

CHEHALEM

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THE POLITICS OF PROTECTING SMALL FARMS

Creating a New Paradigm to Save a Heritage and the Future

By Harry Peterson-Nedry

WINES ARE AN ULTIMATELY SOPHISTICATED AND REFINED LUXURY PRODUCT, and yet an agricultural by-product. From the most basic of farming, no matter how technically complex those basics, we get in wine the purest reflection of time and place I know. Great literature conveys some complexity and a sense of other places and times, but not nearly as well as wine. Wine has the immortality of recorded thought and observation, but with an emotive and sensual dimension great writing lacks. The written word is two dimensional, wine three and four dimensional—more senses revealing greater richness, reflecting the time and place in which it was grown, the hands that made it so.

Yet despite such power, wine growing and the small, value-added farm family to which it belongs, are at risk. Assaults on land-use planning regulations are part of it, even in highly-vaunted farmland protectorates like Oregon where Measure 37's passage in November acknowledged Oregonians' preference for personal, short-term rights to make a buck over the responsibility for caretaking the natural resources we were handed—greater greed over the greater good. Passivity on environmental and resource depletion issues is also part of it, approaching obstructionism at times when politics and corporate profits wield their clubs.

Wine, tied to the earth in all its intricacies, with such a sensitivity to climate, annual weather, and geographical differences, may be the best measure of our culture's growing insensitivity to the finely balanced world we inhabit, may be our canary in the mine.

There is no simple answer to manmade challenges of sprawl, resource depletion, climate change—in short, fouling our nest—but a serious dialogue must ensue, realizing dialectic tension is helpful to effect change. And then we need to work at it deliberately, one small step at a time.

CORPORATE IMPERATIVES AND THE ENVIRONMENT: I am an optimist at heart, and that despite having digested reams of sobering data on global climate change, resource depletion, falling water tables, dangerously polarized haves and have nots, and the new world order of Business States replacing Nation States being just as unstable and callused as before. The Gold War is just as perilous as the Cold War. (CONTINUES NEXT PAGE)

(Above) Small farms, including sites such as our Corral Creek Vineyards, are in danger of sprawl engulfing agricultural land, especially as protections are lifted through initiatives such as Oregon's Measure 37.

(CONTINUED FROM FRONT) The dysfunctional dynamic is not supply-and-demand or the capitalist system, for I support their wisdom and utility, but rather with unbridled power and a selfishness that disdains the “greater good,” power this time not in the hands of blood-thirsty warlords or megalomaniacs, but in boardrooms’ CEOs intent on dominance in their own sphere. Where we go wrong is in not reexamining the bigger-is-better mantra by which most live, especially our institutions. Feeding the insatiable appetites of the corporate animal for growth and quarterly profits can, lacking the restraints of public outcry, reach the same arrogance and insensitivity that harms peoples, environment, climate, and heritage.

And yet progress doesn’t have to be at the expense of the earth or future generations.

VINEYARDS AND WINERIES: Grapegrowing and winemaking are microcosms of this general challenge. As in most businesses, the wine business has seen great consolidation, creating

almost monopolistically sized international vineyard and winery companies (e.g., Constellation, with \$3.8 Billion sales annually), distributorships (where 4 or 5 companies in the US control wine sales) and huge Ag suppliers with big dollars to influence policy and fund their brand of research. Inordinate impact is given to companies based on size alone when dollars speak. But when consumers know the difference and demand accountability, whether for environmental stewardship or consumer access or migrant labor concerns or maintaining regional brand integrity (e.g. no Chablis being grown in California) or for quality in general, restraint is seen and balance results.

