

EPISODE #31 ROSEMONT/JUSTIN ROSE WINEMAKER

SPEAKERS

Fred Reno, Justin Rose

Fred Reno

Justin, welcome to my Podcast. I can't thank you enough for taking the time to sit for this interview.

Justin Rose

Well, thank you, Fred. And thank you for that very nice introduction I am happy to be here.

Fred Reno

Well, as I like to say, I start at the beginning. What's your story? How did you get into winemaking and give me a little background on the family farm?

Justin Rose

Sure. I did not drink much wine at UVA. So it wasn't that. Yeah, my family has had the property in Southern Virginia since 1858. It was always kind of a struggling family farm. We were lucky enough to through a family friend, and then he was friends with Lucie Morton, and we met Lucie in 1999.

Fred Reno

Oh, so that's how Lucie came in the very beginning.

Justin Rose

And Dad, I think had thought about grapes because in 1999, 2000 You know, grapes were kind of a thing in Virginia, and starting to kind of increase in potential. So, he talked to Lucie for about three years, they looked at soil, weather. My dad always remembered that our spot of land on Lake Gaston is very dry, because of the way the weather works with the lake we can talk about later. And so, him and Lucie were like, you know, at least like I think we can make this work. And so, we planted a vineyard in 2003. I was in college here doing Chemical Engineering, where I met my wife, and I was going to take a year off, go to graduate school for Chemical Engineering, and Lucie basically dragged me to Napa. Oh my god! Yeah. And one of her close friends is John Caldwell. And so, I kind of hadn't drunk much wine. I'm like, 23. And it's two in the morning, we're drinking his first vintage of Rocket Science. I was like, this is this pretty interesting. And she kind of convinced John or, they were talking behind the scenes. And John said, do you want to stay for a couple of weeks and work the 2005 harvest and stay at my place? I said, Sure. I met some people in Napa College, the professors and decided to basically, you know, go there, and do their two-year program in a year, I got really lucky with an internship and basically did all that. Lived and breathed wine for almost two years and then got back in time for the harvest of '07, when we harvested our first grapes and started making wine.

Fred Reno

The vineyard was initially planted to 20 plus acres.

Justin Rose

Yeah, 11 acres in 2003, and 11 acres in 2004. And then two more in '05.

Fred Reno

You have a wonderful cross section of hybrid and Vinifera in the vineyard.

Justin Rose

That's right, we were about half and a half. Now, we had a couple of acres of American grapes. We had a little Norton, but we had a lot of Catawba, but we got rid of the Catawba after a couple of years, we had some viruses and once we found Vinifera would do well, we just kind of focused on that. But yeah, we were about half and half vinifera and French American hybrids.

Fred Reno

And what's the difference? In growing vinifera and hybrids, what's it like, the difference in the vineyard itself?

Justin Rose

It depends. If you're looking at Chardonal and Chambourcin, there's a significant difference, because we may spray them a third of what we do with vinifera, Vidal we treat pretty close to Vinifera because of some Pierce disease, being in Southern Virginia is an issue and then also mildew on Vidal for us. So, we'll treat Vidal very close to what we would do for vinifera. Traminette, actually is now getting more towards like Chardonal. I mean, I think as Lucie said too, are very good example of Pierce disease, which I think is starting to move a little bit more north. But we've always had an issue with that or concern with that, you know, we've lost half of our Vidal over the past 20 years to Pierce disease. And I don't think we've lost a single plant of Traminette, and they literally are right next to each other. (That's fascinating). And so, I think it's an interesting, the same with Chardonal we may have lost two over 20 years,

Fred Reno

I will tell you; it took me the longest time to find a bottle of Chardonal. I was just so intrigued when I learned about its cross between Seyval and Chardonnay because I'm a big fan of Seyval Blanc. And after I finally had an opportunity to have your Lineage, it's the best.

