

Laurelwood AVA Proposal:

On behalf of the winegrowers located within the Chehalem Mountains AVA, we petition the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms to establish an American Viticultural Area (AVA) to be known as “Laurelwood”. This proposed viticultural area is wholly located within both the current Chehalem Mountains (Figure 1) and Willamette Valley AVAs (Figure 2). The proposed area is located at the foothills of the Tualatin Valley with 80% primarily in Washington County and the remainder in Yamhill County (Figures 3a-f). The Laurelwood AVA would encompass 52.5 square miles or 33,600 acres. Within its proposed boundaries there are 70+ vineyards planted, totaling about 975 acres and 25 commercial wineries (Figure 4). The primary guiding principal for defining this viticultural area is its Laurelwood soil type (see Distinguishing Features section).

The first known plantings in the proposed Laurelwood AVA were conducted by the Johnson family (petitioners) along Riedweg Road in 1972. This planting was closely followed by others, including a 1975 planting by James Taylor on Firdale Road, later purchased by the Ponzi family (petitioners).

Name Evidence:

The proposed Laurelwood AVA name is derived from multiple sources in use throughout the area, Examples are noted in Appendices 1a-d.

The most common uses of the name are the town of Laurelwood (notes below), the surrounding Laurelwood Valley (referenced in Appendices 1a and 1b) and Laurelwood Water District (Appendix 1c).

This part of the Chehalem Mountains has come to be known as “Laurelwood” by winemaking and wine trade communities (Appendix 1d) because of the Laurelwood soil type which predominates the area and is desirable for growing vinifera (Figure 2 and Appendix 2a).

Additionally, one of the six USGS Quadrangle maps submitted in this petition is named Laurelwood (Figure 3a), clearly defining the area as associated with the name.

Two towns, anchoring the east and west ends of the proposed AVA, use the name Laurelwood and Laurel. Both refer to locally named Laurel trees that are common in the area.

The community of Laurelwood is an unincorporated town 5 miles west of Laurel, and located to the immediate west of the boundary of the proposed AVA. This town is named for a Seventh-Day Adventist school founded in the town in 1904. The school was named for a stand of supposed Laurel trees, in similar fashion to the town of Laurel (Oregon Geographic Names, 7th Edition, Lewis & Lewis). It should be noted that the grove of trees is suspected to have been Madrone trees, common throughout the proposed AVA, and colloquially, if incorrectly, referred to by early residents as Laurel trees.

Boundary:

The proposed Laurelwood AVA is located on the southern foothills of the Tualatin Valley. It includes the northern face of the southwest Chehalem Mountains and the eastern face of the Northern Chehalem Ridge. It includes the head waters of the Chicken, Baker, Heaton and McFee creeks; Laurel Ridge, the northern face of Bald Peak and the eastern part of Iowa Hill, Spring Hill and Fern Hill. It does not include Parrett Mountain or the Cedar Creek Valley. The proposed area is approximately 33,600 acres. It starts at 200 feet

and runs up to 1,600 feet in elevation. It lies to the South of Forest Grove, Cornelius, Hillsboro, Scholls and to the west of Portland and Sherwood.

The petitioners know of no previous attempt at defining the Laurelwood AVA, however, the proposed AVA shares many common boundaries and characteristics of the Chehalem Mountains AVA, as defined within the federal register. The boundary of the Laurelwood AVA would share a common boundary with the Chehalem Mountains AVA on its Northern and Eastern edges. The Southern and Western boundaries are drawn to correspond with the predominate soil type distribution – Laurelwood, for which the AVA is to be named – within the Chehalem Mountains AVA. This distribution, and the boundary accordingly, generally follows the crest of the Chehalem Mountains from North to South to the lower Eastern pass through the Chehalem Mountains (site of the current 99W highway) before tracing along the Western edges of Parrett Mountain.

Written Boundary Description:

(a) Name. The name of the viticultural area described in this section is “Laurelwood”. For purposes of part 4 of this chapter, “Laurelwood” is a term of viticultural significance.

(b) Approved Maps. The appropriate maps for determining the boundary of the Chehalem Mountains AVA are six United States Geological Survey 1:24,000 scale topographic maps.

They are titled:

- (1) Newberg Quadrangle, Oregon, 7.5 Minute Series, 1961 (photo revised 1985);
- (2) Dundee Quadrangle, Oregon, 7.5 Minute Series, 1956 (revised 1993);
- (3) Laurelwood Quadrangle, Oregon, 7.5 Minutes Series 1956 (revised 1992);
- (4) Scholls Quadrangle, Oregon, 7.5 Minute Series, 1961 (photo revised 1985);
- (5) Beaverton Quadrangle, Oregon, 7.5 Minute Series, 1961 (photo revised 1984); and
- (6) Sherwood Quadrangle, Oregon, 7.5 Minute Series, 1961 (photo revised 1985).