Small businesses, wineries, vineyards and farms are attractive and vulnerable now. They offer large businesses a quick buck, either in consolidation for greater efficiencies (which often results in a sameness); or as a raw material for development, as sprawl and suburbia becomes a commodity crop; or for purchasing the special branding that comes with small, driven operations. Vineyards are a high value crop, with impeccably good looks, long-term aesthetic and business stability (as much as farming can give), and are magical places that provide the rural homecoming many need—Napa, without vineyards and the regal sense of being both an intellectual and natural resource, would be an autoparts store--*Sideways* would be *Upside Down* without Pinot noir winecountry.

SMALL, VALUE-ADDED FARMS: The Oregon wine industry is composed almost exclusively of small, family farms adding value to a harvested crop, producing a product valued because of its expression of regional characteristics—bright, fresh fruit of great complexity and authenticity. The vineyards are dispersed, small, aesthetic and value-adding in their own right, just ask neighboring towns with elevated residential values reflecting the perfect bucolic, scenic assets that speak to a balancing of nature, industriousness, neatness and an international knowledge of this place.



Harry in March 2005 with the US Secretary of Agriculture and his staff, discussing ways to fund viticultural research and promote sustainability and rural, value-added farming initiatives, which the USDA has recently piloted.

And, it isn’t just wine, it is produce and meats and seafood and orchards and fruits, or what are called Specialty Crops to differentiate them from the large, corporate farms which notoriously may yield as much profit in subsidies as in Commodity Crop sales. Large farms are valuable and have seen 3X yields in grain production in the last five decades, so I don’t dismiss them. However, like in most areas of life well-lived, we need a balance of focus, small and large, with attempts to continually do things better—higher quality, lower cost, better benefits to employees, the land, and customers. Small scale, value-added agriculture helps to sustain rural communities, keeping them robust financially, resistant to boom-and-bust cycles, and fostering a culture in tune with the earth and long-term issues. Currently, specialty crops outsell commodity crops nationally 52 to 48%.

There needs to begin a better urban-rural dialogue, so that both spheres respect contributions of the other. There needs to be better education on where food comes from, what healthy food is; why farmland needs to be protected from sprawl while denser footprints create urban neighborhoods of richness; rural and culinary tourism needs to paint for urbanites a picture not just of how grandparents lived, but of a sense of seasons and ecology, of preservation of environment and lifestyle. Migration of urbanites to the country to take-up agricultural roles their grandparents left

exists and needs to be encouraged, supported legislatively with easier inheritance laws for farms, low-interest loans for next generation farmers, possibly going almost to the point that Bethel Heights' Pat Dudley describes as a "New Homestead Act".

Currently a cross-disciplinary group in the Oregon is creating such a vision, to help craft novel approaches to the staid national and local farm protections and incentives, and to excite the dialogue that needs to happen. Of course, this augments progressive movements such as Slow-Food, The Cascadia Culinary Conference (Whidbey Island), Organic farming and viticulture movements (Oregon Tilth, LIVE, Salmon Safe, and the like) and the general Sustainable Businesses approaches.

As a winery, Chehalem is beginning to investigate and assess ourselves on several fronts of sustainability and will report to you on our progress, from viticulture to size optimization to recycling and friendlier environmental approaches.

WHAT WE CAN ALL DO: As consumers, we all hold the key to intelligent and forward-thinking decisions by businesses of any size. We can do small things to hold ourselves, and those we buy from, accountable. Small numbers of the right people, saying the right things to other right people, can effect change more easily than we might imagine, can bring us to a "tipping point" where it makes a difference. Principled agreements between consumers and business can create strong alliances that fight the ills of size, ignorance and conflict of interest.

Recently, the cooperative of dairy farmers in Oregon who make and market Tillamook cheeses showed how it's done, by listening to what their customers wanted, searching their own principles and refusing to permit the use of hormones in their feeds, despite the

onslaught of Monsanto, the supplier with the most to gain financially. Consumers and future generations will gain from sensitivity like that.

