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# SUSTAINABLE WA

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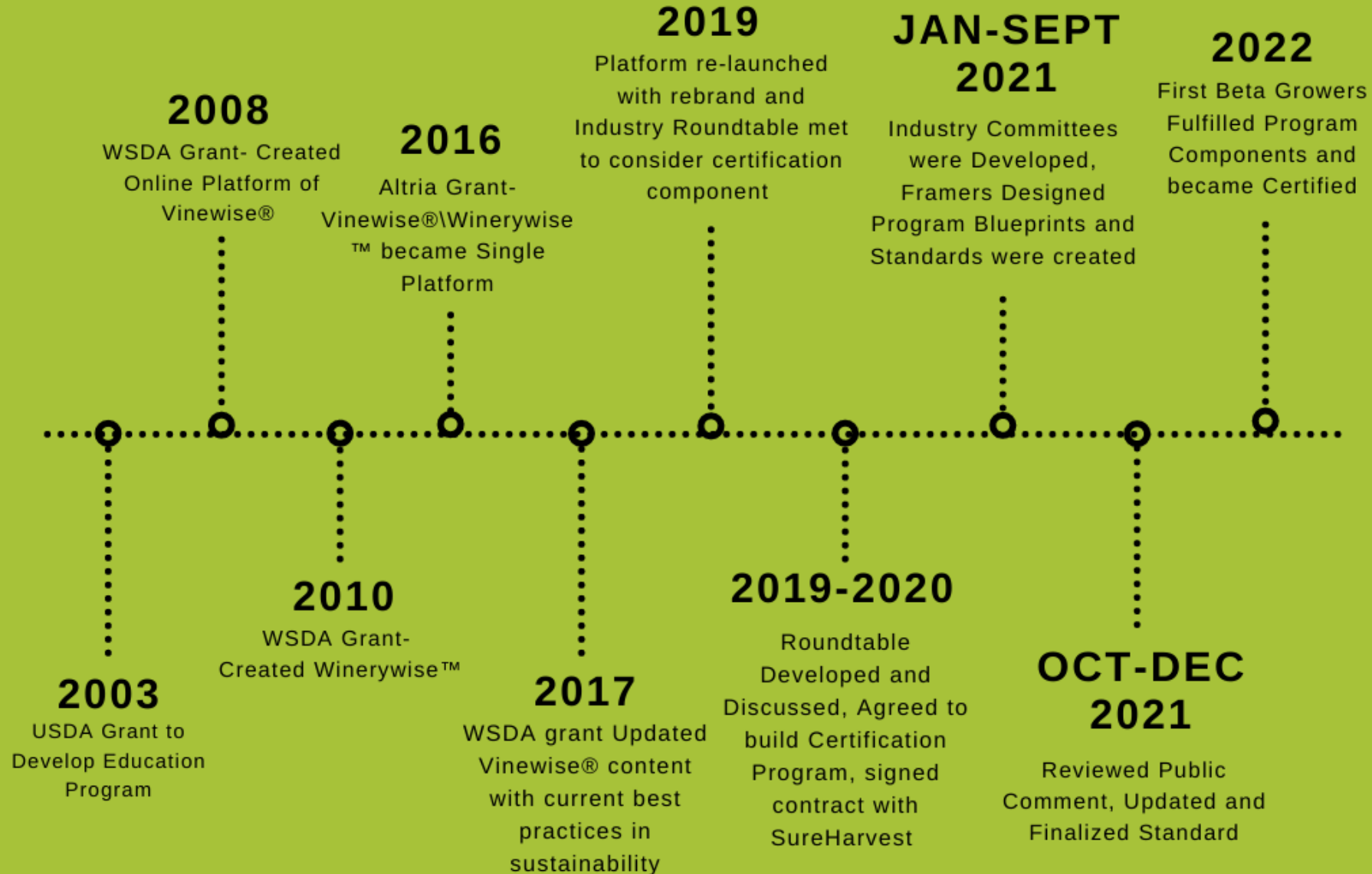




Vicky Scharlau  
Executive Director  
Washington Winegrowers Association



# Sustainable WA: 20 Years in the Making



**2003:** USDA grant to develop education program helping growers understand risk; create checklists and questions to address topics (called “Risk Busters”)

**2008:** WSDA grant to create online platform under name of Vinewise®

**2010:** WSDA grant helped create winery complement called Winerywise™

**2016:** Altria (*previous owner of SMWE*) grant transitioned Vinewise®\Winerywise™ to robust, single platform

**2017:** WSDA grant to update Vinewise® content with current best practices in sustainability, but also:

- Gathered 40+ growers, vintners, and marketing professionals for Sustainability Roundtable
- Topic turned to exploring certification for current sustainability program
- Meetings went on for nearly a year

# Robust Roundtable Discussions

- Is **consumer demand** driving this or are we just ahead of the curve?
  - Roundtable agreed it is both
- Is this “**greenwashing**”?
  - Roundtable was clear we’re not doing this for looks
  - Standards are important, and with third-party audits
- “Would a certified label help **sell more Washington wine**?”
  - Yes, and help protect WA brand/shelf space

