

Alfalfa Farm Winery internship program

The internship program at Alfalfa Farm Winery is designed to give training and experience to young workers interested in learning the fundamentals of vineyard and winery operations. Each year the winery invites several people with interest in grapes and wine to assist in the following areas of operation:

1. **Spring pruning** is carried out in late April to early June. Most of the previous year's growth is removed while retaining the required fruiting canes to provide this year's production as well as properly placed renewal spurs to encourage proper development of the vine for the following year's production.
2. This spring we will be **planting** several rows of new grapevines. With proper care and encouragement, these plants will produce wine grapes in about three or four years.
3. Late spring and early summer calls for **vine training** and further pruning in order to direct growth in the desired areas.
4. **Cluster thinning** may be required (depending on weather) so the retained grapes can ripen properly within the growing season. This will encourage the vines to produce quality grapes.
5. Throughout the year, from May through December, the winery **Tasting Room** is open. Customers can sample several types of wine as well as learn about the vineyard and winery.
6. In late summer there will be a need for **leaf removal** around the grapes so the proper amount of sunlight can reach the clusters and help them ripen.
7. Mid-September to late October is **harvest** time. Many people are required to help harvest the grapes over two or three weekends. The grapes are crushed and pressed immediately after being picked for maximum freshness and flavor.
8. **Fermentation** of each batch will require one to four weeks. During this time it will be necessary to monitor the wine chemistry to correct deficiencies and prevent problems later in the production process.
9. During late autumn and early winter the wines require transfer from fermentor to aging tanks. Called **racking**, these transfers remove the sediment from the wine and help the wine develop clean, fruity flavors.
10. In spring the wines are **bottled, corked** and **labeled**. It is then time to start the cycle again.

If you would like to help us with these tasks while learning the basics, we would like to hear from you. Give a call to Dick Adelman at the winery, 978-774-0014. All assistance is greatly appreciated.