

# 2025 Annual Report



## Highlights

- 2025 Certificate Recipients
- 2026 Schedule
- Kickoff Event - March 25
- Platform Updates
- Auditor Spotlight
- Ready to Apply

### Why Sustainability Certification Matters Now More Than Ever

The wine industry is navigating real headwinds. At WineVit 2026, analyst Danny Brager reported that wine space and assortment shrank 5 to 7 percent across both channels in 2025, and the share of 21 to 29 year olds drinking wine dropped from 57 percent to 49 percent since 2019 (Brager, State of the Industry, WineVit General

Session, Feb. 10, 2026). Younger adults are drinking less and differently than they were six years ago.

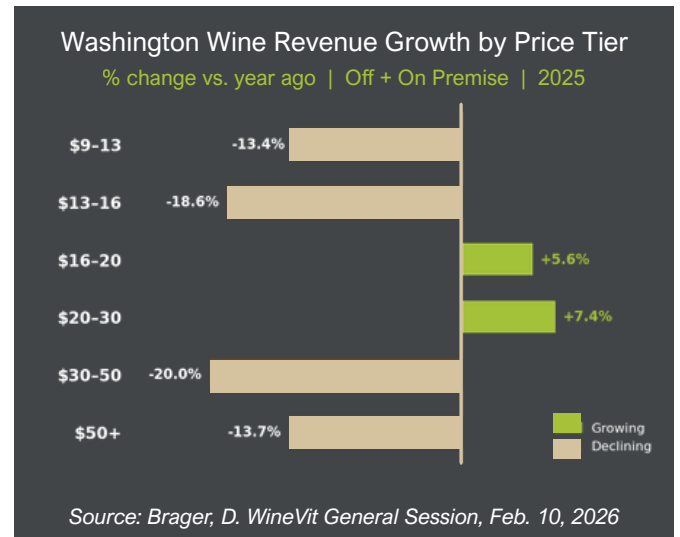
The consumers still choosing wine, and spending more on it, are doing so with intention. Millennials and Gen Z gravitate toward brands that reflect their values. Wine Market Council President Liz Thach, MW confirms they are willing to pay more for brands whose values align with their own, and they expect third-party certification to back those claims up (Thach, L. MW, Wine Market Council, as cited in Wine-Searcher, Feb. 2026, and Wine Enthusiast, 2023).

Washington wine is well positioned to meet that demand. The \$16 to \$30 price tier led statewide revenue growth in 2025, and Washington's direct-to-consumer pricing rose year over year (Brager, WineVit 2026). Over 40 percent of Washington's wineries grew in 2025 (Brager, WineVit 2026). The growers gaining ground are the ones who can tell a credible, verified story about how their fruit is grown.

That is where Sustainable WA certification does its work. Third-party verification and chain-of-custody records give winery and buyer partners the confidence they need when sustainability enters sourcing conversations. Annual

certification also builds a documented track record — something buyers increasingly want to see before making sourcing commitments.

(Sources listed on page 5)





# 2026 Certification Schedule

## What to Expect

Registration for the 2026 certification year opened March 1. Returning growers are encouraged to apply early so there is time to update vineyard lists, confirm contacts, complete the self-assessment, and plan for audits without last-minute pressure. New applicants are encouraged to apply early as well—starting early makes the first cycle smoother and reduces follow-up later.

### Key dates for 2026:

- March 1: Application window opens
- May 15: Application window closes
- June 1: Audits begin
- September 1: Audit period ends
- November 16: Corrective actions due
- December 31: 2026 certificates issued



## Auditor Spotlight

Heather Muser is Sustainable WA's independent third-party auditor. She is the founder and owner of Muser Consulting, LLC (established in 2011) and notes she has worked in agriculture for over 20 years.

Through Muser Consulting, her work spans third-party auditing/inspection and consulting support for agricultural sustainability and certification programs, with an emphasis on practical implementation and strong documentation. The firm describes its approach as helping growers navigate certification requirements and audits/inspections efficiently while building durable practices over time.

# 2026 Registration Event Kickoff

Wednesday, March 25, 2:00-4:30PM at Yakima Community College, Grandview

The 2026 Sustainable WA Registration Kickoff brought together 20 growers for an afternoon of education and discussion. Attendees left with a clear roadmap for the application process and a solid understanding of what to expect from the audit. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive - participants noted the content was extremely useful for both signing up and preparing for their audit. Presentation slides are available at <https://sustainablewa.com/resources/>

### Application & Platform

#### Nathaniel Helligso

Program Manager, Sustainable WA

Nathaniel walked attendees through the application platform - submitting the application, navigating the self-assessment, mandatory scoring levels, how to upload documents and input vineyard information.

