



Ste. Michelle Wine Estates Prosser, WA Cody Seid Fall 2020



The company provided me with a work truck and ATV to get travel in and around several vineyards.

Introduction

Ste. Michelle Wine Estates is the leading wine producer in Washington State and operates in Woodinville Washington. This is Washington States oldest winery, founded in 1954. Ste. Michelle refers to their collection of estate wineries as a 'String of Pearls,' one of which is 14 Hands Winery, located in Prosser, Washington. The name 14 Hands represents the wild horses that once roamed eastern Washington, about 14 hands high. The winery owns many different vineyards throughout the area and writes contracts with other local growers to produce fine Washington wine.



The photo above reveals grape clusters ripening through the version stage. The photo to the left reveals female mealybugs residing on a shoot and excreting their honeydew sap. that was taken with a magnifying glass. The photo to the right shows leaf petiole samples that were collected to assess grapevine leafroll disease throughout a vineyard block.



Responsibilities During Internship

Over the course of this internship, I was able to visit different vineyard sites throughout eastern Washington. The winery provided me with an iPad for navigating vineyards and entering data. I was also provided with an ATV for moving around vineyard sites. The data that I collected pertains to yield estimation. My mentor and I would visit vineyards and collect information such as cluster counts, fruit weights, and phenology stages.

Aside from collecting data, we also spent time scouting vineyards for pests and diseases. Some common pests and diseases that we scouted for were mealybugs, thrips, leafroll virus, and mildew. With this information we were able to notify our viticulturalist and growers of any adjustments that need to be made to the spray program.

Towards the end of the season, we collected fruit samples from different vineyards and brought them back to the lab at 14 Hands. The purpose of this was to analyze fruit samples for their brix measurement and pH levels to determine harvest time.

Summary

Pictured above on the left is a fruit weight sample that I took of some white variety grapes during version. Pictured above on the right is an example of a cluster that was sunburned, from too much direct sunlight exposure.

This internship has provided me with many tools and resources to become a successful grape grower in Washington State. I learned a considerable amount about the anatomy and phenology stages of a grapevine. The internship also increased my knowledge on common vineyards pests and how to examine for them. Being a viticulture intern with 14 Hands has taught me the importance of vineyard management and how it can be applied in real life situations. I appreciated the hands-on experience of seeing where great wines come from.