Justin Rose

Well, thank you. I mean, we only had a couple 100 plants that we planted in '03 and we didn't really add to it until 2012 Because again, Lucie was like, let's put in a bunch of test spots. So, we had Google white, that's gone. We had Vignoles that's gone. So, we had La Crosse, which is from Wisconsin, which we're in the town of La Crosse so we thought this could be clever marketing, problem is a grape from Wisconsin doesn't really work in Southside Virginia. So, we ripped that out pretty quick. So, now Chardonal is our most widely planted. I think we have almost five acres. So, we've really gone all in on it. I mean, we do sparkling to barrel aged on it. So, all across the board.

Fred Reno

So, would that area, your region, be considered Southeastern Virginia or South Central.

Justin Rose

Probably, South Central. We're right in between the mountains and the coast.

Fred Reno

You're really close to the North Carolina border, aren't you?

Justin Rose

Three miles, so most of Lake Gaston is in North Carolina. And if you draw a line from Richmond to Raleigh, North Carolina, we'll be right on 85.

Fred Reno

just not a lot of wineries and vineyards down in that area is there now.

Justin Rose

I mean, Virginia Tech had a had a test vineyard in Blackstone for a while and then there's a couple other smaller vineyards, we're helping out another vineyard that's just starting up, I think it's an interesting area. We obviously have almost 20 years of data. We also have a unique position of where we're located right north of Lake Gaston. So, we do get a lot of storms that come from the west go around us. And it's been that way since the lake, it's a man-made lake that was formed in the late 50s, or early 60s with a couple dams. And so, the fronts will hit Carr Lake, which is west of us near Clarksville, and literally go north and south and then reform past us. And this was the way when my dad was growing up because my grandfather hated it with vegetable farming, or with farming in general, it'd be dry in the summer, okay, and literally, my wife and I live 20 minutes north in South Hill, and we'll get an inch or two more every month in rain than we do at the vineyard. So, we have a little microclimate to which I don't know, it'd be interesting to see how it factors into other growers in the area too. But we have kind of unique position where we're at.

Fred Reno

Well, it sounds like it. I mean, it's interesting to me, I will tell you that I've been impressed with all the different wines I've had from Rosemont since I've moved here to Virginia. There just appears to be a place behind every one of these wines, there's an individuality, and they have really good structure.

Justin Rose

I appreciate that. I think it's my father. I said he went to UVA and was a chemical engineer where Him and I are both very engineering brain. So, it's a lot of data. And always I want to have people around me that know more than I do. So, between Lucie and my mentor from France, Lucien Guillemet, my contacts from California and then all the great resources we have in Virginia with now the Winemakers Resource Exchange and all the ability to talk to other people, and everyone's very open. And the fact that for us, it's always, we're kind of in the middle of nowhere. Now Lake Gaston has grown a lot, but it was always about the wine. And we sold grapes, you know, for 10 years, half of our grapes, now we

keep everything as we've grown. So, we've gone from about 3000 cases now to about seven. So, we've had this nice, slow, steady growth. And if we need to rip out some grapes that don't work, we'll do that. Luckily, the ones we have, like big plots of Cab Franc, Merlot, Petit Verdot, you know, those kinds of grapes have done well. But yeah, I think having people around us has helped out tremendously, and the ability in that position to change if necessary. So, if we have to rip out, say like we had an acre and a half of Cabernet Sauvignon when we started well, that's all gone now. For us, it doesn't work on our site, and we're not going to try to do that. Now we have a lot more Petit Verdot, we got an acre of Tannat, which I think shows a lot of promise for us if we can figure out some of the spring issues, freezes we're having with it, or frost. But, then like Chardonal five acres, 5 acres of Chambourcin our most widely planted red now Cab Franc will be close because we're adding on to Cab Franc next year. And now we're making sparkling with those two grapes with Chambourcin and Chardonal. Southside Virginia and sparkling wine. I wouldn't have thought that you know, but these hybrids, they have the perfect flavor and chemistry for it in early August that we can do it.

Fred Reno

Well, I will tell you folks, I've had a bottle of each one of these sparkling wines from Chardonal and from Chambourcin just recently, and they are terrific.