To help understand what's at stake, I recommend you investigate different sources (see a reading list online), including a powerful book by Pulitzer-winning author Jared Diamond entitled *Collapse*, which paints a sobering portrait of cultures who did not heed imperatives, especially those of environment, and paid cataclysmically for it—read it not to become pessimistic, on the contrary to wake us up to actions we must take. The arrogance and hubris that comes from us feeling an entitlement to success, must not blind us to new challenges which will ultimately define our place in time more than daily headline topics.

Earth Policy Institute's Lester Brown has interestingly simple approaches to avoiding possibly disastrous scenarios based on over consumption of resources like water, energy and naturally occurring food sources—our natural capital—all at a time we are sullyng the environment and changing the delicately tuned climate.

We should all demand fact not rhetoric from our leaders, returning to scientific rigor in deciding scientific questions, not politics or religion. We must assiduously avoid short-term decisions that steal from our children in order for us to live in a new tract home on what used to be orchard. We must develop a "real" cost for our purchases that include full life-cycle costs from primary resource extractions, people issues, environmental impacts, disposal issues and the like for our products and the products we use. Those costs must dictate our policy and priorities.

We must fear explaining to our great-grandchildren more than to the corporate board and shareholders. Indeed, the corporate board needs to view actions through the wise eyes of future generations. 🌱



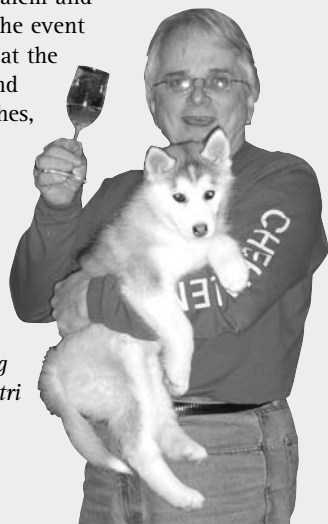
WHAT'S HAPPENING?

FREE SHIPPING TO ENCOURAGE SAFE SHIPPING We want to provide wine to your door in the same temperature-protected condition in which it has been stored since harvest. Accordingly, we are moving towards a spring and fall release of our wines, and as encouragement to get your orders in during the optimal shipping times, we offer **FREE SHIPPING** for case orders shipped Fedex ground anywhere in the U.S., until May 15th.

IAN'S RESERVE CHARDONNAY AND RESERVE PINOT NOIR VERTICAL
Tasting notes from a recent vertical tasting of Ian's Reserve Chardonnay (1996-2003) and Reserve Pinot Noir (1994-2003) are posted online www.chehalemwines.com.

MONTEREY WINE FESTIVAL April 28-30.
Harry and Bill pour Chehalem and Stoller Vineyards wine. The event includes a preview party at the Monterey Aquarium, grand tastings, winemaker lunches, seminars and a live auction. Call 888-814-9463 or visit www.montereywine.com.

Harry has two new husky puppies!
Replacing Brodsky was difficult—it required getting a pair of littermates, Dimitri and Balilaika (shown).





NEW RELEASES

By Sophie Daniels, National Sales Manager



Please welcome Sophie Daniels as Chehalem National Sales Manager, bringing distributor sales experience with our wines from the Boston market.

AH, SPRING! Having grown up in the Berkshire Mountains of Massachusetts, spring was always such a wondrous time. Winters being what they were, (cold, bleak and seemingly never ending), when the snow melted and the ground began to thaw, adults and children alike were filled with an electric energy, charged up and ready to go! This is *still* spring for me, only now walking down the streets all over the country with a bag of Chehalem sample bottles over my shoulder, I can appreciate how others greet the season.

From the rich, ripe 2004 and 2003 vintages I'm pleased to introduce Chehalem's spring releases, beautiful wines to enjoy throughout the spring and summer seasons:

The **2004 WILLAMETTE VALLEY PINOT GRIS** with its soft sweet aromas of white fruit and blossoms, is a beautiful way to ring in spring! On the palate there is a sexy core of white peach fruit and refreshing acidity. A short concentrated harvest, we have a third fewer cases, so make sure you grab enough to keep your cellar stocked!