# Industry Partners:

- **Washington Winegrowers Association**
  - › Program operations
- **Washington Wine Industry Foundation**
  - › Fundraising
- **Washington Wine Institute**
  - › Communicate with policymakers
- **Washington State Wine Commission**
  - › Branding, marketing program



## 2021: January through September

- Developed Industry Committees  
Framers & Standards Development  
Monthly Zoom calls
- **Framers:** Designed Program Blueprint  
Operating environment, define 'best in class', create score thresholds, agree on auditing, process, structure, procedures....etc., etc.,...
- **Standards Developers:** Fleshed Out Standard  
Used Vinewise® self-assessment as starting point; added mandatory requirements for winegrape certification



## **2021:** October through December

- Opened 30-day public comment period
- Received over 12 pages (!) of feedback
- Standards Developers and Governance Council reconciled, compromised, and updated Standard
- Final Standard created for “beta test”
  - Included small group of “test” growers
- Audit firm was selected
  - Auditors were selected and trained on Standard

# Role of Committees – Governance Council

- Program oversight
- Oversee process, budget, assure industry buy-in
- Monitor Standard, auditor training, certification manual, application form, claims guidance
- Populated from WWI, WSWC, WWIF, Winegrowers, WSU and one open/TBD, at-large position

# Role of Committees – Technical Committee

- Address any and all technical issues
- Ensure compliance; federal, state, international
- Align with current best practices, rules
- Address shifts in pest/disease pressure
- Populate with subject matter experts
- 360° inclusion of technical experts
  - And still populating

# Certified Sustainable Vineyards

## **Sustainable WA Standard**

- Annual Self-Assessment includes 9 chapters:
  1. Biz Practices & Risk Management
  2. Human Resources
  3. Vineyard Establishment & Acquisition
  4. Viticulture
  5. Water Management
  6. Soil Management
  7. Pest Management
  8. Materials Handling
  9. Whole Farm Ecosystem & Community



# Certified Sustainable Vineyards

- 9 chapters have 83 requirements
  - From business plans, pesticide use and community involvement
- The Standard requires:
  - 70% for EACH of the 9 chapters
  - +18 “mandatory” requirements

## Mandatory Requirements

Requirement No.	Topic	Category Level
2-1	Workplace policies	2 or higher
2-2	Worker training	2 or higher
2-3	Recruitment and hiring	3 or higher
2-4	Farm labor contractors	2 or higher
2-5	Compensation and benefits	2 or higher
2-6	Accident prevention	2 or higher
2-7	First aid and emergency response	3 or higher
2-8	Working conditions	3 or higher
2-9	Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	3 or higher
2-10	Child labor and forced labor	4
3-10	Irrigation source	2 or higher
8-1	Pesticide use	2 or higher
8-2	Prohibited Materials and Watch Lists	2 or higher
8-3	Pesticide mixing/loading	2 or higher
8-5	Pesticide application	3 or higher
8-6	Pesticide worker safety	4
8-9	Hazardous materials storage	3 or higher
9-1	Land Conversion	2 or higher

# What are Requirement Examples?

- Workers trained to use PPE, in accident prevention and emergency plan, and procedures based on legal and regulatory requirements
- Compliance with State and Federal laws and regulations related to:
  - recruitment and hiring
  - discrimination due to age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, race, and country of origin

# More Requirement Examples:

- Pesticide selection based on registration for use on winegrapes, worker safety, severity of pest problem, and susceptibility of pest to pesticide
- Individuals responsible for pesticide recommendations, application, mixing and handling, exhibit awareness of specific risk associated with pesticides used and has reviewed high hazard pesticide list

How can growers participate?

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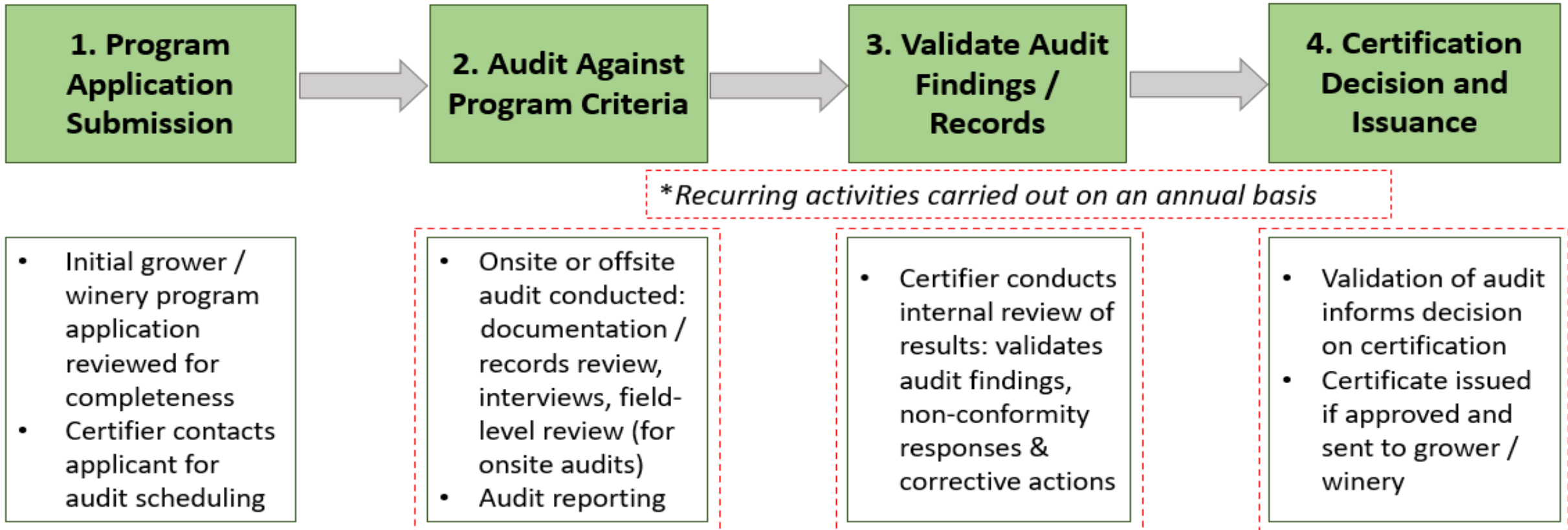
**CERTIFIED**