(c) Boundary. The Laurelwood AVA is located in Yamhill and Washington Counties, Oregon. The boundary of the Laurelwood AVA is as described below:

- (1) The beginning point is in Washington County on the Laurelwood map in section 17, T1S/R3W, at the intersection of Winters Road and Blooming Fern Hill Road.
- (2) Proceed West and then Northwest approximately .4 miles on Blooming Fern Hill Road to its intersection with the 200-foot contour line in section 8, T1S/R3W, Laurelwood map; then
- (3) Proceed Northwesterly and then Northeasterly 1.5 miles along the meandering 200-foot contour line to its intersection with La Follette Road along the eastern boundary of section 8, T1S/R3W, Laurelwood map; then
- (4) Proceed south 0.25 mile on La Follette Road to its intersection with the 240-foot contour line, north of Blooming Fern Hill Road, along the western boundary line of section 16, T1S/R3W, Laurelwood map;
- (5) Proceed Easterly and then Southerly 17 miles along the meandering 240-foot contour line, crossing over and back on the Scholls map in section 25 and 56, T1S/R3W, crossing Christensen Creek in section 35, T1S/R3W, and continuing to the contour line's intersection with Laurel Road West, along the southern boundary line of section 1, T2S/R3W, Laurelwood map; then
- (6) Proceed East 0.15 mile on Laurel Road West to its intersection with the 200-foot contour line, along the Southern boundary line of section 1, T2S/R3W, Laurelwood map; then

- (7) Proceed Easterly 17.5 miles along the meandering 200-foot contour line, and, after crossing onto the Scholls map and crossing over Laurel Road South, McCormick Hill Road four times, and Midway Road, and after crossing over and back on the Newberg map (crossing Heaton Creek) in section 28, T2S/R2W, continue to the contour line's intersection with Mountain Home Road, east of Heaton Creek, section 21, T2S/R2W, Scholls map; then
- (8) Continue Easterly and then Southerly 8.9 miles along the 200-foot contour line and, after crossing Baker Creek, skirting Laurel Ridge to the North, crossing onto the Beaverton map, crossing over and back on the Sherwood map, crossing over in the Southwest corner of the Beaverton map, and returning to the Scholls map, continue to the contour line's intersection with the middle tributary of an unnamed creek, along the Western boundary line of section 24, T2S/R2W, Scholls map; then
- (9) Proceed Southeast along the meandering 200-foot contour line and, after crossing over to the Northeast corner of the Newberg map to the Sherwood map, continue to the contour line's intersection with Edy Road, section 25, T2S/R2W, Sherwood map; then
- (10) Proceed Southwest along the meandering 200-foot contour line and, after crossing onto the Newberg map, skirting part of Chicken Creek, and returning to the Sherwood map, continue to the contour line's intersection with Elwert Road, along the Eastern boundary line of section 25, T2S/R2W, Sherwood map; then
- (11) Proceed South 0.85 mile on Elwert Road to its intersection with Oregon Highway 99W, along the Eastern boundary line of section 36, T2S/R2W, Sherwood map; then
- (12) Proceed South-southwest 0.45 mile on Oregon Highway 99W to its intersection with the 250-foot contour line immediately south of an unnamed Cedar Creek tributary, section 36, T2S/R2W, Sherwood map; then
- (13) Proceed Southerly 1 mile along the meandering 250-foot contour line to its intersection with Middleton Road, section 1, T3S/R2W, Sherwood map; then
- (14) Proceed Southwesterly 0.5 mile on Middleton Road, which becomes Rein Road, to the road's intersection with the 200-foot contour line, immediately South of Cedar Creek, section 1, T3S/R2W, Sherwood map; then
- (15) Proceed 1.6 miles generally East along the 200-foot contour line to its intersection, in the village of Middleton, with an unnamed light-duty east-west road locally known as Brookman Road, section 6, T3S/R1W, Sherwood map; then
- (16) Proceed Easterly 0.4 mile on Brookman Road to its intersection with the North-South Washington-Clackamas County line, where Brookman Rd turns North, at the west corner of section 5, T3S/R1W, Sherwood map; then
- (17) Proceed 1.0 miles South along the Washington-Clackamas County line to its intersection with Parrett Mountain Road, the last .4 miles concurrently running along Ladd Road, at the boundary of section 7 and section 8, T3S/R1W, Sherwood map; then
- (18) Proceed 2.6 miles Southwesterly along SW Parrett Mountain Road, crossing to the Newberg Map at the Washington – Yamhill County line, passing the intersection with Haugen Rd to a T intersection with a western leg of Parrett Mtn Road, known locally as NE Old Parrett Mountain Road, in section 13, T3S/R2W, Newberg map; then