To learn more:

Nathaniel@wawinegrowers.org  
509.782.8234

### The Audit Process

#### Heather Muser

Lead Auditor, Muser Consulting LLC

Heather covered what to expect on audit day: the two-part structure of documentation review & vineyard tour, which records to have ready and tips on areas growers can improve.

To learn more:

muserconsulting@gmail.com  
209.810.1966

### Salmon-Safe

#### Brian Muegge

Farm Program Manager, Salmon-Safe

Brian presented on Salmon-Safe and the dual certification pathway available to Sustainable WA participants. He described the market credibility dual certification can bring to growers.

To learn more:

brian.muegge@salmonsafe.org  
509.508.1653

The program was built as a partnership, and will remain a partnership.




## Thank you to our event sponsor:



## Platform Updates for 2026

Based on 2025 participant feedback, Sustainable WA is implementing application and assessment platform improvements aimed at reducing friction and improving clarity throughout the self-assessment process. The focus is on smoother navigation, more intuitive data entry, and clearer questions so growers can complete the self-assessment more efficiently and with fewer follow-up questions.

- Streamlined vineyard information entry (more consistent vineyard details and IDs).
- Improved traceability through audit reports and certificates (better alignment from application to outputs).
- Simplified application fields and workflow (cleaner forms, fewer unnecessary questions, more automation).
- Updated logo-use section to make submissions clearer and more consistent.
- Reporting and certificate improvements (formatting fixes and clearer audit type indicators).
- General usability fixes to reduce common pain points (uploads, navigation, finding required documents).



\*QLBS Website Update

A clearer, easier-to-complete self-assessment improves the quality of information submitted, reduces back-and-forth during audit review, and helps the program stay on schedule from application through corrective actions and certificate issuance. We'll provide an overview of what's new and a brief walkthrough during the March 25 kickoff event so participants can see the changes and know what to expect before they start their 2026 submission.

Sustainable WA registration opened **March 1**. Returning growers: plan to apply early, confirm vineyard lists and contacts, and build time into your season for the self-assessment and audit window. New growers and vineyard managers: if you're considering certification, the March 25 Kickoff event and early registration are the best ways to get oriented and set yourself up for a smooth first cycle.

[Click Here to Apply for 2026](#)

Questions or support: Nathaniel Helligso, [Nathaniel@wawinegrowers.org](mailto:Nathaniel@wawinegrowers.org)

# 2025 Sustainable WA

## Certificate Recipients

● = Salmon Safe Certified S/S

**SUSTAINABLE WA**

WHAT ROOTED US THEN, SUSTAINS US NOW

Grower/Mgt. Co.	S/S Vineyard(s)	Grower/Mgt. Co.	S/S Vineyard(s)
Airport Ranches Inc.	● Airport Ranch Vineyards	Les Collines Vineyard	● Les Collines Vineyard
Arthur J den Hoed Inc.	● 14 North Inc. ● Arthur J den Hoed Inc. ● Glade A Inc.	Marcusen-Milbrandt LLC	Ravenscliff
Bayernmoor Farm, LLC	● Bayernmoor Estate Vineyard	McKinley Springs Vineyard	● McKinley Springs Vineyards
Boushey Vineyards LLC	● Boushey Vineyards	Mercer Ranches	● Carma ● Chapman Creek ● Culloden ● Eagle and Plow ● Milt's Vineyard ● Spice Cabinet ● Princeton
Brothers In Farms, LLC	● Klisun Vineyards	Merkle Farms LLC	● Desert Aire ● TC Beverly ● TC Vineyards ● Wautoma Springs ● JMST Vineyard ● Merkle Farms Zillah
Central Wine Grape Management	● Evergreen Vineyards ● Gearheart ● Spanish Castle	Monson Snake River Orchards	● Goose Ridge Vineyards
Chelan Valley Farms	● Chelan Valley Farms	North Slope Management	● Margaret's Vineyard ● Eventide Vineyard ● Taggart Vineyard ● Ferguson Vineyard ● Seven Hills Vineyard
DC Vineyards	● Charlottes Ridge Vineyard	Opal West Wines, LLC / Walla Walla Vinters	● Blooming Branch ● Cut Bank Estate
Doubleback LLC	● Flying B Vineyard ● Schafer Vineyard ● McQueen Vineyard ● Bob Healy Vineyard ● Lefore Vineyard	Rawn Farm Management	● Angiolina ● CBlock ● Copeland ● Dineen ● Loch Block ● Marcela ● Mary Evelyn ● Pollard ● Portteus ● Schmidt ● Morrison ● Eliceo's Block ● Konnowac ● Sonrisa
Elerding Vineyard	● Elerding Vineyard	Redpath Vineyard	● Redpath Vineyard
Frenchman Hills Vineyards	● Frenchman Hills Vineyards	RKP Vineyard	● RKP Vineyard
Gilbert Orchards, Inc.	24K Chukar Hackett Hackett Ranch Peach 10 River Ridge	Rocky Pond Holdings	● Clos CheValle Vineyard ● Double D Vineyard ● Rocky Reach Estate Vineyard
Golden West Farms, LLC	Golden West Vineyards		
Hedges Vineyard Partnership	● Hedges Bel' Villa Vineyard, LLC ● Jolet Vineyard, LLC		
Hightower Vineyards	Hightower Vineyards		
Kiona Vineyards	● Kiona Estate ● Heart of the Hill ● Ranch at the End of the Road ● Sunset Bench ● Artz Vineyard		
Lawrence Vineyards LLC	● Boneyard ● Conner Lee ● Corfu Crossing ● Crossfire ● Daedalus ● Icarus ● La Reyna Blanca ● Laura Lee ● Scarline ● Solaksen ● Stoneridge ● Thunderstone ● Forcefield		

