



SUPPORTING B.C.’s LAND-BASED WINERIES, CIDERIES & DISTILLERIES

ISSUE

Agri-tourism offers farmers tremendous opportunity to add value to their operations, enhance local economies and educate visitors. Wine-based²⁵² agri-tourism supports a visitor economy in wine growing regions. Wineries are a catalyst for tourism in many regions. A 2015 report on the economic impact of the wine and grape industry in Canada estimated that there were 1 million tourists visiting B.C. wineries, having a total impact of wine-related tourism of \$246 million²⁵³. Estimates suggest that for every bottle of wine produced in the province, there is \$48 of economic impact generated²⁵⁴.

A 2018 report estimates that the Liquor Distribution Branch (LDB) generates *over \$1 billion annually which goes into general revenue* of BC government revenues.²⁵⁵

Farm-based wineries attract visitors from all around the world to the region to sample the wine, taste local foods, see local sites and stay in local accommodation. A strong, well-known cluster of wine producers entices visitors and attracts export dollars into their communities and regions and contributes to BC’s \$17 billion tourism economy²⁵⁶. A healthy tourism and hospitality industry contributes provincial and local taxes, creates jobs, enhances civic pride and provides visitors and residents with leisure activities.

BACKGROUND

The tourism sector is fiercely competitive; tourists have many global destinations to choose from. The success of a wine-based agri-tourism sector depends on farmers growing the finest quality grapes, wineries practicing advanced, high quality wine-making processes plus providing unique, memorable and remarkable visitor experiences. B.C.’s wine growing regions need government to support the success of B.C.’s wine- based agri-tourism sector while minimizing the hurdles and obstacles they face.

One such obstacle is the high property tax classification for land-based²⁵⁷ wineries. BC’s Liquor Control and Licensing Branch categorizes all wineries in BC as either ‘Land Based’ (LB) or ‘Commercial’ Wineries. LB Wineries must: produce wine made from 100% BC grown grapes; have at least 2 acres of vineyards at the licensed winery site and use those to produce wine; make wine with at least 25% of the grapes used to make wine coming from land owned or leased by the LB winery; not use wine or juice from Commercial wineries; use ‘traditional’ wine-making techniques; and be



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