Consumers Can Create Wine on the Internet With Virtual Vineyard

Columbia Crest

PATERSON, Wash. (PRNewswire) — The Internet now has a vineyard — a premium, award-winning one at that. Beginning today, Columbia Crest [1] — the only Washington winery to be awarded Wine Spectator's No. 1 Wine in the World* — will help the online community of wine-lovers create the first-ever Crowdsourced Cabernet Sauvignon from the beginning stages of the vineyard all the way to bottling and selling the wine through a new online experience.

Over the next 18 months, the new interactive website, CrowdsourcedCabernet.com [2], will allow everyone from casual drinkers to wine aficionados join the process of winemaking, and determine how the grapes are tended, irrigated, harvested and blended through weekly votes. Participants will have access to weather analytics, season-by-season data, past data and time-lapse camera shots down to the individual grape. Additionally, Columbia Crest head winemaker Juan Munoz Oca will offer expert advice and answer questions from the community to assist with the winemaking process every step of the way.

"We know our wine supporters are a knowledgeable and discerning bunch, so we thought we'd issue them a challenge. For the first time, everything from fruit-thinning, to the harvest, to the final blend, and even the label will be in the hands of our fans; it's a trailblazing adventure," Munoz Oca said. "The Crowdsourced Cabernet process will invite wine-lovers to gain a deeper understanding and connection to the craft and skill of winemaking. Our fans will make the calls like when to fruit-thin, when to water, when to hedge, and even when to harvest. We will ferment it, barrel it, bottle it, and baby it until it's ready to drink."

Columbia Crest has set aside an acre of reserve grapes in its estate vineyard for the project, the same grapes that earned the Columbia Crest 2005 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon the No. 1 Wine in the World designation from Wine Spectator magazine in 2009. At the end of the process, approximately 1,000 cases of the Crowdsourced Cabernet 2014 vintage will be available for purchase in the U.S., online and in the Columbia Crest tasting room in Paterson, Washington, and will also be sent to leading wine publications to be rated alongside other premium wines.

"Columbia Crest already has an international reputation for producing highly acclaimed wines, but now we are challenging wine-lovers everywhere to make their own wine that reflects the spirit of Columbia Crest," said Martin Johnson, Senior Vice President of Marketing for Columbia Crest. "Never before has the art and skill of winemaking been introduced to the digital world of crowdsourcing to this extent, and we are excited to see what our loyal fans create."

Columbia Crest will support the project with an entirely new advertising and social

media campaign that will invite people to become honorary winemakers. To learn more about Crowdsourced Cabernet, visit www.CrowdsourcedCabernet.com [3] or follow Columbia Crest on Facebook [4], Twitter [5] or Instagram [6].

About Columbia Crest
Founded in 1983, Columbia Crest has grown from a small winery in a relatively unknown wine region to one of the most significant wineries in the U.S. and a major force behind Washington State's emergence as a world-class wine region. In 2009, Wine Spectator magazine named the Columbia Crest 2005 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon the No. 1 Wine in the World on its Top 100 list, the first time a wine from Washington State has received the ranking. More information about the winery can be found at columbiacrest.com.

**For 2009 of the Columbia Crest 2005 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon*

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[6] http://cp.mcafee.com/d/1jWVIpdEIn78I3HIcCXCQrILCzBBdZx4SztBYQsIFLLfCQrIzA
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