

HOW DO I INTERACT WITH MY NEIGHBORS AND COMMUNITY TO PREVENT PROBLEMS THAT CAN ARISE AS MORE NON-AGRICULTURAL PEOPLE LIVE CLOSER TO TRADITIONALLY RURAL AREAS?

CHECKLIST OF QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

Target Audience:

1. Who are your neighbors?

- Identify those that may be impacted by your farming operations
- Nearby (neighboring farmers, other residents)
- Community (schools, businesses, residents, media)
- Region
- Statewide
- Some neighbors are concerned about certain issues more than others. For example, if you are near a school, expect that parents will be concerned about pesticide spray issues.

2. Who are your supporters and adversaries?

Identify Conflict Areas

What farming practices are areas where potential conflicts may develop?

- Pesticide application (drift, residues, chemical usage)
- Vineyard groundwork (dust, equipment noise)
- Wind machines (noise)
- Smudge pots (air pollution)
- Bird control (noise)
- Harvest (nighttime light pollution, increased traffic, noise)
- Water (competing uses, inefficient application)
- Land use (loss of open fields or natural habitat, i.e. steppe shrub, competing uses – wheat farming versus vineyards)
- Labor (congestion during peak labor times)

Proactive Planning

Have you developed a proactive plan emphasizing education and communication to minimize problems from potential conflict areas?

A proactive plan should be developed for each target group that has been identified.

Components of the plan might include:

1. Get acquainted

- Get to know neighbors or group (at least the leaders) in a friendly setting before problems arise. Invite group or neighbor to tour your vineyard/winery. Attend group's meeting as interested person, learning their issues and concerns.

2. Educate

- Share what practices you use throughout the year, when and why. Share sustainable, best management practices used by industry.
- Develop understanding and awareness of your business, putting a face to your operation.



3. Communicate

- With communication lines open, find a neutral setting to discuss any concerns the neighbor or group may have.
- Respect views of neighbors.
- Seek common areas of interest.
- Develop positive relationships.
- Explore changes to practices that could smooth tensions (i.e. scheduling objectionable activity like spraying when neighbors are at work and not on weekends when they are likely to be outside).
- Send postcard to neighbors to alert them when spraying.
- Share your ecosystem goals and how they fit with the area ecosystem.

4. Generate goodwill

- Invite neighbors, groups, community members to vineyard/winery events, such as harvest barbeques.
- Be involved in community events and civic and charitable groups, working alongside community members.
- Understand that you are an ambassador the Washington State wine industry.

Media/Community Relation

1. Have you developed a relationship with local media?

- You can get to know your local media representatives through a regional industry group or on your own (if doing on your own, you may want to seek professional advice beforehand). Encourage regional or statewide groups to cultivate relationships with local, regional, and statewide media.

2. Who covers the farm beat?

- Invite reporters to your vineyard/winery, giving them newsworthy information. For example, if you schedule a tour during harvest, you could give them industry information about size of estimated crush, local and statewide economic impact, etc.
- Share your sustainable practices and explain what industry is doing to reduce pesticide use, etc.
- Respond promptly if media does call as they are frequently under deadline. (If you don't have the information they seek, call and give them the name of someone who can help.)

3. Have you developed a relationship with your local community leaders (county commissioners, county conservation agency, influential business and civic groups)?

4. Does your county have a right to farm ordinance or growth management plan?

- Right to farm ordinances and growth plans can help to limit urban encroachment and sprawl, but cannot be depended on to eliminate urban-rural tensions and conflicts.

CHECKLIST: BUILDING YOUR COMMUNITY NEIGHBORS TOOLBOX

- Have you identified those who would benefit from establishing good community neighbor relations?
- Have you identified what vineyard practices are ripe for conflicts?
- Have you developed a proactive plan for each group with which you are building a relationship that includes education and communication?
- Are you seeking common ground on divisive issues?
- Are you a solid community member, involved in community events and civic groups?
- Are you a member of regional and statewide industry trade groups?



- Are you an ambassador for the industry who has sought training in media relations?
- Are you responsive to calls from the media?
- Have you developed a relationship with your local and county leaders?
- Are you familiar with local and county zoning laws, right to farm ordinance, and growth management plans?

RESOURCES:

Web sites for state wine and grape organizations:

Washington Wine Commission,
www.washingtonwine.org

Washington Wine Institute
www.washingtonwineinstitute.org

Washington Association of Wine Grape Growers
www.wawgg.org

Regional wine and winegrower groups:

Columbia Cascade Winery Association
www.columbiacascadewines.com

Columbia Gorge Winegrowers
www.columbiagorgewine.com

Columbia Valley Winery Association
www.columbiavalleywine.com

North Sound Wineries Association
www.northsoundwineries.org

Puget Sound Winegrowers
www.pswg.org

Rattlesnake Hills Wine Trail
www.rattlesnakehills.org

Red Mountain Estates Association (509) 588-4534

Spokane Winery Association
www.spokanewineries.net

Walla Walla Valley Wine Alliance
www.wallawallawine.com

Wine Yakima Valley
www.wineyakimavalley.org

Woodinville Wine Country
www.woodinvillewinecountry.com



Washington Guide to Sustainable Viticulture

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