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PRESS RELEASE:
(hi-rez photo links included)

(Eastern Pennsylvania) This year, springtime not only represents new growth in the vineyards and on the farms and orchards here in Berks County, but expansion and high profile interest in many of the Berks County Wine Trail wineries themselves.

Recently, Pinnacle Ridge Winery was the cover story on the leading wine industry trade magazine 'Vineyard & Winery Management' in a piece called "Doing It Right in Pennsylvania" and Long Trout Winery was featured in a cover story in the State of PA's tourism magazine, 'Pursuits,' called "Long Trout Winery Teems with Boomers". Both these articles can be viewed on the "news/awards" page of www.berkscountywinetrail.com. Such tandem feature articles is not only tremendous recognition for individual wineries of Berks County, but of the burgeoning wine industry in Pennsylvania overall. What the wineries of Berks County are doing is vibrant.

Robust recognition for the quality of winemaking continues to flourish as well with nearly 50 awards since January for wines produced by Berks County Wine Trail wineries! Double Gold wins for Calvaresi and Clover Hill; a Gold/Best in Show for Pinnacle Ridge; as well as Wine Society excellence in winemaking nods for Manatawny Creek and Pinnacle Ridge. Cabernet, Merlot, Chambourcin and Riesling grapes grown in Berks County become the dominating wines when the Berks wineries go to compete regionally, nationally, and even on the international level. Complete awards information is available on the wine trail's website.

Because of the outgrowth of support, recognition and interest in the Berks County wineries in the last few years, many of the wineries on the Berks County Wine Trail are undergoing expansion projects for 2010. These facility expansion projects will enable the wineries to produce more wine more efficiently as well as provided increased hospitality space in their tasting rooms for winery visitors. Blair Vineyards, formerly of Mertztown, will be opening their charming new state-of-the-art winery/vineyard facility in Kutztown in June. Grand opening date to be announced soon.

Long Trout Winery of Auburn is undergoing from the ground-up expansion projects to extend the size of their colorful tasting room as well as their winemaking facility. Grand-re-opening plans are set for the summer at Long Trout. Pinnacle Ridge Winery of Kutztown is expanding their winemaking production space by reclaiming old farm outbuildings and turning them into high-end wine making spaces so as to maximize production efficiency. Kog Hill Winery of Morgantown is finalizing plans to start construction to expand their tasting room facility so visitors can experience sampling of Berks County wines outside on a new deck.

Since the trail formed six years ago, annual visitorship has more than tripled annually with particularly vibrant increases in the number of visitors during the four events the trail hosts annually. The February Chocolate & Wine event alone has drawn nearly 5000 people to tour Berks County during that sweet event weekend.

The wine trail encourages wine lovers old and new to visit their local Berks County wineries anytime to enjoy new wines being released this spring and summer as well as see the expansion plans taking place and then visit the wineries during their various upcoming open house celebrations.

You don't need wait to visit a Berks County Wine Trail winery during an event weekend; one can visit any of the trail wineries any weekend to sample wines from their tasting menus. And many of the wineries are open weekdays as well. Visit the wine trail website, or any of the wineries' individual websites, for details regarding hours of operation.

Combined, the Berks County wineries have won hundreds of state and international awards. The winemakers, their families and employees are proud to be able to preserve beautiful countryside landscapes and the agricultural heritage of Pennsylvania farming through the growing and processing of Pennsylvania grown grapes and fruits.

The Berks County Wine Trail's member wineries are proud to be associated with Pennsylvania Wine Association, Pennsylvania Wine Society, The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's 'PA Preferred' Program, The PQA Program, the Greater Reading Convention & Visitors Bureau, Schuylkill County Visitors Bureau, and nine-plus regional Chambers of Commerce.

For more information about the Berks County Wine Trail, its member wineries, lists of wines, maps and directions: www.berkscountywinetrail.com or berks_county_wine_trail@yahoo.com

Downloadable High Rez Photos:

Photo credit: Berks County Wine Trail

http://www.berkscountywinetrail.com/blair_construction_interior300.jpg

Richard Blair of Blair Vineyards readies his wine as he anticipates construction completion at his new facility in Kutztown.

http://www.berkscountywinetrail.com/LongTrout_construction_exterior300.jpg

Visitors are undeterred by construction at Long Trout Winery in Auburn.