Justin Rose

Thank you. I mean, it's been a fun little side project that now is probably going to be a bigger project, which is good. We do it a little different, we're doing it in a Charmat tank, to try and keep the cost down and to do it a little quicker. We're doing it with zero dosage and basically unfiltered. So, it's a kind of cool little thing that makes the wine kind of unique.

Fred Reno

Let me back up again, though. So, when your father retires from Dow Chemical, and he wants to come back to the family farm. Was it the Lucie Morton connection that made him think of grapes or was he thinking about that maybe independently as well?

Justin Rose

I think, you know, when he was growing up, he and again, like I said, it was a very strict. I mean, he would wake up 4:00/4:30 in the morning, milk cows, then went to school, we never did tobacco. The boys, my father's brothers would work for tobacco farmers, like as a side to make extra money. But yeah, he worked up the corporate ladder at Dow and we moved a ton growing up and he was getting burned out. And he had this, you know, family farm that was just sitting there. He just wanted to get back there and kind of have that balance. My mom also is from the same area they met and dated after in college but met in high school. And, you know, I haven't talked to him a ton about that. I think he probably had the thought of doing it, and then went to Lucie, and she was able to convince him that this is maybe potentially possible. And that's a big risk for her too. I mean, again, we're in the kind of middle of nowhere and not a lot of grapes are being grown at the time.

Fred Reno

Especially down there but it proved to be accurate and true.

Justin Rose

I think so, I mean, again, you know, with anything, you have your little struggles initially, but we were able to sell fruit. And we were able to kind of slowly grow. I think we've gotten very lucky. And then having Lake Gaston, and that population base has helped.

Fred Reno

So, what was the inspiration behind the Vermouth project? Because I love this Vermouth. So, what was the inspiration?

Justin Rose

Again, these random things that kind of happened. So, we work with a distributor based out of Charlottesville, Williams Corner, they've been fantastic for us. And, their owner, Nicolas he comes down, we'll taste wine, we're talking. We used to do box wines again, and we have done kegs and things to kind of get our wine out in the marketplace more and just build a brand to get into more wine shops and restaurants. I had some extra wine that we had boxed sitting around. I was like, I might use it. We have some sweet wines that we do, too. So, I might use it in that later. And he was like, what would you be interested in a Vermouth? You know, I been talking with Peter and Kat from Capitoline up in DC and they are thinking about maybe working with a Virginia winery. So, he put us in contact with them. I sent them samples because again, I make the vermouth. But I very much again, in that thing of people that know more than me, they do this as a business, they kind of started as a side thing, but they really have a skill in blending and thinking of what to use for vermouth. And so, they helped us do it. And now we've partnered with them. So, it's a copartner between Rosemont and Capitoline. The Vermouth has been fun again, something that we're ramping up some fun little side project that now has turned into a bigger project.

Fred Reno

Well, I have a bottle in my refrigerator 24/7. It's great as a cocktail on its own. Yeah. And it makes for a really good blender, whether it's some Virginia bourbon or whatever it might be.

Justin Rose

Yeah, it's been fun. We want to get people local so instead of using like sugar, for sweetener, we're using Virginia honey from a guy out of Richmond and then Capitoline is growing pretty much all of the botanicals up in DC and then obviously our wine. So yeah, we've tried to keep it again, regional, and local.

Fred Reno

So, you started learning how to make wine in California, clearly, in your career, which is young at this point, obviously, my favorite question to ask every vintner. So, what was that one bottle of wine that you had, where you went? Oh, okay, I get it. Now that wine can be this ethereal. It can be this really complex. What was that one bottle? Can you recall?

Justin Rose

Yeah, I mean, again, it was with Lucie and John, at John's place. And again, after midnight, sitting with them, they're talking about stories of them back in the day. And John like stealing grape vines from

Europe to bring over. And, you know, for a kid that's like, 23/24, just mesmerized by these stories. And this, this kind of lifestyle, you're sitting in Coombsville, Napa Valley, overlooking all these vineyards and, he pulled out, I think, either his first or second vintage of Rocket Science, which I think was Syrah based at the time and he was just getting ready to start, I think to make his own wine. He had the nursery. He's getting out of that business and getting into just the wine side. Yeah, just having that, because again, in college, I wasn't really drinking wine. And having that just like wow, this is fantastic. And my father started a vineyard and I have a chemistry background, which relates pretty well to winemaking. Probably smart of me to maybe put my foot in the door here and see where it leads.

