

ADELSHEIM VINEYARD: FROM OREGON FARMS TO ASIAN TABLES

One beautiful June day in 1971, David and Ginny Adelsheim stood atop Oregon's Willamette Valley and looked out over the vast patchwork of green trees and tall grass. The Adelsheims dreamed of planting a vineyard and making high quality wine; so they gathered together enough to purchase 19 acres of the rolling Oregon countryside.

Nearly 50 years and more than 200 acres later, the couple's modest dream and small vineyard have both grown tremendously. According to Adelsheim's winemaker, "by staying true to our place and honoring the natural characteristics of our land, we've helped change the world's view about world-class wines in the [Oregon] Willamette Valley."

And the world has taken notice. Demand for their Oregon Pinot Noir began to increase steadily over recent years. Catherine Douglas, Adelsheim's Manager of Export Sales, has witnessed this growth firsthand. According to Douglas, Adelsheim decided to "step up our focus on exports" around late 2011, a time when export sales totaled only around 1% of the business. In 2015, that figure grew to 3-5%, and she states the goal is reach 10% by volume in five years.

The Oregon winery has been able to expand steadily in part through the assistance of the U.S. Small Business Administration's State Trade and Export Promotion (STEP) grant program, a federal program designed to increase the volume and value of small business exports. Adelsheim earned a grant in 2013 to help them attend the ProWein International Trade Fair in Dusseldorf, Germany, and will use a second grant to attend an Oregon wine roadshow around Australia's capital cities this March.

Today, Adelsheim's top export markets by volume include Canada and mainland China; they export to 14 countries and territories in total, including Germany. The winery has a big presence in Hong Kong and has recently expanded its reach in Asia by signing with a new distributor in the Philippines. Douglas cites this international success in part to a different structure and body that makes Oregon Pinot Noirs unique from other Pinot Noirs from around the world.

"Our Pinot has bright acidity and round tannins and is very approachable when young – unlike Old World Pinot Noir which takes longer to evolve. There is vibrant fresh fruit and people have commented on how drinkable it is either on its own or with food."

Today, the Adelsheim Vineyard estate includes 10 estate vineyard sites in Oregon's north Willamette Valley, totaling 223 acres. A new generation of experienced wine industry professionals has joined David and Ginny Adelsheim to continue the growth of their winemaking dream. To learn more about their products, visit: www.adelsheim.com

To see how the SBA's State Trade and Export Promotion program can benefit your small business, please visit: www.SBA.gov/STEP , and to find other local SBA resources, visit: www.SBA.gov/OR.