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Owen Valley Winery Earns Two Medals At '12 Indy Competition

Rural Vineyard Now Offers More Than 15 Locally Made Wines

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Staff Writer



Owen Valley Winery's Anthony Leaderbrand shows off a healthy cluster of Marechal Foch grapes found in the Leaderbrand vineyard on rural [Timber Ridge Road](#). (Staff Photo)

While many who depend on the land for their livelihood have experienced the ill effects of the ongoing drought, the Leaderbrand family has appreciated the dry weather at their [Owen Valley Winery](#) vineyard on rural [Timber Ridge Road](#).

Despite a complete loss of product earlier in the year due to frost, the second round of buds have flourished in the dry conditions, which have helped keep the vineyard's grape harvest healthy.

"This year has been wonderful; I don't know whether to attribute the crop to the drought or to our skill in pruning and caring for the plant, but either way it has been a great year for us with all of the components combined," Anthony Leaderbrand said. "Rain encourages the diseases and fungicides to grow, so I didn't have to spray near as much this season for fungicides on the vines as I have before, because the dryness keeps them all at bay. Especially with the Steuben (grapes), there is barely any fungal damage at all. Usually you have it throughout, but it's very little. These are beautiful, I just can't get over them. There's just something about a cluster of

grapes hanging on the vine."

Where's the story?



8 Points Mentioned

In just its second full season of operation, [Owen Valley](#) Winery shined once again at the Indy International Wine Competition held last week at [Purdue University](#). In the Catawba category, the vineyard's 2011 Crimson Delight received a silver medal, as did the 2011 Pear entered in the applepear category.

“Our method of entering wine competitions is only entering in the Indy International Wine Competition and we only enter in wines that we produce here on the property,” Leaderbrand explained. “We do source grapes from different vineyards in Indiana and out of [California](#), but we do not enter those in the competition. It's our stance that we only enter in wines that are grown end-to-end on this property. We entered five different wines and those two received a silver.”

He said the winery will once again be calling on locals here in [Owen County](#) to provide pears and other produce because of the volume needed to produce the indemand wine.

“We want to produce more, because of the demand being so high. We do believe that pulling from our local community still makes for a local product,” Leaderbrand said. “Just like our persimmon wine, they all came from [Owen County](#). We did 1,100 pounds of persimmons last year and 95 percent of that came from right here in Owen County.”

With more than 15 varieties of wine already being made at the family ran location, the Leaderbrands say they are always looking to add something different.

“We may be doing a peach again; a local grower is looking at what kind of product he'll have,” Leaderbrand said. “We've got some new wines coming out, including strawberry, blueberry, and we're getting ready to bring Harvest Moon out again and we just bottled rhubarb. Sometime in the near future we'll have a Moscato we sourced out of [Canada](#). People like to have a change, something new, so we always look for something different.”

Due to an increasing demand for additional space, the Leaderbrands are currently in the process of expanding operations.

“We are certainly looking to expand our facility. We're at the point where we have to expand because we need more inside seating, especially with the winter months coming on,” he said. “We're also starting a micro-wholesale company so we can start getting into stores. There's a demand for our products in a lot of different restaurants and stores throughout the state. My son, Cody, will be the micro-wholesale distributor. People have really been responsive to our wines.”

Through September, the winery will host bands for various events each and every Saturday. The winery has also been setup all season



For the third year in a row, the [Owen Valley](#) Winery earned recognition at the annual Indy International Wine Competition, receiving silver medals for its Crimson Delight and Pear wines. (Staff Photo)

at the farmers' market in [Terre Haute](#) and plans to become a vendor at the [Owen County](#) Farmers' Market.

The winery will have booths setup at the Gosport Lazy Days festival and during the annual Spencer Lions Club Apple Butter Festival, set for September 15-16.

"We're going to take part in a Halloween party at Hickory Hills Campground at the end of October and we're going to be at a festival down at Sculpture Trails in early November," Leaderbrand said. "So we're trying to get a little more penetration into the community. We've been very well received by the public. We were told from the very start that we would have to expand within a year, so that's where we're at. We want to be able to provide a good experience for our customers."

The winery is open Thursday through Saturday from 12 noon to 7:00 p.m., and on Sunday from 12 noon to 6:00 p.m.

[Owen Valley](#) Winery is located at [491 Timber Ridge Road](#), south of Spencer. For more information, call 812-828-0883, or visit: www.owenvalleywinery.com.

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