Fred Reno

Well, that's interesting. And Coombsville is a very cool growing area in Napa. So, I can see him doing Syrah there. Should be very fascinating.

Justin Rose

I mean, the wine, his wine again, he would always have his vineyard, but then he was doing the nursery. Now actually most of our first planting along with a lot of Lucie's clients back then. I think like Boxwood and Black Ankle, all of our vines are from Caldwell nursery, which was great, because, as you probably know, in this day and age, with plant material, we had beautifully cleaned plant material that now is almost 20 years old. And these vines like our Cab Franc and Merlot still look fantastic.

Fred Reno

Well, that's interesting. Yeah, now that you're getting some vine age on them, that's really going to change the character and the establishment of the vineyard. What do you see in your short period of time if anything, since the 2007, harvest? Climate change? What have you experienced?

Justin Rose

It's been interesting for us, and we've actually gotten technically a little colder. If you look at only looking at 20 years, my dad did kind of go back a little bit to it, again, an interesting thing between the mountains and the coast, okay. And like this year, again, this year probably is abnormal. I was behind pretty much Charlottesville the whole time, which has never happened. And again, we had another frost this year that pushed things back. We're very cold in the spring for us, but I would look at the daily temperatures and yeah, you know, Northern Virginia is always going to be more behind us, but Charlottesville, so, for us. It's to me, it's just more variable. There's no year that's there's, it's just always different. We never had frost issues. We've been frosted out three of the last six years. And now we're putting in a bunch of wind machines literally this week. And so that used to not be a thing we'd have to worry about. And we've lost 40% of our crop the last two years from frost in the spring.

Fred Reno

So that's definitely a change.

Justin Rose

Yeah so, it's changing. I don't know what it's doing for us. It's just changing everywhere. So, we've always had, obviously, on the east coast things you deal with weather. And now we seem to have more things, but luckily, at 20 years and some experience.

Fred Reno

Is your father is still actively involved in the vineyard here. What do you see on horizon here for? First, let's start with Rosemont What's the biggest challenge you foresee in the next decade or so looking forward for Rosemont.

Justin Rose

He is, that was a big change. About three or four years ago, my uncle was kind of doing the vineyard. And he kind of stepped down from that with my dad really running the business because a new business and everything with finances. And so about three or four years ago, it was 2017. He stepped away, and he runs the vineyard solely now. And my wife pretty much runs the business. And that's good too, because he's really done, I think that's how the vineyard has started. take that next step. Look at all the little things and work with Lucie even more. He's involved there now. I think Kate would love to get a vineyard manager to come in soon, but he would still always be there and my father's the type of person, he's not going to not work. So, he will be there, which is good. We always want to try new grapes because Virginia is so young that we don't know everything which is good. And so, we always want to keep learning. Like I said, we had Cabernet Sauvignon, it's gone. We did plant a little bit of Vermentino this past year as a test plot. The reds I think we're getting more and more honed in. We put in an acre of Mourvèdre this year, which I'm really excited about. We had thought we had put in Mourvèdre a couple of years ago, and it happened it was Graciano, the nursery, okay, it was a big thing, the big story that came out for a bunch of people. And so, we have some Graciano now as a little test plot, so we have a lot of these grapes that we're testing out and starting to get fruit on, which I think is interesting. Always trying to grow. I think hybrids will always be an important thing for us, especially now there some of the most widely planted grapes. Whites is where we're looking at next because right now, we have Traminette, Vidal, Chardonal, we have a little Pinot Gris we'll probably rip out the Pinot Gris in two years. Just it's just it's been there for 20 years, it just doesn't it's not particularly good with Pierce disease, it just, the wine is not exactly what I'm looking for. I mean, that warmer climate a little bit. And so, we put in test plot of Vermentino, we're talking about Petit Manseng, Albarino is really high on the on the list. So again, it's always trying to try new things and see where we go. And then the ones that work well keeping those and expanding and obviously sparkling wine is becoming a bigger thing for us. We do a lot of dry Rose. So that's our biggest produced wine. That's 100% Chambourcin

Fred Reno

This wine is terrific folks, I've had it and it is really good.

