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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **J. Christopher Winery Begins Phase II Construction While Celebrating and Preserving Oregon's Natural Environment**

NEWBERG, Oregon, June 24, 2011 -- What does saving honey bees and planting wildflowers have to do with making wine? Just ask J. Christopher winemaker Jay Somers.

Construction of the new [J. Christopher Winery](#) in Newberg, Oregon, began its second phase this month with groundbreaking for new fermentation buildings. With red and white wine fermentation rooms, crush pad, bottling room and lab space, the new buildings are on track for completion before the 2011 harvest.

At full build-out, the winery will have a production capacity of 8000 cases of Pinot Noir and 2000 cases of Sauvignon Blanc and other white wines. And, in keeping with Oregon's reputation for environmental stewardship, the winery and its adjoining Appassionata Vineyard are being constructed with utmost care and respect for the environment.

### **Underground Caves = Low Carbon Footprint**

Inside the winery, underground caves built using insulated concrete arches set into a north-facing slope help maintain natural cool temperatures and great humidity, allowing the wine to be held in barrels with very little evaporation loss and eliminating the energy use of artificial heating, cooling and humidification.

"The caves naturally maintain a constant temperature between 52 and 60 degrees all year without any artificial heating or cooling," says Winemaker Jay Somers. "If they were above-ground, we'd be running heat and humidifiers constantly all winter and AC in the summer."

Solar panels on the roof of the barrel cellar have generated power credits (meaning that the winery is making more energy than it's using) since they were installed in January. Use of fluorescent bulbs throughout the winery add to the energy savings.

## **Dry Farming Saves Valuable Water and Makes Better Wine**

Given the Willamette Valley's rainy climate, it's tempting to think that saving water doesn't matter, but Yamhill County's aquifer is under substantial pressure. The winery's adjoining Appassionata Vineyard will be [dry farmed](#) (no irrigation). Dry farming techniques establish the vines early and then give them as little water as possible so they grow deep roots to find the water they need.

"The complexity of terroir is in the deep soil," says Somers. "Dry farming makes the vines express the full depth of that terroir and it absolutely shows up in the wine. By contrast, irrigated vineyards produce the wine equivalent of hydroponic tomatoes."

Using biodynamic principles, the vines are cared for without the use of pesticides or herbicides. Natural compounds such as sulfur are used to control mildew, compost teas promote beneficial microbes and earthworms, and weed control is all manual with native flowers encouraged to grow between the rows.

## **Recycling and Reusing**

Most vineyards typically use endposts for the rows that are made of metal or chemically treated wood. Appassionata Vineyard's endposts are made from recycled juniper, an invasive non-native plant that [conservation efforts are working to eradicate from Eastern Oregon](#). Naturally resistant to rot, the recycled juniper endposts require no chemicals or preservatives.

Waste from the winemaking process is all recycled. Spent grapes are composted and a process wastewater disposal system metabolizes the water and drips it into the soil at a low rate so it doesn't get into the aquifer.

## **Protecting Wildlife and Native Plants**

In designing and building the winery, every possible care is being taken to preserve wildlife and natural plants. The 40-acre property has many old oak trees, some over 100 years old, that have been carefully preserved. One five-acre piece with a pond has been left untouched as a protected wildlife corridor.

"We have to fence the deer out of the vineyard," says Somers. "So we made very sure to protect their corridor, and when we walk there, we often see places where they've bedded down for the night."

Perhaps the most interesting J. Christopher “save” is an old dead tree that had to make way for the new vineyard. Home to a large, long-established honey bee colony, [the dead tree was carefully moved](#) to the wildlife area and is being overseen by a professional beekeeper. “The bees are doing great,” Somers says.

All this and hand-crafted, terroir-driven wine that is rapidly gaining an international following as part of the Dr. Loosen “Friends of Ernie Loosen” portfolio.

J. Christopher Winery and Appassionata Vineyard are a joint venture between J. Christopher winemaker Jay Somers and Dr. Loosen owner Ernst Loosen. The winery is located at 17150 NE Hillside Drive, Newberg, Oregon 97132.

More information about J. Christopher Wines at [www.LoosenBrosUSA.com](http://www.LoosenBrosUSA.com). Contact Kirk Wille at [kirk.wille@drloosen.com](mailto:kirk.wille@drloosen.com) or 503.984.3041.

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### **About J. Christopher Wines**

J. Christopher Wines in Newberg, Oregon, is a joint venture between winemakers Ernst Loosen of Germany’s Mosel Valley and Jay Somers of Oregon’s Willamette Valley. Ernst Loosen is a lifelong Pinot Noir fanatic, and has been producing it at his J.L. Wolf estate since 1996. Jay Somers has been making Pinot Noir in Oregon for more than 15 years and launched his own J. Christopher Wines in that same year, 1996. When the two met some years ago, they quickly realized that they share a similar taste and passion for Pinot. Their friendship was cemented in 2004 when Jay traveled to Germany to help the short-handed harvest crew at Dr. Loosen. Since then, they found it only natural to work together to produce interesting Pinot Noirs and white wines that combine Old World and New World ideas. For more information, please visit [www.jchristopherwines.com](http://www.jchristopherwines.com) .

### **About Loosen Bros. USA**

Loosen Bros. USA is the sole U.S. importer of the wines of celebrated Riesling producer Ernst (Ernie) Loosen, including Dr. Loosen (in Germany’s Mosel valley) and J.L. Wolf (in the Pfalz). Loosen Bros. also offers a select group of extraordinary wines made by good friends and relatives of Ernie Loosen in other regions of Germany, as well as Switzerland and the United States. Loosen Bros. USA is based in Oregon City, Oregon. For more information, please visit [www.loosenbrosusa.com](http://www.loosenbrosusa.com).