

**Subject:** WINE CLUB SUMMIT ... EAST by Vineyard & Winery Management magazine  
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## Vineyard & Winery Management

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### WINE CLUB SUMMIT ... EAST Fine Tunes Direct Wines Sales in Eastern U.S.

**Windsor, California (September 27, 2005)** -- On the heels of a sweeping move by the New York Legislature permitting in-state and out-of-state wineries to ship directly to adult residents of the state, *Vineyard & Winery Management* magazine presents "Wine Club Summit ... East," a daylong conference to be held November 3 at Belhurst Castle in Geneva, New York. The event's well-timed agenda provides comprehensive training, useful information and constructive feedback to vintners east of the Mississippi River who market their products directly to consumers via wine clubs.

An experienced group of wine industry insiders including Elizabeth Slater, owner of InShort Direct Marketing; John McGregor, vice president of McGregor Vineyard & Winery; Kit Kalfs, tasting room manager of Sheldrake Point Vineyard; Teddie Piece, owner of Technology Consulting Alliance; and Paul Thienes, technical director of Missing Link Networks will conduct this multileveled look at wine club functionality.



Interested winery personnel are encouraged to register early. "Our first Wine Club Summit in Napa, California was a huge success, selling out almost immediately," said Kay Stephens, West Coast events coordinator for the magazine. "The New York summit offers different speakers and fresh topics."

With stiff competition from large domestic producers and shrewd importers, small wineries everywhere in the U.S. are turning to wine clubs as a means of fortifying their bottom lines. According to a 2004 direct sales survey by the accounting firm MKF, "direct sales impact on gross profit may nearly double that of equal sales through the three tier system."

Following opening remarks by *Vineyard & Winery Management* President Robert Merletti, a session entitled "Develop a Wine Club" will lead attendees on a fast-paced journey from the basics of wine club startups through the concepts of advanced management: goals, benefits, infrastructure, timetables, challenges and registration forms. Next, "Wine Clubs That Work" is a panel discussion fielded by eastern winery personnel already operating successful consumer-direct programs. Closing out the morning sessions, "Maintain & Promote Your Club" reveals techniques needed to retain club members and bring back

those that are lost. The hiring and training of club administrators will also be covered.

Want to go high-tech? An afternoon session called "Wine Club Technology -- Automating Your Club" is a presentation of wine club software by the experts who develop them. Lastly, participants will peer into the soul of a focus group as "Perspectives of Wine Club Members" reveals the expectations, turnons and turnoffs of consumers belonging to multiple wine clubs. A similar panel discussion held at the Napa Wine Club Summit was a huge success. "It was scheduled for one hour, lasted an hour and a half, but could have gone another hour," said Stephens.

See [www.vwm-online.com](http://www.vwm-online.com) for details and information.

"Wine Club Summit ... East" is a special project of Vineyard & Winery Services, the publisher of *Vineyard & Winery Management* magazine, a *Directory & Products Guide* and the *Wine Industry Phone Book*. With offices in Windsor, California and Watkins Glen, New York, it conducts seminars, conferences and trade shows (Tasting Room & Profitability Seminar, Managing the Winery Laboratory, Marketing & Public Relations Conference, and Wineries Unlimited), and three wine competitions (The Grand Harvest Awards judges wines in the context of their own viticultural areas; the International Eastern Wine Competition features entries from the East Coast and Europe; the West Coast Wine Competition includes wines of the western United States as well as producers in British Columbia, Australia, New Zealand and Western Mexico).

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