Justin Rose

That's the easiest one I make. So, you know if we pick it at the right time with the right balance of acidity and sugar, and I have my little secret on how much I use when I press it out. Because I don't use all of it. It's a direct press too. It's not on the skins, its whole cluster in the press and press it out because Chambourcin has color in its pulp so I can get that nice kind of pinkish color. It looks like orange right away. And then I will watch it and be very meticulous and when I cut the press fraction ferment multiple different tanks worth so first cut, second cut, really hard press. Then when we blend it and literally let it ferment done, blend it, filter it. So as long as I kind of hit those press cuts, right? I don't have to do anything else.

Fred Reno

I'm curious about something. So, you trained on the West Coast, you obviously must have West Coast vintner friends. What is their view of Virginia wine today as opposed to what it might have been when you left there well over a decade ago?

Justin Rose, I think it's good and it's interesting, maybe that is something I never thought about. So, some of my closest friends are not in Napa anymore. My two closest people I knew I mean, Ari is in Israel making one, he was the assistant winemaker at O'Shaughnessy and Dave Boss, who was kind of my closest friend there. He's from Michigan where I went to high school as well. That's probably why we became friends. He's back in Michigan now making wine Oh, really where at? Well, he's doing his own thing. So, he was really big at Grgich. He was like with their organic program. And then he was actually living on the site there for a while when I knew him. And then he did his own side consulting business into organic, natural farming natural like organic farming. So now he's back in Michigan just happened I know he started to do his own brand, I think a little bit and also consulting in Michigan, and he has his own wines he was doing in California too. So, I need to reconnect with him because we were just up in Michigan visiting some friends a couple of months ago, but I don't really talk with any of them, but I mean I think in general yeah Virginia quality wine is grown. The idea of Virginia wine has been grown And I think, you would know better than I would. I think the reputation in California of Virginia wines is only grown over the years, I would, I would hope. I don't know if they know a ton about it, but

Fred Reno

I would hope it's growing. From my experience it's a pretty limited growth. I can tell you that when I sent a good friend of mine, a bottle of Norton, who knows everything about wine, in air quotes, folks, he was stunned. He never had a bottle of Norton before in his life. And he was like, this is really good. What is this? I told him well, that's a native Virginia grape from Richmond that they started to grow and propagate in Missouri. And everybody thinks it comes from Missouri. But it's Virginia.

Justin Rose

That's right. Yeah. Doesn't help Virginia, reach nationally when that most of our wines are sold here.

Fred Reno

Well, that's that was where I was headed with this. Because what is it going to take? Do you think, from your experience for Virginia to break out of this dome, if you will, and I'll preface this by saying, I will probably get in trouble here. But that's fine. I'm used to that. 20 years ago, give or take. New York State had that moment, to become recognized in this country as the new, hottest, interesting wine growing region in the country. And for whatever reasons, and I don't know, because I haven't been involved in New York. They never seized it. I believe we're there at that crossroads in Virginia right now. And what we do in the next several years, is going to determine whether people realize that Virginia is the new, most exciting wine growing region in the country. What do we have to do?

