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## Hospitality Focus



Hiddencroft Vineyards' business has increased 27 percent over the past year, says the Lovettsville property's owner, Clyde Housel. Photos courtesy Hiddencroft Vineyards

## Va. wine industry toasts twice the economic impact in 2010

By Jarondakie Patrick

Virginia's wine industry contributes \$747 million to the state's economy annually, according to a new survey.

The study, conducted by Frank, Rimerman and Co. LLP and commissioned by the Virginia Wine Board, found that the wine industry's economic impact increased by 106 percent from 2005 to 2010, the most recent figures available.

“We knew the numbers were going to be much higher,” said Annette Boyd, director of the wine board. “The fact that it doubled was surprising.”

A 2005 study reported that the wine industry contributed more than \$360 million to the state's economy annually and employed more than 3,100 people.

In the survey released this year, vineyards said they employed 4,753 full-time workers who received \$156 million in wages, a jump from \$84 million in 2005.

Wine sales in Virginia reached a high of 5.5 million bottles in fiscal 2011.

Virginia, with its more than 200 wineries, ranked fifth in the nation for most wineries and was the country's fifth-largest wine grape producer, according to state officials.

The survey's findings don't surprise Clyde Housel, owner of Hiddencroft Vineyards, a Lovettsville vineyard that opened in Loudoun County in 2008.

“Business has increased 27 percent in the last 12 months” at his vineyard, he said.

Housel said he hasn't noticed a significant increase in wineries in his area but has seen a ripple effect from wineries that is benefiting other businesses.

“I get calls everyday from companies making wine labels, advertising and winery gift items,” he said.

Virginia's wine-making industry has risen in profile in other ways as well.

In 2011, for the first time, the Destination Races, a prestigious wine country half-marathon that started in 2004, was held on the eastern coast of Virginia. The 13.1-mile race is normally run in the West Coast's popular wine states, primarily California and Oregon.

This year, the race returns to Virginia for the second year, to be hosted in Loudoun County, and the event has already sold out.

### Red, white and green

Virginia's vineyards grew more than just grapes between 2005 and 2010. Their contributions to the state also swelled, especially in economic impact, tourism spending, and state and local taxes.

#### Economic impact

2005: \$362M  
2010: \$747M **106%**

#### Wages

2005: \$84M  
2010: \$156M **86%**

#### State/local taxes

2005: \$21M  
2010: \$43M **105%**

#### Wine tourism spending

2005: \$57M  
2010: \$131M **130%**

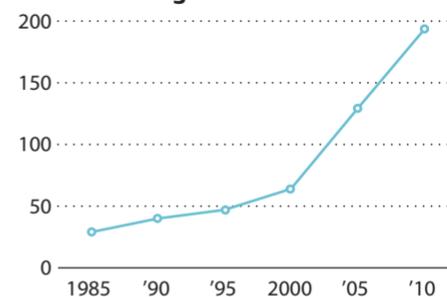
#### Retail value of wine sold

2005: \$45M  
2010: \$73M **62%**

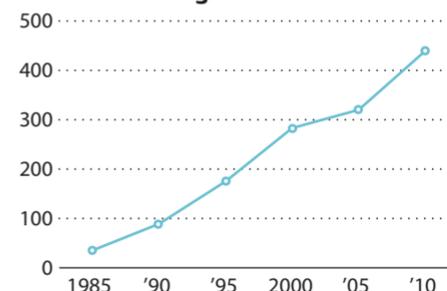
#### Full-time jobs

2005: 3,162  
2010: 4,753 **50%**

#### Number of Virginia wineries



#### Case sales of Virginia wines In thousands



Source: Virginia Wine Board report

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