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## Quick Facts & Timeline

(The complete notes from our Annual Notebook are available at:  
[www.lawrencedunhamvineyards.com/annual\\_notebook.html](http://www.lawrencedunhamvineyards.com/annual_notebook.html) )

### 2007

First visit to the Willcox/Pearce area. Tasted local wine at our friends' vineyard, Keeling Schaefer Vineyards and were very impressed. We decided to return to seek out property for a potential vineyard site.

Found 40 acres in Pearce, negotiated and closed in September. Decided on the name for what would become: Lawrence Dunham Vineyards. Had our first Thanksgiving celebration and began work on the master plan.

### 2008

Finalized the master plan and began clearing a large portion of the acreage for the vineyard. Installed needed infrastructure for the vines, water distribution and deer fencing. First planting of Syrah and Grenache began in April on two acres toward the road with the help of neighbors and friends. In May, the vines started sprouting with four hours of watering every day. By July, we were able to begin training the growth. By Thanksgiving, the vines enjoyed a long and warm growing season with ample rain; setting us up for a good growing season in 2009. A ton of Grenache and a ton of Syrah grapes were purchased from Keeling Schaefer so that we could get started.



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### 2009

The new year began with planning for the winery building. The existing steel pole building is to become the new winery. Four additional acres of vineyards were developed with steel poles and irrigation. The 2008 Syrah and 2008 Grenache are coming along nicely. The Syrah shows great potential, the Grenache has a high sugar content and a new yeast pellet should bring it down. Pruning of the first two acres was in March. Vines came in for the April planting along with replanting dead Petite Sirah and Grenache. 2,700 Grenache, 900 Syrah and 200 Viognier vines were planted. A hard freeze in late April damages some of the buds. By mid-summer, all of the plantings were doing well; the Petite Sirah seems very vigorous compared to others. Tasted the 2008 Syrah and still very good. Tasted Grenache and it is still sweet but the flavors and nose are amazing. Strawberry patch, Rhubarb, ripe watermelon. If we can get the sugar out, should be a stunner. Late summer was extremely dry and bees became a problem. Although heavy rains and hail hit hard, the vineyard drained surprisingly well. September saw our first harvest of 4.3 tons which is amazing for our first year considering freeze, bees and hail on only two acres. The end of October saw the first freeze and the end of the 2009 growing season, which was a good one. Our conditional use permit for the winery building will be heard in January, so we are moving forward.

### 2010

The Cochise County Planning and Zoning Commission approves our conditional use permit. The Lawrence Dunham Vineyards interim website was launched in February with visitors signing up to receive email updates. In February, we found that most of the Grenache planted in April of 2009 was killed, most likely from the hard freeze at the end of October 2009. Roughly 2,000 plants will need to be replaced. In April, we began planting new Viognier vines and replacement Syrah, Grenache, Viognier, and Petite Sirah skips which took about 10 days. We had our first visitors to the vineyard and gave them a tour and some barrel tastings. An overnight freeze on May 1<sup>st</sup> forced us to set mesquite log fires and burn smudge pots. The temperature hit 30 degrees but did not last long enough to do any major damage. Many vineyards throughout Arizona were hit pretty hard. Veraison began in mid-July, which is late. Fungus and bunch-rot became a problem in August. We may have to re-evaluate our grow tube protocols, either cutting them down or removing them earlier so the base of the plant can dry out between rains. Viognier has come on strong, getting a lot of lignification. We should get some nice fruit next year barring any weather issues. The rest of the non-fruit bearing plants look good too.



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Overall it was a good summer. In September, we picked a little over 3 tons per acre. Brix was pretty consistent in high 27's and pH in high threes and around 4. Petite Sirah was placed in 10 open top fermentation bins. We picked the remainder of the Syrah and Grenache, most of the fruit was pretty beat up from insects. We have decided to segregate if from the rest of the Petite Sirah must. Fermentation was begun in October and ended in November. The Grenache and Petite Sirah have been malolactic fermentation inoculated. With the damage done from the 2009 freeze, we are searching for grape stock to plant next April.

**2011**

The vineyard looks good except it has been a very dry winter so far. We have counted up all of the skips and have found enough stock for replanting. Looks like about 1,200 plants. February saw the coldest weather in decades. A frozen pipe in the house ended up flooding the entire building with extensive damage. To add insult to injury the damage in the field needs to be determined, especially with the grapes planted in 2010 and the plants that struggled through last year from the October 2009 freeze. The pruning in March revealed that the Viognier had a significant kill, the Grenache and Syrah are a disaster area. The majority of this area of the vineyard will have to be replanted yet again in 2012. All of the plants that had at least two growing seasons seemed to survive the freeze. In April, bud break started on the Viognier right at the end of March. Too early! We had a frost event the first week and had some damage but not too bad. The Petite Sirah was not out much yet. Older vines come out later. Two more freezes in May. I think our Viognier and Petite Sirah took a significant hit from these freezes. Unlike the April freeze, everything was budded out. We will have to see in June what the fruit set is but can't imagine we will have a crop even close to last year's. In June, the tinder dry Chiricahua Mountains exploded in fire from drug smugglers trying to evade the authorities. The fire was unstoppable and basically burned the entire mountain through the month and into July. Firefighters did a great job of stopping it before it did a lot of property damage but the trade off was the whole mountain burning until there was no fuel left. Not sure how this is going to impact our weather and watershed. The vineyard looks very inconsistent. The Petite Sirah looks hearty although there is not a lot of fruit. Grenache and Syrah have a few plants that have some fruit set. Viognier probably is what you might expect from a second year vineyard unless you had seen it last fall. It was so perfect and now it is quite average and just looks beat up. Veraison started about mid-July.



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A lot of the Viognier that survived the -1 degree freeze and put on fruit is looking rough. We are dropping the fruit and/or cut them back to save them. It is such a shame to have to do that. We are really going to have to temper our estimates for the crop. Hopefully we will get enough for a production run. I have been hoping we might get 100 cases this year but I think we will be lucky to get 50. Petite Sirah looks good but much lower yield this year I think. What little Grenache that is producing fruit looks pretty good. 2011 plantings are growing but seem a bit behind schedule. Syrah is a spotty mess. In September, Harvest of the reds went off without a hitch. Bee damage was pretty extensive on the edges but the fruit in the middle was good. Estimation of yields were about right. Petite Sirah was down but we picked a little more Grenache than thought. With the Syrah, we probably harvested 1.75 tons. We were unable to acquire any grapes from any Chiricahua Bench vineyards so our production is going to be down for 2011 wines but it is all LDV fruit for the first time. Fermentation went smoothly and Fall set in gradually, unlike 2009. In order to try to cut down on our winter kill of young plants, we have stuffed all of the plants that are young enough and still have grow tubes with a straw mixture to try to insulate the plants from extreme cold. This technique has been used elsewhere successfully so we are giving it a try. Cannot afford to keep replanting! LDV vineyard expansion underway in December. 25 new rows, have been laid out. There should be plenty of room for our 2,000 new plants of Petite Sirah. The creekside vineyard property was scraped with all of the vegetation and rocks removed. This will allow us to mow weeds when they come back. Temperature and humidity weather stations were installed to monitor the creekside vineyard. The data gathered in spring of 2012 will let us know if planting this area will be viable. It sure would be nice to have the space for a few thousand more plants down the road.

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