



Wineries Look to Bottle Reuse to Boost Sustainability, Consumer Interest

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shable label for easy cleaning and refill.

Cooperative (OBRC). “California just recently the Oregon Legislature added wine in cans in With extended producer responsibility (EPR) in some states, I think that many producers e bills. Those who are impacted by container need to be part of those conversations as well.” s yet to pass a bottle bill, GPI recently received gton and the State Departments of Commerce egation hub in rural Eastern Washington wine glass making facilities on the West Coast for l glass used to make new wine bottles. wine bottles from the wineries in Central and the bottles those wineries would otherwise use a co-op model to aggregate the smaller n to the West Coast plants in the Seattle and fe. “We are actively looking at sites for the hub

U.S. Change Makers

Despite logistical headwinds, other U.S. winery bottle reuse programs exist, coast to coast. In Sacramento, winemaker Loraine Scott of Acheson Wine Company established a reusable wine bottle program at her family winery in 2019. Acheson uses etched flask bottles filled from wines stored in metal kegs. Consumers pay \$7 for each returnable bottle, in addition to the cost of the wine. She also offers home delivery within seven miles of the tasting room.

To date, Scott estimates her winery reuses about 6,500 bottles annually. “Since beginning [the] program, we have saved over 35,000 wine bottles from going to the landfill,” she said. “Our winery is 100%-refillable and no longer produces any regular bottled products.”

Further south, La Jolla winemaker Lowell Jooste of LJ Crafted Wines introduced reusable wine bottles in 2016.

“When we started, half our wine was bottled traditionally in 750ml bottles with corks,” Jooste explained. “Customers were offered the same wine in these 750ml bottles or the 1-liter growler (with a \$6 deposit) directly out of the barrel for the same price, the difference being that we did not pay for bottling and packaging. Ninety-nine percent of customers chose the 1-liter option with an extra 250 ml.”

Each Italian-made flask sports the winery’s screen-printed logo and required government verbiage, along with a peel-off label that lists the variety, ABV, AVA and vineyard. Jooste pumps the wine from barrels into bottles using an ingenious, air-tight wine pumping system he patented called the “Wine Steward.”

LJ Crafted Wines sells about 18,000 1-liter growlers annually and reports a 93% growler return rate, essentially cutting the winery’s carbon footprint in half

“Hopefully, more wineries will adapt to reusables for their hospitality side,” Jooste said. “It makes sense environmentally, economically and sends the right message.”

S. Behaviors

bottle reuse programs relies not just on policy ion.

massive behavioral shift that needs to take Master of Wine (MW) Melissa Saunders of r and distributor in New York City. “I think be driven by a real feeling that it’s important we’re just not raised that way. A lot of us don’t pens to our waste once we throw it away. We in a bin that we’re told to put it in, and then

is on “Wine Retailers & the Environmental ignore the impact of packaging,” she said. “It

Breaking New Ground

Whether part of a circular or linear economy, wine industry stakeholders world-