believe having a better understanding of the grape growing process is necessary to help me achieve my career goal of becoming a successful winemaker.

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