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For Immediate Release

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VIDON VINEYARD'S NEW CURRENCY

Tasting rooms are built for traffic. While business models vary, the goal remains the same – maximize wine-buying visitors. An inconsistent schedule is a risk for wineries that depend on direct sales, but it's one Don Hagge took at his tiny Vidon Vineyard in the Willamette Valley of Oregon.

“Crowds are not conducive to serious tasting and conversation,” he said. “I'd have some \$10,000-days (in sales), but it was no fun. It's so much nicer for wine buyers to be here when there aren't crowds at the bar. It's the total experience. Wine is a part of it, but it's not everything.”

What led Hagge, 83, to change his mind about granting total access to his small property? It was his consternation with all the visitors who came in droves via limos and buses, tasting his wine all at once. This doesn't fit with Hagge's iconoclastic personality.

After years of keeping the tasting room open 7 days a week and dealing with tasters that came late and stayed even later, Hagge decided to “go private,” opening his doors for Wine Club Members only. But with no outside means to sell his wine, Hagge quickly realized that wasn't the best move.

Hagge has reached a clever compromise for his business.

Vidon – a producer mainly of Pinot Noir in the Chehalem Mountains of Newberg, Ore. – took another risk. He discontinued a successful Wine Club to launch a “Wine Rewards Program” that operates much like an airline points system. The difference? You leave the ground only after drinking Vidon's wines.

Wine Clubs require ongoing maintenance from updating contact information to monitoring credit card expirations. Members don't always get the wines they really want; skip shipments or ask the winery to hold their wine for months at a time. So, Hagge created an approach that eliminates these hassles, giving customers complete flexibility and control over their wine purchases.

The program – a kind of wine club in reverse – is free to anyone: Consumers can select any of Vidon's several different releases, at any time; and earn “Vidollars” or discounts from 15% to 25% toward future purchases. No restrictions. No credit cards kept on file. Oh, and did we mention that Vidon's doors have once again opened to the public, this time with regular hours and plenty of room for appointments?

Rather than give a 15-20% discount, Vidon's members now “earn” Vidollars by accumulating rewards points toward future purchases. Just like the airline programs. In addition to four Pinot Noirs, Vidon also produces Tempranillo, Pinot Gris, Chardonnay, Pinot Blanc, Viognier, and a Syrah co-fermented with some Viognier.

New Tasting Room Hours: Daily 11am to 4pm; Limo Tours 10am – 11am. Also by Appointment.

Additional Winery News: Effective August 1st, Hagge has been joined by Brandy Grey, former Direct to Consumer Manager at Colene Clemons, also in the Chehalem Mountains AVA. Brandy has been

appointed as Vidon's Operations Manager and Assistant Winemaker. "I keep pinching myself. Don provides exactly the type of experience a consumer wants when visiting a winery" says Brandy. "Not to mention the opportunity to take ownership across the board and the chance to run operations for Don. Who wouldn't want to work with a former NASA scientist?"

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