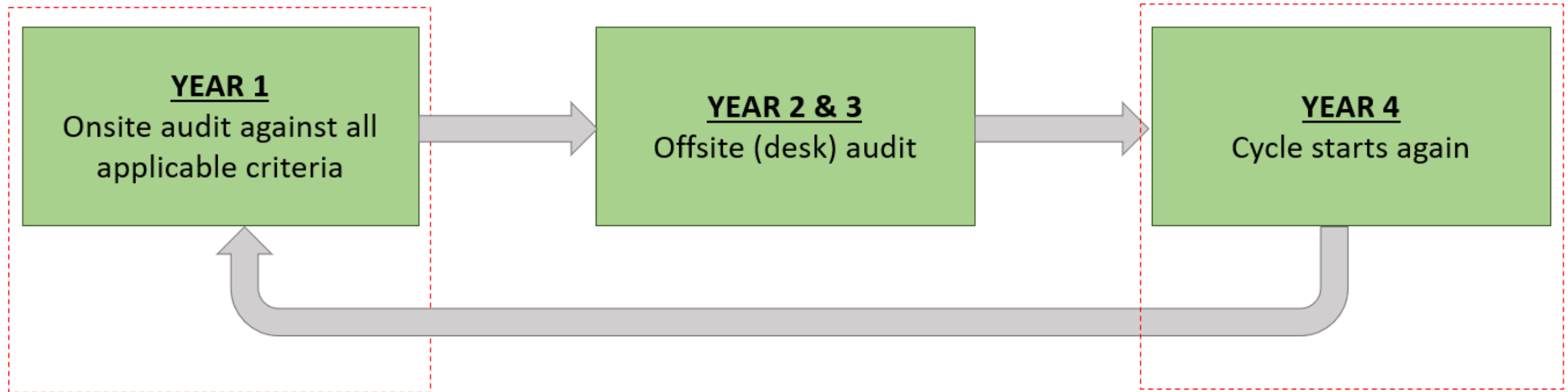
# Application and Program Fees

(1) Application Fee (select acreage)		(2) Acreage Fee		(3) Annual Program Fee	
Less than 50 acres: \$750				Less than 50 acres: \$500	
50-200 acres: \$1,000	+		+	50-200 acres: \$1,000	= <b>Grower Cost</b>
201-1,000 acres: \$1,250		\$10/acre		201-1,000 acres: \$1,500	
More than 1,000 acres: \$1,500				More than 1,000 acres: \$2,000	

# Standard Certification Process



# Audit Cycle



\*Onsite audits carried out once every three years unless scope changes or other special circumstances (e.g., follow up on non-conformities) apply.

# Eagle Certification Group



**EAGLE** Certification Group  
SERVICE • INTEGRITY • VALUE

- Third Party Audit Company from Ohio
  - Accredited by the ANSI National Accreditation Board
- Audit Objectives
  - Impartial insight toward intended sustainability results
    - Identify gaps in labor and environmental practices
    - Improve risk management
    - “Challenge the norm”
    - There is always room for improvement!



# Where are we now?

26 growers signed up for 2022  
7 audited  
14 self-assessed  
5 certified (confirmed to date)

Next steps:  
2023 signups start now!  
Salmon-Safe partnership  
Edits, improvements continue

# Pushing sign-ups for 2023!

<p><b>Quarter 1- Send In Your Applications</b></p> <p>Visit <i>SustainableWA.com</i>, start your application, send to Washington Winegrowers Association</p>	<p><b>Quarter 2- Complete Your Self-Assessment</b></p> <p>Then your audit will be scheduled.</p>
<p><b>Quarter 3- Prepare for Your Audit</b></p> <p>Use our “How to Prepare for an Audit” Worksheet</p>	<p><b>Quarter 4- Celebrate Your Certification</b></p> <p>Join the ranks of Certified Sustainable growers in Washington State</p>

Thank you for your attention.

Questions?

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**CERTIFIED**