

Ken Wright Cellars

Carlton Tasting Room:

120 N Pine

Carlton, OR 97111

503-852-7010

www.kenwrightcellars.com



Ken Wright Cellars is committed to the production of the highest quality Pinot Noir. This can be achieved only by working with fruit that possesses those qualities that make Pinot Noir the preeminent wine grape on this planet. In our considered opinion, those qualities are best expressed by the fruit of the northern Willamette Valley. The luscious core of sweet, textural fruit, natural acid balance and power is a testament to this variety's affinity for this region.

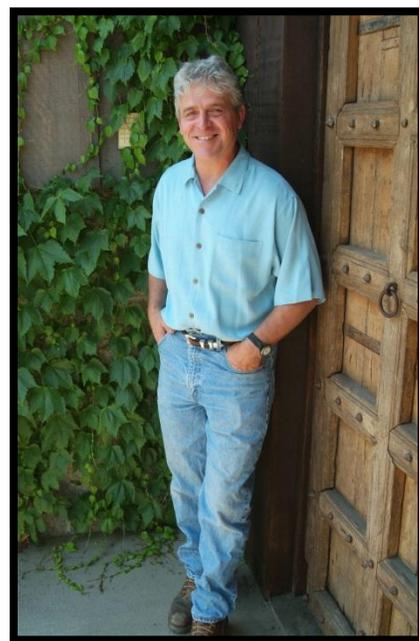
Ken Wright Cellars' approach to the craft of winemaking is one of stewardship. More often than not, manipulation of wine in the cellar results in a loss of character. There are several ways, however, a positive difference can be made. Keeping crop levels to a minimum, personally sampling every vineyard, and hand-sorting each cluster received are all critical steps that can be taken to ensure that all of the inherent character in the fruit is revealed in the finished wine.

Ken Wright

Owner/Winemaker

The seed for a career in wine was planted squarely in Bourbon Country of Lexington, Kentucky. While waiting tables to put himself through school, Ken was exposed to fine wines from regions around the world. Passion became avocation when Ken left the Bluegrass State to attend enology and viticulture classes at UC-Davis. Eight years were spent winemaking for Ventana Vineyards and Talbott Vineyards in Monterey County of California's central coast. Friends from the Willamette Valley piqued Ken's interest in the region when they would visit, and a trip to the Northern Willamette Valley in 1982 convinced him that this was where the finest Pinot Noir in North America was being grown.

In 1986, with family, belongings and 10 barrels in tow, Ken moved to McMinnville and created Panther Creek Cellars. His concept of focusing on vineyard-designate bottling began during those years at Panther Creek and was cemented as a core philosophy in 1994 when Ken Wright Cellars was founded in historic downtown Carlton.



Given his appreciation of sense of place, it was a given that Ken would contribute to the locations and industry near and dear to his heart. Instrumental in organizing the six new American Viticultural Area (AVA)s in the Northern Willamette Valley – areas that define in detail the distinct growing areas within the region, he wrote the proposition for the Yamhill-Carlton AVA and served as the association's first President. Ken was also a founding member and chair of SALUD, a partnership between Pinot Noir producers, Medical Teams International and Tuality Hospital to provide free health and dental care for the seasonal workers who tend local vineyards.

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