



# IDAHO WINE COMMISSION

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## **Idaho Grape Growers Celebrate Harvest Season Close**

*'Stellar' grape quality offsets reduced tonnage*

Boise – Idaho grape growers are celebrating the close of harvest season. The unique growing year resulted with lower quantities of grapes, but high quality fruit for Idaho wineries.

While grape quality is high, yields are less than in 2014. Many growers attribute this to a sharp decrease in average temperatures during November 2014, which was detrimental to all plants. Even established grapes were affected and struggled to come back in the 2015 growing season.

The cooler overall season, compounded with a bud break in early spring, April frosts, mildew from rapid cooling and rain in the summer led to the total tonnage of grapes decreasing between 40-50 percent from previous years.

“Harvest started very early and finished earlier than we’ve had in many years,” said Gregg Alger, owner of Huston Vineyards and Chair of the Idaho Wine Commission. “Even though this is leaving us with less tonnage than previous years, the quality of fruit will be stellar.”

The harvest quantity will affect the availability of certain varietals. Idaho can expect to see limited production of merlot, viognier and chardonnay this year. Growers are confident the wines produced will be excellent, based on the superior grapes.

“In Idaho we know a greater volume of grapes does not always mean better wine,” said Alger. “Instead of quantity, nature is giving us quality through fruit with robust flavors that will translate into fine wine.”

Growers are waiting for frost, which signals to plants to begin going dormant. This will prevent more loss in the winter months.

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*The Idaho Wine Commission is dedicated to marketing and promoting all Idaho wineries and growers. There are 51 wineries with 1,300 vineyard acres planted. The wine industry contributed \$169 million to Idaho’s economy in 2013. Visit [www.idahowines.org](http://www.idahowines.org) for more information about wineries, vineyards and events in Idaho.*

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