

# Wawawai Canyon Vineyard

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Located along the Moscow-Pullman highway, the Wawawai Canyon Winery tasting room is a familiar sight to many WSU students and Pullman residents. While many of this small-scale winery's events take place at this location, the grape growing and wine making operations take place about 20 miles south of Pullman amidst the winding canyon lands of Wawawai. With the first planting occurring in 1994, this vineyard site represents the first to be planted in Whitman County since prohibition. A combination of factors including steep slopes, proper heat, and appropriate soil fertility make Wawawai Canyon an ideal location for growing grapes.

My primary responsibilities throughout the summer involved dealing with the excessive vegetative growth that had occurred as a result of the considerable rains of the previous winter. This included canopy thinning, shoot positioning, vine training, and affixing irrigation lines to trellis wires. Additionally, I participated in bottling at the winery just down the hill from the vineyard.



A particularly vigorous section of the vineyard before and after pruning.



Grape clusters exposed to sunlight after removal of excessive vegetative growth.

Though my goal is to eventually work as a winemaker, I do not feel that I could be completely qualified without having developed an appreciation for the hard work that goes into growing and maintaining the grape vines. I've learned much in the classroom about the various ways in which grape growers manipulate light and resource allocation to ensure the proper ripening of the fruit. This experience allowed me to finally translate much of my education from theoretical knowledge to practical experience.