

# WINE BUSINESS MONTHLY

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The Industry's Leading Publication for Wineries and Growers

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## Wine Industry 2020 **Leaders**



Honoring the year's changemakers and influencers



## 2020 Salary Survey Report

Base Pay Up 2.4 Percent Across All Positions;  
Results of Gender Pay Study Included

### PLUS:

Wineries Report Challenges in  
Hiring and Recruiting

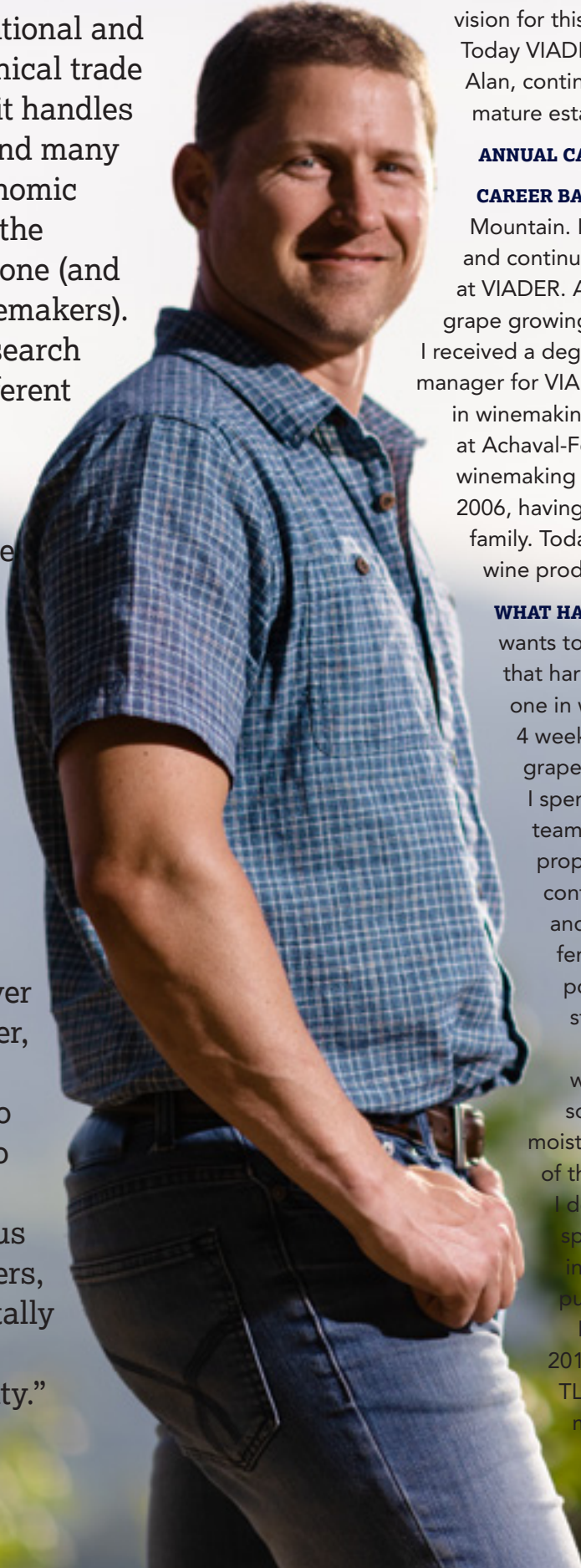
New Research Finds Oak Compounds  
that Can Make Wine Taste Bitter

Individualizing Irrigation Practices  
by Grape Variety

## Alan Viader, winemaker and vineyard manager, Viader Vineyards & Winery, Napa, CA

“*Wine Business Monthly* helps me keep up with the latest news, and I’ve found it to be the most educational and informative of all technical trade magazines. I like that it handles a multitude of topics and many perspectives. The economic and marketing side of the industry is very well done (and very useful for us winemakers). I like that there are research studies, and many different professional insights shared throughout the magazine.

I do tend to gravitate towards the vineyard articles on innovative new products or techniques available. I follow specifically Mark Greenspan, and I still remember his “Understanding Grapevine Water Management” (March 2011). I’m a firm believer that to be a good farmer, you need both boots on the ground, but also embrace technology so we have more tools in our toolbox, allowing us to become better farmers, and more environmentally sustainable while still achieving higher quality.”



**NAME AND TITLE:** Alan Viader, winemaker and vineyard manager

**WINERY NAME AND LOCATION:** Founding winemaker Delia Viader forged the vision for this hillside estate vineyard and exceptional wine blend in 1986. Today VIADER is a thriving multi-generational family business as her son Alan, continues to produce world-class wines from their magnificent, mature estate vineyard on Howell Mountain.

**ANNUAL CASE PRODUCTION:** 4,500 cases **PLANTED ACRES:** 28

**CAREER BACKGROUND:** I grew up on my family’s vineyard on Howell Mountain. I started working in my family vineyards at the age of nine and continued to help throughout my teens, as cellar-hand in the caves at VIADER. After high school graduation, I pursued my passion for grape growing with a hands-on junior college program in Sonoma where I received a degree in viticulture management. I then became vineyard manager for VIADER in 2002, while simultaneously continuing my education in winemaking at UC Davis. In 2005, I worked a full harvest season at Achaval-Ferrer in Mendoza, Argentina, which convinced me that winemaking was my calling. I officially stepped in as ‘lead winemaker’ in 2006, having always helped mom “unofficially” like everyone else in the family. Today, I oversee vineyard operations while working in all areas of wine production at VIADER.

**WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST PROFESSIONAL CHALLENGE?** Nobody wants to relive the 2017 harvest season, but for me personally, that harvest was one of hard-won success over difficulties and one in which all of us came to help each other out. I was about 4 weeks deep into harvest with more than 95 percent of my grapes picked and fermenting in tank, when the fires broke out. I spent the entire first night out with the Napa Search & Rescue team leapfrogging ahead of the fires evacuating and clearing properties in its path, door to door up in the mountains. I would continue for the next several days volunteering for search and rescue and running back up to the winery to work on my fermentations. Family and winery were safe, but we had no power, no cell phone reception and tanks full of wine in all stages of fermentation.

Many of our tanks are concrete, so temperature control wasn’t my concern. I needed to keep the tanks active and somehow figure out a way to pump over the cap to keep it moist and fermentations going. I was able to punch down many of the tanks manually, but for the wines in my larger fermenters I devised a system using long lengths of hose and an irrigator/sprinkler head at the top of the tank. I then used my forklift to induce “gravity” that helped start the flow and get each tank pumped over.

It was a real lesson in true old-school winemaking. All of our 2017 wines have benefited from that old school real “hands on” TLC and their rich character and intensity will forever remind me of those long days and nights helping others.