

## *Viticulture*

### Marcus Buchanan

The Viticulture program began in July 2007. Based on discussions with Rogue Valley winegrape growers and an initial idea gathering to assess and prioritize the industry's needs for educational and research programs in 2008, the program's priorities are:

- Broadly identify the technical support needs of growers;
- Respond to inquiries about production problems;
- Work collaboratively with the Rogue Valley Winegrape Growers Association (RVWA) to provide and support educational programs;
- Develop a collaborative effort and interaction with other OSU personnel, and
- Develop funding for specific projects, demonstration and education programs

*Supporting viticulture directly boosts jobs, beneficial land use and tourism.*

**Vineyard Contacts.** Thirty-four contacts ranged from one-time vineyard walks to multiple meetings, fully developing planned or recommended changes in management, and providing a more detailed discussion regarding soils, vine physiology/nutrition, and irrigation.

By September 2007, Marcus collaborated with four growers to develop crop response observation projects for the 2008 season and reviewed irrigation records for four other growers as a basis for developing individual plans for improving irrigation efficacy to meet production and quality goals.

**Requests for Information.** In addition to field meetings, Marcus provided five written responses of significant length and detail regarding very specific topics related to plant nutrition, soil test interpretation, and irrigation, fertigation, and fertilization strategies. Two other reports were made orally during vineyard meetings.

#### **August Problem Tour.**

Marcus was part of the OSU group that looked at potassium nutrition issues, a lateral shoot thinning trial,

and poor vigor and fruit set in local vineyards. He followed up with each of the growers with information and suggestions, and plans to return to their sites in 2008.

**Other field problems.** Marcus responded to seven problem calls or e-mails ranging from general poor vigor to leaf symptom concerns and herbicide drift damage. These all involved field visits to confirm, observe, and provide follow up information or suggestions where possible.

As the Rogue Valley winegrape and wine industries continue to grow, SOREC's Viticulture program expands county producers' support of local economic development through high-value uses of land resources, providing new employment opportunities, and enhancing the viability of other affiliated and support sectors, including tourism.

Indirectly, the Viticulture program can help to maintain and integrate rural community and environment values in an increasingly urbanized region.