- (19) Proceed 1.7 miles Westerly along NE Old Parrett Mountain Road, passing to the North of the 1224 ft peak and continuing West to its intersection with an unnamed road (known locally as Shaad Rd) at the boundary of section 14 and section 15, T3S/R2W, Newberg map; then
- (20) Proceed 0.5 miles Westerly along Shaad Rd road to its intersection with Corral Creek Road (misnamed Ladd Hill Road on the Newberg map), in section 22, T3S/R2W, Newberg map; then
- (21) Proceed North 0.9 miles along Corral Creek Road to its western-most intersection with an unnamed light-duty road locally known as Veritas Lane, section 15, T3S/R2W, Newberg map; then
- (22) Proceed North-Northwesterly in a straight line approximately 0.05 mile to the intersection of Oregon Highway 99W and the 250-foot contour line, 0.4 mile east of Spring Brook, in section 15, T3S/R2W, Newberg Map, then
- (23) Proceed Northwesterly 1.0 mile along the 250-foot contour to its intersection with the second, westernmost intermittent stream that is an unnamed tributary of Spring Brook, section 50, T3S/R2W, Newberg map; then
- (24) Proceed Northerly 0.5 miles along the unnamed intermittent stream, crossing under the single gauge railroad track, until the intermittent stream intersects with the 430 contour, T3S/R2W, Newberg map; then
- (25) Proceed West 0.25 miles along the 430 foot contour, crossing an unnamed crossing an unnamed road (known locally as Owls Lane) to the contour's intersection with NE Kincaid Road, T3S/R2W, Newberg Map, then,
- (26) Proceed North 0.25 miles Northwest along NE Kincaid Road until its intersection with NE Springbrook Road, T3S/R2W, Newberg Map, then,
- (27) Proceed North 0.22 miles Northwest along NE Springbrook Road until its intersection with Bell Road, T3S/R2W, Newberg Map, then,
- (28) Proceed East along Bell road for 0.5 miles, then through a sharp turn to the northwest and continue for another 0.2 miles until it its intersection with Mountain Top Road, section 49, T3S/R2W, Newberg Map, then,
- (29) Proceed 1.9 miles West along Mountain Top Road until it intersects Highway 219, Section 5, T3S/R2W Newberg Map, then
- (30) Proceed 0.1 miles North on Hwy 219 until it intersects with Mountain Top Road at the Washington County-Yamhill County line, Section 32, T2S/R2W, Newberg Map, then
- (31) Proceed 3.1 miles northwest on Mountain Top Road, crossing from the Newberg Map to the Dundee map, until Mountain Top Road intersects with Bald Peak Road, Section 26, T2S/R3W, then,
- (32) Proceed 4.8 miles Northwest, then Northeast, then North along Bald Peak Road, crossing from the Dundee Map to the Laurelwood map, and passing Bald Peak State Park, until it intersects Laurelwood Road , Section 47, T2S/R3W, Laurelwood Map, then,
- (33) Proceed .8 miles West and then forth on Laurelwood Road until it intersects the 700 ft contour line near an intersection with a private road (near 37420 Laurelwood Road) on section 4, T2S/R3W, Laurelwood Map, then,

(34) Proceed 5 miles Northeast then west along the meandering 700 foot contour line - around the Hill Creek drainage above the town of Laurelwood, crossing an unnamed tributary creek of Hill Creek in section 32 of Laurelwood Map, then crossing Dixon Mill Road in the same section, West of the unnamed creek, continuing to the North and proceeding West of Iowa Hill, continuing North and passing West of Spring Hill, (section 29), and intersecting the top of Winters Road at the intersection of sections 19,20,29,30, T1S/R3W, on the Laurelwood Map

(35) Proceed 2.0 miles North on Winters Road to return to the starting point

Distinguishing Features:

Soil:

Laurelwood soil is unique because of its source, described in Appendix 2a by Dr. Scott Burns, a Professor of Geology at Portland State University. Also referred to as “old” loess, this soil is a (Pleistocene) loessial soil. In the Pleistocene period, a mantel of silt was blown into the area from Eastern Washington and Oregon covering all the Eastern exposed slopes of the Chehalem Mountains. The Laurelwood soil consists of deep, well-drained soils that formed in silty loessial like material at elevations between 200 to 1500 feet (Appendix 2b).