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Grower/Mgt. Co.	S/S Vineyard(s)	Grower/Mgt. Co.	S/S Vineyard(s)
Sagemoor Vineyards LLC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Bacchus and Dionysus Vineyard</li><li>● Gamache Vineyard</li><li>● Southwind Vineyard</li><li>● Weinbau Vineyard</li><li>● Sagemoor Vineyard</li></ul>	The Ancora Estate, Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Ciel Du Cheval</li></ul>
Shaw Vineyards Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Shaw Red Mountain LLC (Stanton)</li><li>● Shaw Red Mountain 32 LLC</li><li>● Strawberry Hill Vineyards LLC (Scootenev)</li><li>● Red Mountain Partners LLC (Obelisco)</li><li>● Candy Mountain Hill LLC</li><li>● Shaw Red Mountain 15 LLC (Northstar)</li><li>● Shaw Section 14 LLC</li><li>● Quintessence Vineyard LLC</li><li>● Shaw Red Mountain Henry Earl Estates LLC</li><li>● Shaw Red Mountain S 20 LLC (Quinn)</li></ul>	Three Rivers Winery Estate	Three Rivers Winery Vineyard
Sportfisher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Sportfisher LLC</li></ul>	Upchurch Vineyard LLC	
Ste. Michelle Wine Estates		Upland Farms Management,	Upland Farms Management, LLC
SMW - Three Big Vineyards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Canoe Ridge Vineyard</li><li>● Cold Creek</li><li>● Paterson/Columbia Crest</li></ul>	Via Montis LLC	Fidelitas Estate Vineyard
SMW - North Star	North Star Estate Vineyard	Whitman Hill Winery LLC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Whitman Hill Vineyard</li></ul>
SMW - Spring Valley	Spring Valley Vineyard	Wyckoff Farms, Inc.	Phoenix Dufault #14 Miller Hop #6, 7, 8 Stokely NE J. Sunridge #16
		Zirkle Fruit Company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Beverly Vineyard</li><li>● Four Feathers Vineyard</li><li>● Soaring Eagle Vineyard</li><li>● Stonemark at Zillah Vineyard</li><li>● The Cliffs at McNary Vineyard</li></ul>

Thank you to all of our 2025 participants. We appreciate your dedication, effort, and passion for growing. Here's to another great year of being your partner in sustainability.

# SUSTAINABLE WA

WHAT ROOTED US THEN, SUSTAINS US NOW

### References

Brager, D. (February 10, 2026). *State of the Industry: The Category & Consumer*. General Session, WineVit 2026. Washington Wine Institute. Available at: [static1.squarespace.com/static/5f08a4d76f1045639dbd9c77/t/6993380c941e2124dec7756e/1771255820139/Brager+General+Session+WineVit+Feb+10%2C+2026.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5f08a4d76f1045639dbd9c77/t/6993380c941e2124dec7756e/1771255820139/Brager+General+Session+WineVit+Feb+10%2C+2026.pdf)

Thach, L. MW. (February 2026). As cited in: *Hitting Generational Wine Beats*. Wine-Searcher. Available at: [wine-searcher.com/m/2026/02/hitting-generational-wine-beats](https://www.wine-searcher.com/m/2026/02/hitting-generational-wine-beats)

Thach, L. MW. (2023). As cited in: *Millennials and Gen Z Could Save the Wine Industry*. Wine Enthusiast. Available at: [wineenthusiast.com/culture/wine/millennial-wine-market](https://www.wineenthusiast.com/culture/wine/millennial-wine-market)

Wine Market Council. (January 2026). *New Wine Market Council Study Finds Millennials Now Largest U.S. Wine-Drinking Cohort*. Available at: [winemarketcouncil.com/new-wine-market-council-study-finds-millennials-now-largest-u-s-wine-drinking-cohort](https://winemarketcouncil.com/new-wine-market-council-study-finds-millennials-now-largest-u-s-wine-drinking-cohort)