



Field worker training the vines

Seeking diversification, the King family has planted 15 acres of their land to plum, apple and pear trees in the tradition of the old Lorane Orchards. Also, about 100 young hazelnut trees will be delivered in spring 2006 for planting on estate grounds. The roots of these trees will have been injected with white and black truffle spores. In 4 to 7 years, King Estate hopes to harvest both nuts and truffles for their culinary use. The other trees in the orchards produce fruit used for jams, chutneys, ciders, and produce for the estate's own use and for sale in the Marketplace. What they don't use from the orchards and gardens are donated to Food for Lane County, a charity which is dear to the heart of the King family, especially to Ed King III who is a member of the board.

We toured the gardens and the state-of-the-art greenhouses where special heated tables helped seedlings begin to sprout and grow. The 10-acre gardens, under the management of a local Loranian, Jessie Russell, produce vegetables and plants of all kinds used for food and landscaping on the estate, sales in the Marketplace, and donations to charitable organizations.

From there, we toured Lorane Grapevines where King Estate has developed a state of the art vine propagation facility that operates as a separate business under the directorship of Tom Lodge, who is in charge of grafting and growing over 600,000 grapevines each year. His organization oversees a small vineyard of phylloxera-resistant grapevines from which twigs or "sticks" are cut. Sticks from the choice varieties that are not as disease-resistant are grafted onto them using a hand-operated punch that joins the two varieties. The joint is covered with wax and the vines are allowed to grow in the greenhouses.

These rootstocks are used for planting new vineyards on King Estate and are also sold and shipped all over the world. According to their website, "The development of an extensive library of rootstocks and bud-wood material allows Lorane Grapevines to produce custom grafted vines ideally suited to the

various planting sites on the estate, maximizing potential fruit quality. Long term experimental work with non-traditional varieties is also being conducted in both the propagation facility and vineyards."

In 2002, King Estate received the certified organic label from the Oregon Tilth certification organization. It has done so well that Oregon Tilth, Inc. awarded King Estate its 2005 "Producer of the Year" award. In 2006, the winery contains almost half the total acres of certified organic vineyards in Oregon. It uses cultivation and mowing to keep the grass and weeds down and fertilizes with fish oil spray and compost. All trimmings and residue from the wine making process are composted on site and reused.

Despite the large number of grapes that the winery grows, it still needs to bring in roughly 50% of its grapes from off of the estate. This also allows King Estate to bring in the best quality fruit from Oregon's finest quality vineyards to add to their own. In addition, King Estate has developed its "Domaine" label which is put exclusively on wine that is 100% estate grown and produced under organic conditions.

Those of us who subscribe to *The Register-Guard* have read some articles on King Estate and the business analyses of its projected success or failure. These articles were mainly analytical and did not touch upon the very human element involved in the huge undertaking of the King family. They did not mention the possible ramifications to Lorane of a new mega-business in its midst. Since the gradual decline of the timber industry has had a negative impact on its lumber mills and logging



King Estate Marketplace



Lorane Grapevines