

Sagemoor Vineyards (Bacchus & Dionysus)

Pasco, WA

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Introduction

- Sagemoor first began in 1968 by Alec Bayless in Pasco, WA with little knowledge about grape varieties and how to successfully grow the grapes. They are now owned by Allan Brothers Fruit.
- Sagemoor owns five vineyards in Washington, which total to 1,100 acres of wine grapes. These five vineyards are Sagemoor, Bacchus, Dionysus, Weinbau and Gamache. I always reported to Bacchus and Dionysus for work each day
- Sagemoor grows over a dozen different grape varieties and sells their grapes to many wineries in Washington both big and small. They are very knowledgeable about the wine grape growing process. They are also aware that how the wine grapes are grown will affect the quality of wine product.



View of Bacchus Vineyard.



View of Dionysus Vineyard.

Responsibilities

- Data collection was a large part of my job as an intern. A weekly job I had was to measure the length of shoot growth in each block. At the beginning of the summer, I set up 2 test sites in each block that were marked with red tape on both sides of the row. Two different shoots were then marked in each row to be measured and recorded. This would be a total of 4 shoots in each block were measured each week.
- Counting clusters was another data collection task I performed. In May and June, I had to count the number of clusters that were on the vines in each block. About 25 vines per block were counted and recorded in the Sagemoor data system.
- On Tuesdays I worked at the WSU vineyard in Richland. Here I performed many different tasks depending on what needed to be done on a particular day. Shoot thinning, leaf thinning, pulling suckers and weeds, planting new vines and cutting shoots were all tasks I did. I gained a lot of hands on experience here.
- I worked with the crew a few days at Bacchus and Dionysus with leaf thinning and pulling suckers. Leaf thinning is where leaves are removed on the east side of the row to expose the berry clusters to sunlight. This task takes practice because if too many leaves are removed, it can cause sunburn on the grapes.
- The last job I had at the end of this internship was cluster weights. The purpose of this job is to record the weight of the clusters from one vine so the growers can predict the crop load. I would cut and count all the berry cluster off of one vine and put them into a bucket for them to be weighed. I would record this weight and the number of clusters that were removed from the vine. The location of the surveyed vine was also recorded (North or South). The amount of cluster weights done per block was dependent on the size of the block. On average about 6 cluster weights were done per block.



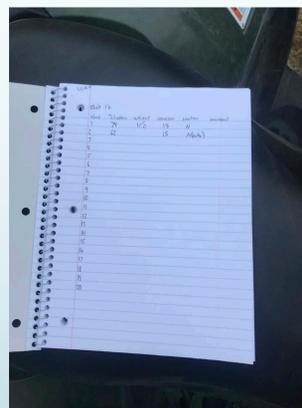
Driving through a block in Bacchus Vineyard on a four wheeler. This is how I got around in the vineyard.

Summary

- Working for Sagemoor Vineyards as a Viticulture Intern throughout the summer has given me the opportunity to gain an understanding of vineyard systems. I collected vineyard data at their different locations Bacchus, Dionysus and Gamache. I also worked with the crews for removing leaves, shoot thinning and removing suckers. I have learned an abundant of information from this internship, which I plan to apply to my last year of college at WSU and in my own career in the future.
- This knowledge I have gained will be useful when I manage my own vineyard one day. This internship taught me what healthy vines look like, how varieties grow differently, common pests to look out for and how to maintain a high quality vineyard. I plan to gain more experience in the future with wine making so I can have hands on knowledge in that area too. Having knowledge in both viticulture and enology will allow me to excel in either side of the wine industry since I will understand both processes.



Weighing clusters that were cut from a vine ■



How the cluster weights were recorded ■