Justin Rose

You know, I don't know. I mean, I think you could do a couple of hours on this one, to me, you have a couple factors, obviously, a lot of wineries, I think are doing well being successful, you have a big

population base near you. So, if you're getting people coming to your winery, you're selling your wine out the door, and you're not looking to like ramp up production, I don't know, if it takes a big brand to come in and put in a couple 100 acres, that's probably the only way you're going to do it. Honestly, someone to come in and buy a big one, and then expand on it. Because, you know, places like us, you know, we've talked about it, we're at 7000 cases now, or we're trying to, we're going to make 7000 this year and kind of have some backlog. But I don't want to jump much more over eight, if I can do eight a year, and keep it there, because again, our focus is on our vineyard and not sourcing fruit, for our family business. Now, I got kids that are nine and six, and they're constantly going in different directions. Probably like us as a family, we're not going to be the ones that do it. We're trying to make the best wine we can. I will be honest, if I get brand recognition from outside the region, because we're distributed in a couple states, but I'm not the one that you know, and a lot like me, I'm not going to be the one to do this to make it national. So yeah, you probably need, if you think of Charlottesville and this area, if you have someone come in and buy and do a 400-acre track, put it all in, but again, you have these weather things more of an issue.

Fred Reno

Well, I tell people think about Virginia, like you think about France. And by that, I mean they don't grow Pinot Noir in Bordeaux, and they don't grow Cabernet Sauvignon in Burgundy. And there's just certain areas and regions in France to do much better with certain varietals, right. That's what Virginia looks like to me. You just have a diversity here.

Justin Rose

Right, and you have so many different varietals, and it's not a bad thing, but you have so much experimentation and trying new varieties. And so yeah, you know, you had Petit Manseng that started to kind of grow in popularity, but no one's come in and put like a huge track of that in, so yeah, that's a question Do you try to pick one or two grapes for one of those producers that's what they're going to make, and you're going to make 40,000 cases of Cab Franc and put it out there.

Fred Reno

I agree with you, Justin. That's what it's going to take. Some people are scared by the notion of some big player with a lot of capital. A lot of experience, the distribution clout to come in here, but that is going to, how's the old saying; a rising tide raises all boats. Right? It does. It does do that. I mean, if you look at Oregon, when Drouhin went there, everybody said, What are you doing? Now today, and recently in the last decade, Oregon has been the hottest wine growing region in the country. And that's what it's going to take but I don't see it as a threat. I see it as a positive for Virginia because it will help the entire industry. I had some people say, Well, you know, I only make 500 cases. And I'll say, Well, do you realize that some of the greatest wines in the world are only made in 500 case lots, and everybody in the world knows about them and wants to buy them. This is my opinion again. But I believe that's important to the long-term viability of the Virginia wine industry to have a global recognition where people go, Oh, it's part of what I want to experiment with. I want to understand Virginia wine, right? Because if we're all selling to the same people...

Justin Rose

no, I think that's right. And yeah, you're exactly right. You can be, you can have a small case production of some really good wine and build the brand that way too. So, I do agree. I mean, I have been involved since 2007, so yeah, some of the bigger wineries that have had some distribution and built their brand. I've heard both sides of that. A rising tide lifts all boats, I think it's, I think it's right, though, if you don't want to get on that tide, and go with it, that's on you. But if they're going to break some of those barriers, that's fantastic. And that has happened with some of the some of the wineries and through distribution and their quality of wine and their recognition. And again, for us, it's always been about the wine. So, I sit down there in Southside Virginia, and try to do what we do and just kind of slowly build on what we're doing, which has been nice, and that my father has given me the ability to do. My father, basically, when I got back from Napa, because my dad was always about the vineyard first. He wanted to do something with the land, he drinks wine a little bit, but it's not about the wine for him. It's about the passion of using the land that he grew up on in the family for years. And growing the grapes and farming, and the whole soil and all that kumbaya stuff. I mean, my dad, that's what he does. But for me, yeah, just the fact that he was like, here's a 25-year-old, go make wine. It was kind of a risky thing for him. But I think hopefully, it's worked out for us.

Fred Reno

well, I'd say the results that you have put out there speak loudly, the quality is there. There's absolutely no question about that. You know, I can't imagine the future not being bright. And you have a family. So, there's a at some point, there's a generational pass here.

