

Commissioner Todd Staples
TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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COMMISSIONER STAPLES AWARDS \$250,000 TO TEXAS GRAPE GROWERS

AUSTIN - Commissioner Todd Staples announced today the Texas Department of Agriculture awarded \$250,000 in wine grape grants to support Texas' booming wine industry. Ten Texas vineyards committed to increasing their wine grape production received the grants.

"Maximizing grape production maximizes profits for the Texas economy and our wine industry," Commissioner Staples said. "The greater the investment in our grape vineyards, the greater the potential for a profitable return."

The \$250,000 in reimbursement grants will enable Texas vineyards to plant a total of 141 new acres of grapevines, creating a total new investment in the industry of more than \$1.5 million. The grants come from TDA's Wine Grape Investment Pilot Grant Program and are awarded to vineyards committed to expanding their operations by at least five acres.

Commissioner Staples awarded reimbursement grants to the following vineyards: Martin's Vineyard, Bell Mountain Vineyards, Cliff Bingham, Brennan Vineyards, Clint Bingham, Delaney Vineyards, Mesa Vineyards, Oswald Vineyard, Red Caboose and The Family Vineyard.

"From the Hill Country to the High Plains, Texas wines are a lot like Texans themselves: rich in heritage, diverse in character from region to region and full of Texas pride. These funds boost one of Texas' fastest growing industries," Commissioner Staples said.

Texas wine industry facts:

- Texas is the fifth-largest wine-producing state in the nation.
- The Texas wine industry contributes \$1.3 billion to the state's economy.

- Texas has 280 commercial vineyards planted on more than 3,100 acres.

- Texas is home to 163 wineries supplying almost 9,000 jobs.

For more information about the Texas wine industry or about the wine grape investment program, visit <http://www.gotexanwine.com/>.

All TDA press releases are also available via the Internet at www.tda.state.tx.us