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## Oregon Wine Continues Its Ascent, Driven By Pinot Noir

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Oregon wine continues to gain traction in the U.S. market, with both local players and more recent arrivals making gains at premium and above price points. Oregon wines leapt 13% to 1.1 million cases and 13.8% to \$212 million in Nielsen channels in the 52 weeks through August 10. That follows a robust year in calendar 2018, in which Oregon's total volume jumped 15% to 4.15 million cases, boosted by out-of-state sales, as well as direct-to-consumer and export shipments, according to the Oregon Wine Board.

Pinot Noir remains Oregon's calling card. The varietal made up nearly 60% of the state's production last year. Longtime Oregon player King Estate sold its Acrobat label to Foley Family Wines last year, but recently reloaded with a new Willamette Valley Pinot Noir brand called Inscription, producing 10,000 cases for the first year. The King Estate brand itself was at about 111,000 cases last year, according to Impact Databank.

Ste. Michelle Wine Estates is seeing solid gains in Oregon Pinot with its Erath brand. Erath has added about 100,000 cases to its total over the past three years, earning Impact "Hot Brand" honors, and is positioned to cross 300,000 cases this year. Known for its flagship Oregon Pinot, the brand has also been expanded with a number of estate and single-vineyard expressions. Union Wine Co.'s Underwood label is another Hot Brand, leveraging its canned format to soar 43% to 400,000 cases last year.

Newer on the scene is Copper Cane Wines & Provisions, whose founder Joe Wagner has made an aggressive push into Oregon with his Elouan brand. "Elouan has become one of the leading by-the-glass Pinots out there and it has helped bring Oregon into the national spotlight," Wagner recently told SND. "While the Willamette Valley is the main name in Oregon, the Rogue Valley and Umpqua Valley just to the south have started to produce some amazing Chardonnays and Pinot Noirs as well, with new plantings coming in." Indeed, the Umpqua and Rogue valleys saw the biggest percentage increase in planted acreage statewide last year, rising 10%. Overall, Oregon's planted acreage rose 5.8% to nearly 36,000 acres in 2018.

Other California-based players making moves in Oregon have included Jackson Family Wines, Foley, and most recently Coppola. Jackson Family's portfolio includes Zena Crown Vineyards, Gran Moraine, Penner-Ash, and WillaKenzie, as well as La Crema- and Siduri-made Oregon wines. "We opened our winery in McMinnville last year, and continue to see a lot of opportunity there," says Jackson Family CEO Rick Tigner.

Meanwhile, Coppola earlier this year unveiled a new upscale label, Domaine de Broglie, with three estate-grown Pinot Noirs retailing at around \$56, as well as a Pinot Noir Dundee Hills (\$36) blended from multiple vineyard blocks. Coppola developed the new brand after acquiring the former Vista Hills Vineyard from the McClintock and McDaniel families last year for an undisclosed sum.—*Daniel Marsteller*

| <b>Leading Oregon Wine Brands in the U.S.</b><br>(thousands of 9-liter case depletions) |                                |             |             |                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Brand</b>                                                                            | <b>Company</b>                 | <b>2017</b> | <b>2018</b> | <b>Percent Change<sup>1</sup></b> |
| Underwood                                                                               | Union Wine Co.                 | 280         | 400         | 43.0%                             |
| A to Z                                                                                  | A to Z Wineworks               | 285         | 295         | 3.5                               |
| Erath                                                                                   | Ste. Michelle Wine Estates     | 234         | 293         | 25.2                              |
| Acrobat <sup>2</sup>                                                                    | Foley Family Wines             | 156         | 166         | 6.4                               |
| Willamette                                                                              | Willamette Valley Vineyards    | 135         | 146         | 8.7                               |
| King Estate                                                                             | King Estate Winery             | 113         | 111         | -1.6                              |
| Elouan                                                                                  | Copper Cane Wines & Provisions | 75          | 90          | 20.0                              |
| <b>Total Leading Brands<sup>3</sup></b>                                                 |                                | 1,278       | 1,502       | 17.6%                             |

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