

# Grgich Hills Estate Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month Honoring Team Commitment to Regenerative Organic Farming

*-Honoring Diversity, Cultivating a Sustainable Future-*

RUTHERFORD, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, September 27, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As the nation observes Hispanic Heritage Month, Grgich Hills Estate is proud to recognize and celebrate those members of its team who align with that identity. Occupying a wide array of positions throughout their organization, Grgich Hills' Hispanic employees perform crucial roles that enable the pursuit of the company's mission: crafting the highest quality wines through environmentally friendly means.



Grgich Hills Estate

A pillar of sustainable and regenerative winemaking in the Napa Valley, Grgich Hills Estate believes that the health of the land is the greatest contributor to the quality of their wines. In keeping with those values, all five of their estate vineyards were Regenerative Organic Certified in March of 2023, and they became one of only a handful of wineries in the world to meet the strict prerequisites that the Regenerative Organic Alliance requires. “The health of the soil, and ultimately our plants, is paramount in this style of farming,” stated Ivo Jeramaz, VP of Vineyards and Production. “So of course, you have to have people you trust on the ground, managing and caring for the vines that are the essence of our business.”

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*Ivo Jeramaz, Winemaker and VP, Grgich Hills Estate*

Oscar Chavez, Executive Vineyard Manager, takes on the challenge of cultivating Grgich Hills' 365 acres of regeneratively certified vineyards in stride. A member of their viticultural team since

2005, Chavez was the executor when the company shifted to regenerative farming in 2019, ensuring that the staff of over 30 vineyard workers understood the new protocol and implemented it effectively. "There are many ways to do this job, and Ivo taught me this new way that helps Grgich make the best wines... this is a special way- nobody in this area does what we do," said Chavez, whose successful leadership enabled the procurement of certification in 2023.

Now, Chavez is himself an ambassador of this farming practice. When asked about his role in the ongoing regenerative agriculture revolution, in the Napa Valley and beyond, he replied, "We are eager to teach and share our methods with others, whether they come from different corners of the world or share similar backgrounds." These words embody Chavez's dedication to knowledge dissemination and community support, and also underscore the winery's commitment to lead agricultural colleagues on the regenerative path.

After being grown and harvested, Grgich Hills' grapes are in the capable hands of their Cellar Master, Juan Salomon. After years of dedication working in Napa Valley cellars,

Salomon sought an advanced position in a cellar hierarchy, which he found at Grgich Hills, who brought him on as their Cellar Foreman just before the onset of the pandemic. Later that year, the presiding Cellar Master took an extended leave of absence due to complications with COVID. Normally a loss that would foster chaos in the cellar's functionality, Salomon instead stepped up and took on additional responsibilities, proving himself more than capable of filling that vacuum. "One of my proudest milestones at Grgich is, one year from when I got hired, I was offered the position of Cellar Master," he said.



Grgich Hills Estate Vineyards



National Sales and Events Administrator



Salomon's responsibilities now include managing the cellar crew and overseeing all cellar operations, including quality control, maintenance, and the bottling line. Interestingly, he has not felt the need to bring on an additional Cellar Foreman, stating "With the help of my team, who have been stepping up big time, I've accomplished all those tasks with less people." Salomon's success story is a testament to his skillful leadership, aptitude, and diligence. For those looking to follow a similar career trajectory, Salomon offers this advice: "You can accomplish anything you set your mind to, as long as there's determination."

Being a brand with global distribution, Grgich Hills Estate receives thousands of orders each year, which necessitates a capable, meticulous individual in the Administrative Department. Though he began his Grgich Hills career as a Wine Educator, Luis Portilla was soon promoted to National Sales and Events Administrator, facilitating all orders from Grgich Hills' California, national, and international sales teams. Portilla highlights the distinct values of the winery, stating, "I personally hold the conviction that each member of our winery team serves as an ambassador for Grgich, embodying the same values that define our institution."

When asked about what the future of Grgich Hills looks like to him, Portilla had the following to say: "I see the winery succeeding in the future based on the deep roots in agriculture. We not only grow every grape we harvest and make into wine, but also have a strong focus on sustainability of the vineyards and nature. I think that's a great sign of long-term commitment to the environment. How would I contribute to that future? With commitment, passion, integrity - by showing up every day, rain or shine, with the best disposition to get the job done."

Since its inception, Grgich Hills Estate has been fortunate to foster positive relationships with members of the Hispanic community and are proud to acknowledge the many accomplishments and talents they have contributed to the company culture. Their passion, expertise, and diverse backgrounds enrich the tapestry of regenerative winemaking,



Executive Vineyard Manager



Cellar Master

embodying a shared vision for a better, more sustainable future.

Please visit <https://www.grgich.com/celebrating-hispanic-heritage-month/> for more information.

About Grgich Hills Estate: Grgich Hills Estate was founded after Vintners Hall of Fame inductee Miljenko "Mike" Grgich first earned world-wide recognition when the 1973 Chateau Montelena Chardonnay that he crafted won the 1976 Paris Tasting, beating the best of France and drawing international attention to the Napa Valley. Mike then partnered with Austin Hills of the Hills Bros. Coffee family in the pursuit of creating the best wines in the world and chose Independence Day, July 4, 1977, to launch their family-owned-and-operated winery.

Today, Grgich Hills Estate is 100% estate grown and Certified Regenerative Organic through the Regenerative Organic Alliance (ROA), a leading force in the Regenerative Agriculture movement worldwide. Referred to as "Organic Plus," regenerative farming is a science-driven approach focused on no-till soil management, building organic matter to sustain microbial life, incorporating livestock and biodiversity and caring for people who work in the fields and winery. It is a key component of combating climate change and reducing greenhouse gas pollution. In 2022 Grgich Hills Estate was recognized as one of the world's "Top 100 Wineries" by Wine & Spirits Magazine.

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