The Laurelwood soil series, as noted in the Washington County Soil Survey (Appendix 2b), was named for the first area it was mapped, specifically near the town of Laurelwood. The soil survey clearly defines the proposed AVA as being predominantly composed of Laurelwood soils and specifically refers to a survey spot on Iowa Hill, within the proposed AVA. Furthermore, the text from The Geography of Wine: Regions, Terroir and Techniques includes a section (Appendix 2c) that discusses favorable soils for wine grape growing. Laurelwood soils are mentioned as the third most cultivated in the Willamette Valley. Wineries and vineyards within the proposed AVA refer to this soil type when distinguishing their wines from other viticultural areas.

The proposed Laurelwood AVA is focused solely on the “old” loess (Alfisol) Laurelwood soil type, dominant within the proposed boundary; as opposed to “young” loess (Inceptisol) soil (Appendix 2c), also found in Northwest Oregon. It is important to note the distinction between these two loessial soils. The area inside the proposed AVA is dominated by “old” loess (Alfisols) which is over 50,000 years old. The defining characteristics of the old loess are its red color, from the iron oxide that builds up over time, and weathered concretions called “pisolites” which look like little bee-bees (Appendix 2a).

Outside the proposed Laurelwood AVA there is “young” loess (Inceptisols) which is not red and does not have pisolites. As Dr. Scott Burns points out (Appendix 2a), “Young loess is very common to the northeast of Chehalem Mountain in the West Hills of Portland where one finds the Cascade Silt Loam soil. It is not good for growing wine grapes because it contains too many nutrients, and plants have excessive vigor.”

In addition to being distinct from other loess soils, Laurelwood soil is different from the other two primary soils for grape growing in the Willamette Valley because of the windblown silt (loess). The Willakenzie soil is marine sedimentary and the Jory soils are residuum derived from basalt.

To the Northeast of the proposed AVA are a variety of Missoula Flood soils. These soils are tan in color and only about 15,000 years old.

Soils southwest of the proposed AVA on Chehalem Mountain are mostly Jory and Willakenzie, both red in color, but both lack the pisolites.

On Parrot Mountain, which is southeast of Chehalem Mountain, one finds mainly Jory soil and some Saum (Jory with young loess on top of it). Neither have pisolites.

Northwest of the proposed AVA, small deposits of Laurelwood soils exist, but not in the same consistency or contiguity as the area within the proposed AVA boundary. Furthermore, these deposits do not contain the older volcanic soils that make the Laurelwood soil of the proposed AVA unique.

As noted as a point of differentiation in the petition for the Tualatin Hills AVA, situated to the northwest of the proposed AVA, “The only other area that has these same soil types is the northeast facing portions of the Chehalem Mountains and even there it is mixed with older volcanic soils.”

Distinctive Laurelwood Soil Farming Methods

The uniqueness of Laurelwood soil, due to the combination of the windblown freshwater sedimentary top soil and underlying basalt creates a need for different farming techniques from other soils found in the Chehalem Mountains AVA. (Appendix 3a).

The major influences unique to Laurelwood soil that affect farming and make the area unique from other soils within the Willamette Valley and Chehalem Mountains AVAs are the following:

Sufficient in nutrients

The loess topsoil is higher in nutrients, in comparison to other grape growing soils, and this makes for quite vigorous young vines. Riparia Gloire (a low vigor rootstock) is most widely used in Laurelwood soil over other soils in the Willamette Valley.

This soil also requires an increased need for annual lime applications to ensure that the vine can access the high amount of nutrients and minerals naturally available in the soil. Lime applications in other soils may be sporadic as needed or not at all.

Water holding capacity

The loess topsoil in Laurelwood soil drains very well and can be susceptible to erosion. This is a concern for young plantings and requires careful vineyard techniques.

On the other hand, the fractured basalt layers at deeper depths contain clay which has very good water holding capacity. This requires the need for frugal irrigation techniques and allows dry farming in older vines to be more successful in Laurelwood soils over other series

Very deep root growth

There are no obstacles, such as large rocks or hardpans to inhibit deep vine root growth in this soil. This promotes very strong growth and allows the older vines in Laurelwood soils to access water at deep depths creating vines that can regulate themselves in heat and in the months leading to harvest when it can be very dry and warm. Many of the oldest vines in the Willamette Valley AVA are planted here in Laurelwood soil and continue to maintain good health and productivity.