Justin Rose

I think so. I mean, that's what we hope, I won't push them too hard. But if they're interested, 100% I mean, my son is nine already. We're bottling our next sparkling wine on Thursday and Friday. And he wanted me to not do it that Thursday, Friday, but Friday and Saturday, so he can help on Saturday. Well, that's cool. Yeah, he also wants to get paid, which is fine. I appreciate that game. We're very lucky that my parents are right there, obviously. And my wife's parents are in DC, but they're down all the time. And so, we have that too.

Fred Reno

Well, your wife Aubrey is involved in the operation. She's running the business.

Justin Rose

She's been with us now. I think almost 10 years. We met at UVA. She was in the comm school. She was working in DC. We didn't start dating until after college, right before I went to Napa. We were friends though all through college. And she was working for Adobe, Symantec. She would come visit me when I was in Napa. She was working for that tech company in DC and then move down to Southside Virginia. We got married in '09. But after about two and a half, three years, my dad and I couldn't keep, well like Rosemont was not going to grow without someone there. And she had the marketing background and stuff. So yeah, she's been with us now almost 10 years. And basically, like I said, Dad now has taken over the vineyard and Aubrey pretty much keeps us all in line.

Fred Reno

Well, she's on the Virginia Wine Board now. Yes. So, You were on the Virginia Board?

Justin Rose

I was I'm on the Virginia Wineries Association Board. And I was president of the Wineries Association. That's right.

Fred Reno

I'm curious about the Virginia Wineries Association, What's its number one Mission?

Justin Rose

So, there's always been kind of confusion too, because you have all these different associations. So, you had the Vineyards Association; makes sense. Mostly vineyards, wineries, going to be mostly wineries. But like, years ago, it was mostly they did Vintage Virginia Wine Festival. That was kind of their thing. That's where they made the money. And then they were part and now the Wineries Association doesn't, well, actually we're not going to have that anymore I don't think. So, it's more of promoting Virginia wine really. I think they had been really important through COVID. Because we were doing multiple meetings a week at times, just to keep people up to date. You also had the legislative form of it, which hopefully for people listening, to the industry have been encouraged to help out as much as you can, because there's always legislative issues. So, we do a little bit with that. But there's also a legislative group that does that, too. So, we have all these different things. Then you have the Virginia Wine Board. Now the Virginia Wine Board is all the excise tax money appropriated from the governor. And so that is what Aubrey is on now. That appropriates money for research, marketing, all that stuff, which I think, you know, just talking to friends of mine in Maryland, I think they're very jealous of that. It's an amazing thing that we have to just promote Virginia wine and educate. So, we have all these systems, you have the Winemakers Research Exchange. We're doing all this testing, between winemakers, doing projects and talking about what they're doing. There are so many outlets, it gets a little confusing, but it's all good. In the end,

Fred Reno

Are you involved at all with the Winemakers' Research Exchange?

Justin Rose

a little bit, I wish I were more, but I think when I was President of the Wineries Association, I used to do a lot more. I want to get back into doing it as I did a lot of trials. I'd like to get back into doing more I tried to participate in all of them, because you always learned something on these things. You get to taste people's trials and talk about what they're doing. So, I've been a little bit involved, but not as much. If they're willing, I would love to be more involved. But they have a really good group that's doing a lot of good work.

Fred Reno

So yeah, it sounds like that's critical. And that filled that void when Bruce Zoeklein retired, all of a sudden there was this void. And they came in and filled that.

Justin Rose

That's right. And a great idea. Again, a lot of these things, some not all of them but some started in Charlottesville with winemakers, getting together as a group, and then go to the Virginia Wine Board to get grants and funding. So again, all these things that are set up that if you utilize can really help out the industry.

Fred Reno

Fascinating. Well, Justin, I enjoyed our time here.

Justin Rose

I appreciate it. Yeah, it's been it's been fun

Fred Reno

To get a what I'm going to call a younger, energetic viewpoint of what is happening here. But yet somebody with well over a decade of experience.

Justin Rose

I Appreciate the younger because I turned 40 next week. I appreciate you saying younger.

Fred Reno

Well. I just turned 70. So, I can tell you don't want to be 70. But in any event, we've had a nice glass of Chablis. Yes. Well, thank you. Thank you. I really appreciate it.