2004 INOX™ CHARDONNAY, our stainless steel fermented Dijon clone chardonnay will likely be our best yet, with bright apple and quince fruit flavors, not masked by the influence of oak. All the rage right now, we don't expect to keep it in the warehouse for more than a few months!

The **2004 RESERVE DRY RIESLING** has the perfect balance of stone fruit and flowering vine aromas and flavors, complemented by a cleansing mineral zing. This is another wine we can't seem to make enough of.

The **2003 CERISE** (French for cherry) lives up to it's name, packed with tangy, tart cherry flavor. In the hippest hue of bright violet, this wine is the ideal mate for spring and summer fare, whether it comes off the grill or out of the picnic basket.

The **2003 3 VINEYARD PINOT NOIR** boasts deep raspberry and blueberry fruit notes, with just a dash of brown and black spices. From a big vintage, the winemakers should be commended for making such a supple, well-balanced wine in a year that had the potential of being a bit clumsy and hot. Another great 3 Vineyard Pinot Noir at a great price. In a blind tasting of 14 entry-level 2003 Pinot noirs from our peers, all but one was stellar (a surprise) and ours proved the favorite (a pleasure!).

Finally, the **2003 CORRAL CREEK VINEYARDS PINOT NOIR** in all its glory. Wild strawberries and bright red currants meld seamlessly with hints of violets and ginger, all taken up a notch by the 2003 vintage. Sultry, this wine is the true mistress of spring. (Only 225 cases made.)

Time for longer days, higher temperatures and plenty of Chehalem! Enjoy. 🍷



DAN BEEKLEY OPENS WINE SHOP
Chehalem's former National Sales Manager just opened Square Deal Wine Company in NW Portland. The focus is on wines from small, boutique producers in remote, sometimes under-appreciated, wine regions.
www.squaredealwine.com.

CHEHALEM AT NEW ORLEANS WINE AND FOOD EXPERIENCE, May 25-29.
Vintner dinners, seminars, the Royal Street Stroll, Bubbles and Brunch, grand tastings...
Call (504) 529-9463 or visit www.nowfe.com.

MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND OPEN HOUSE May 28-30.
15% case discount on new releases this

weekend only. Limited amounts of the 2002 Pinot noirs and a selection of library wines as well. Hours are Sat.-Mon. 10am-5pm. \$5 fee includes wine tasting, appetizers and a visit with the new husky puppies. FREE for Chehalem Tasting Panel members.

CHEHALEM WINE RELEASE AND ART SHOW August 20-21, Noon- 5pm.
This is our most popular winery event, and with Ted Katz, our label artist, featured this year, along with other local artists, it will be cool. Our friends Quartette di donne will perform in the barrel cellar again this year. Invitations will be mailed before the show. 🍷



WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

The Wine Advocate, October, 2004, Pierre Rovani

91+ **2002 Stoller Vineyards Pinot Noir** ...densely packed, plump, and satin textured, this is broad, lush decadent effort. Loads of expressive darks fruits are intermingled with spices...

92 **2002 Ridgecrest Vineyards Pinot Noir** ...Combining power and density with grace and purity, it regales the palate with massive quantities of blackberries, dark cherries, cassis, and chocolate...

93 **2002 Reserve Pinot Noir** ...nose of gorgeously sweet red cherries...rich and precise, bold and elegant. Loads of red cherries, blackberries and kirsch, and notes of blueberries...concentrated and exceptionally well-balanced, this wine also appears to be holding a great deal in reserve.

Oregon Wine Report, Cole Danehower, "2002 Oregon Pinot noir." Issue 20

A- **2002 Ridgecrest Vineyards Pinot Noir: One of Cole's Top Ten 2002 Oregon Pinot Noirs** ...Big, herby, earthy aromas waft above a core of dark, brambly blackberry and black cherry fruit...In the mouth, the wine delivers deliciously smooth flavors of big black berries with a slight, tart uptick reminiscent of sun-drenched raspberries...There is good complexity in this wine, with additional notes of summer-hot, dry dirt, warm gravel, dark licorice, and Provence lavender...

