Economic Perspectives on the California Wine Industry

Jim Lapsley, Ph.D. Dept. of Viticulture and Enology Agricultural Issues Center

Topics

- Demand
- Supply
- Regions
- Future?

A Few Statistics

- Approximately 5000 grapegrowers statewide
- Wine is California's # 1 finished Ag product
 Estimated \$51.8 billion impact in California
- Roughly 520,000 acres of wine grapes

The U.S. Wine Market in 2009

- California supplied 61% of all wine sold. Imports were 31% Other states supplied 8%
- 83% of California wine was sold in the U.S.
- Of the 17% exported, half was bulk, and valued at \$1.05 a liter
- Approximately 75% of the wine sold in the U.S. retailed for under \$7 a bottle and 30% sold for less than \$3 a bottle
- Most of this wine came from the San Joaquin Valley

US Wine Sales Have Increased Every Year Since 1993

Millions Cases of Table Wine



Total sales is a function of population times per capita consumption. Both have increased



2009 Wine Market Council Study

Percent Adult Population

Core Consumers enjoy at least one glass of wine a week or more. At 16% of the adult population they number about 34 million and they consume 91% of all table wine—averaging 70 liters per person



Marginal consumers drink less than 1 glass a week, although they say they enjoy wine. They drink the other 9%

Source: Wine Market Council

Conclusions on Demand

- Consumption has increased, largely due to "Millennials" choosing wine at a higher rate than did "Boomers"
- Every year for the next 7-8 years, 4 million Millennials will come of legal drinking age
- Proliferation of grape-growing and winemaking in states outside of California will make wine less "foreign" to non-consumers
- What of Supply?

SAN Joaquin Valley

COASTAL

Regionality? 2009 Crush Percentages



Price of Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay Grapes, \$/ton, in Various Districts, 2008



California Winegrape Acreage



The Wine Booms of the 1970s and 1990s

- Two wine booms—one white and one red
- Demand increased as Baby Boomers came of legal drinking age and adopted wine
- Technology played a role in improving wine quality



Wine Grape Acreage

Per Capita Consumption in gallons

	1970	1980	1990	2000
Red wine	.54	.64	.35	1.00
White Wine	.27	1.26	.93	.92
Blush wine	.27	.47	.60	.45
Total wine	1.08	2.38	1.87	2.30

Varietal Mix of California Winegrape **Production**

1980



1990



- Cabernet Sauvignon
- Merlot
- Zinfandel
- Other Red
- Chardonnay
- French Colombard
- 📕 Sauvignon Blanc
- Other White



Nonbearing Acreage of Winegrapes as a Percentage of Bearing Acreage



Vineyard Removal in 2003



Regional Distribution of California Winegrape Acreage, 1981 and 2008





California winegrapes are a small part of a large world supply

Crop	% World Production	% World Export Market	
Almonds	80	90	
Walnuts	30	60	
Wine	7	4	

In 2009, 60 million gallons of bulk wine valued at 70 cents a liter were imported and bottled in the U.S.—most by California wineries. The presence of inexpensive foreign wine acts as a ceiling to wine grape prices in the Southern San Joaquin Valley

The need for more grapes

- A 2030 market of 407million cases is an increase of 125 million cases, requiring 1.75 million tons of grapes
- Assuming California supplies 60%, and that half sells at \$5 a bottle or below, the San Joaquin valley needs to expand production by 500,000 tons, or 42,000 acres at 12 tons/acre
- 2008 acreage was 157,000 –down from a 2001 peak of 190,000 acres

Cost and Profitability of Alternatives

Cooperative Extension Cost/Return Studies: Cost per Acre

Crop	Investment	Re venue	Cost	Net
Winegrapes	\$7100	\$3000	\$2920	\$80
Almonds	\$4840	\$4200	\$4000	\$200
Walnuts	\$5700	\$5100	\$4030	\$1070
Pistachios	\$9276	\$4540	\$3680	\$860
Pomegranates	\$3490	\$5400	\$4780	\$620
Alfalfa Hay	\$530	\$1480	\$1500	-\$20

The future?

- The U.S. wine market will look quite different
 - It will be significantly larger
 - Number of wineries in other states will double
 - Upwardly mobile Hispanics will adopt wine
- California will remain the major U.S. producer but will lose volume to inexpensive imports marketed as global brands
- Faced with expensive water, San Joaquin valley growers will switch to crops where California has a competitive advantage