Laurelwood Soils Effect on the Wines

Laurelwood is a fascinating and unique soil series when it comes to manifesting itself as wine. The difference between the loess (windblown sedimentary) top soil and the basalt which lies beneath determines extreme

differences in the wines made from young vines (where they are expressing the loess soil) and wines made from vines past 15 years (whose roots are accessing the basalt soils beneath).

The following very general descriptions can help illuminate these differences:

Loess influence and characteristics (young vines):

Early ripening, high pH, forward floral aromatics, red fruit flavors (often cranberry, raspberry or pie cherry), soft, dusty tannins.

Basalt influence and characteristics (older vines):

Later ripening, higher acidity, blue/black fruit flavors, violet, lavender, anise, white pepper aromatics, darker and present tannins with a brambly, earthy note.

We consistently see the aforementioned characteristics in wines crafted from vineyards on Laurelwood soils, despite different handling and treatment of the grapes in the winery. (Appendices 4a-c)

Comparison to Surrounding Established AVAs:

Chehalem Mountains AVA:

The proposed Laurelwood AVA is contained completely within the Chehalem Mountains AVA and shares an elevation line of 200'. The Chehalem Mountains AVA CFR makes specific mention of the wide variety of soils in the AVA and specifically notes the soils of this AVA are not what make it unique, due to the wide diversity of the soils contained within it.

While the Chehalem Mountains AVA is diverse in soil type, the proposed Laurelwood AVA has a dominate soil, Laurelwood soil, found only on the Northern slope and Eastern corridor of the Chehalem Mountains AVA. This is what distinguishes it from the Chehalem Mountain AVA.

While the soil distinguishes the proposed Laurelwood AVA from the Chehalem Mountains AVA, they share similarities in physical features, elevation and climate.

As noted in the Chehalem Mountains AVA CFR, the hills are a significant geographic feature of the Northern Willamette Valley and the proposed Laurelwood AVA. The Chehalem Mountain range is the highest in the Willamette Valley. The proposed AVA anchors the Northern slope of the Chehalem Mountains. It also ties together the Eastern-most features centered around Parrett Mountain with the rest of the ridge forming the backbone of the range.

The proposed Laurelwood AVA nearly stretches to the highest point of the Chehalem Mountains, stopping just short of Bald Peak (the highest point of the Chehalem Mountains at 1,633 feet above sea level). The proposed Laurelwood AVA maintains the 200 foot contour line boundary of the Chehalem Mountains AVA which clearly differentiates the mountains from the valley. Most of the vineyards in the proposed AVA and the existing Chehalem Mountains AVA are between 200 feet and 1,000 foot level.

Both the proposed Laurelwood AVA and existing Chehalem Mountains AVA have dramatically different rainfall from the surrounding area. The Chehalem Mountain range, located within each, is the highest in the Willamette Valley and a significant obstacle to Eastward moving storms. The moist air is forced over the mountain ridge, condensing and falling to the earth as terrain-induced rain. As noted in the Chehalem Mountains AVA CFR, annual rainfall ranges from 37 inches at the base of the proposed AVA to almost 60

inches in its highest elevations. This rainfall contrasts with annual rainfalls of 36 inches in Hillsboro and Beaverton (to the North) and Portland International Airport (to the East) or over 100 inches per year in the Coast Range to the west. (Figure 5)

Both the proposed Laurelwood AVA and existing Chehalem Mountains AVA are more exposed and closer to the cold Eastern air flow from the Columbia River Gorge than any of the other AVAs located in the Willamette Valley.

Willamette Valley AVA:

The proposed Laurelwood AVA is contained entirely inside the Willamette Valley AVA, which extends 150 miles in length from the Columbia River to the north and Calapooya Mountains to the south. To the west it is protected by the Coast Range, and by the Cascades to the east. The vineyards within the Willamette Valley AVA, including those inside the proposed Laurelwood AVA boundary, enjoy similar climate, thanks to the geographic features mentioned above. More specifically, both the proposed Laurelwood AVA and Willamette Valley AVA share the same temperature and degree days (Figures 6).

While the Willamette Valley AVA has very diverse soils, the proposed Laurelwood AVA is dominated by Laurelwood soil. Further, Laurelwood soil seems to only be found in the northern part of the Willamette Valley, and predominantly on the North and East slope of the Chehalem Mountain ridge because of the occurrence of old loess deposited by east winds. Furthermore, the proposed Laurelwood AVA does not include the broad valleys found in the whole of the Willamette Valley AVA.