Burghound.com, October 2004, Allen Meadows

90 **Chehalem 2002 Reserve Pinot Noir:** A more deeply pitched red and black fruit nose merges into round, rich, sweet and very supple medium full flavors blessed with generous amounts of extract, length and overall character. I particularly like the finishing intensity and the supple character makes this a wine that could be approached now or held for another 3-5 years.

The Oregonian, December 5, 2004, Matt Kramer

2002 3 Vineyard Pinot Noir ...owner-winemaker Harry Peterson-Nedry consistently provides a deft touch to nearly all his wines, red and white. Not surprisingly, in the 2002 vintage his work-horse pinot noir...excelled. ...a lovely example of the attributes of the 2002 vintage. It's soft, lush and catch-free down the gullet...

Northwest Palate, January/February 2005

2003 Pinot Blanc: Recommended. Perfumed floral apple blossom nose with hints of mint. Round and rich flavors of ripe pear and melon. Well-balanced, with juice spiced-fruit finish...

2002 Ian's Reserve Chardonnay: Recommended. Aromas of toast, apple, citrus, and mineral. On the palate, light toast balances creamy ripe apple fruit with faint butterscotch notes in the bright-acid finish. Pair with pan-fried razor clams.

The Oregonian, December 19, 2004, Matt Kramer, "Oregon Wines Worth Remembering"

2002 Chehalem 3 Vineyard Pinot Noir: Another fine pinot noir from Oregon's 2002 vintage. Lush, supple and just plain pleasing...

Oregon Wine Report, Cole Danehower, "Recent Dry White Wines." Issue 19

Two of Cole's Top Ten Recent Oregon White Wines are Chehalem's.

A- **2003 Pinot Gris** ...Complex in the mouth with a variety of flavors competing for attention. The first impression is of sweet ripe pear...followed by a leaner nectarine or yellow peach note. Other flavors seem to include warm melon and spicy tangerine...This is perhaps the most substantial Pinot gris in the tasting...

A- **2003 Reserve Dry Riesling** ...Healthy aromas of spiced apples, dried flower blossoms, lightly sweet smelling apple peel and a touch of talcum. Punchy and concentrated flavors of dried pink grapefruit, red apple, and a veil of lemon and rosewater...zestful acidity brings a kind of radiance to the flavors, and the finish is quite intense with a lingering and pleasing bitter sense of grapefruit and spice...Harry Peterson-Nedry once again "nails it" with a compelling dry Riesling...

B+ **2003 Pinot Blanc** ...Subtle aromas of dried white fruits and summer field grass. In the mouth, there is great force to the flavors reminiscent of mixed melons, a touch of white peach...strong acids help to bring the fruit forward and deliver a distinctly peppery finish...

The Wine News, Steve Pitcher, February/March 2005

92 **2002 Pinot Gris Reserve:** Top wine out of 12 Oregon Pinot Gris featured...nose of lemon curd, crème brulee and poached pear. A polished, elegant Pinot gris...lush palate with bright flavors that echo the nose, enlivened by brisk acidity.

90 **2003 Willamette Valley Pinot Gris:** Bright fruit aromas of ripe pear and orange blossom are enhanced by a subtle note of ginger spice...copious flavors of apple, white peach and succulent pear. Finishes with hints of white pepper and minerals.

Saveur, Michael Steinberger, March 2005

...Plump or taut...the best Oregon pinot gris has an invigorating freshness that bespeaks its Northwest origins and makes it particularly agreeable at the table...

2003 Pinot Gris Reserve: A subtle blend of apple, honey, spices, and herbs on the nose. Nicely poised, with ripe melon and white flowers on the palate... 🍷

