

Wine Packaging

PONZI VINEYARDS



Like Wine, the TricorBraun WinePak and Ponzi Vineyard Partnership Becomes Finer with Age

Wine is nearly as old as time. However, to thrive in this highly competitive industry, winemakers must adapt to modern-day nuances. That is key to the ongoing success of one of Oregon's premier winemakers.

After more than 50 years, Ponzi Vineyards continues to pioneer viticultural innovation while maintaining its commitment to winemaking excellence and environmental stewardship.

In 2008, as part of its continuing mission to minimize its environmental footprint — and remain LIVE certified sustainable — Ponzi Vineyards sought to switch to a more sustainable glass bottle for its wines. Unfortunately, their search found that traditional glass producers didn't have a high-quality, "eco-friendly" option. That all changed when TricorBraun WinePak's account manager, Gillian Brennan, introduced Ponzi Vineyards to a revolutionary new lightweight, sustainable eco-bottle.

Sourced through TricorBraun WinePak and manufactured on the West Coast, the eco-bottle used 75% post-consumer recyclable glass, which meant Ponzi Vineyards could significantly reduce the environmental impact from manufacturing and delivering the bottles.

The new bottles also weighed less, resulting in a lighter 12-bottle case that workers could handle with less effort. In addition, as shipping rates are dictated by shipping weight, more wine cases could be added to each shipment, avoiding increased transportation costs. TricorBraun WinePak's ability to provide a sustainable solution resulted in Ponzi Vineyards sourcing more than 90% of the glass used for its wine from the manufacturer.

"TricorBraun WinePak is an extension of Ponzi Vineyard's business. Working together to make them successful is how

we succeed," said Amanda Reuser Stacey, Regional Sales Manager, TricorBraun WinePak. Reuser Stacey has been Ponzi Vineyard's day-to-day contact since 2019, when Brennan retired. TricorBraun WinePak had a strategic account succession plan in place to bring Reuser Stacey into the winery's business before Brennan's retirement to ensure a seamless transition and instill Ponzi Vineyard's confidence.

Following the changeover to the glass eco-bottle, Max Bruening joined Ponzi Vineyards. As Associate Winemaker, Bruening, with aid of the winemaking team, assists Ponzi Vineyard's Director of Winemaking & Viticulture, Luisa Ponzi, with every aspect of the winemaking process—from vineyard to bottle, beginning with the harvest season through engaging in vendor relations to coordinating packaging and distribution. This role requires detailed and strategic forecasting to ensure Ponzi Vineyards always has a consistent glass supply for its wines and, in turn, keeps the winery's business running smoothly.

When the global pandemic in 2020 disrupted supply chains worldwide, Bruening knew exactly who he needed to engage to ensure the winery remained resilient: TricorBraun WinePak.

A Strategic Partner to Persevere Through the Unknown

"Historically, forecasting for Ponzi Vineyards begins in the spring after the harvest, and we base that off of case production and sales from the previous year combined with industry trends and developments that can directly impact the business," said Reuser Stacey.

Unfortunately, no one could have forecasted the 2020 market disruption because of the COVID-19 pandemic. While Ponzi Vineyard had to close its tasting room during the pandemic,

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its winery facility was large enough for its team to spread out to maintain safety protocols and keep the production process moving. However, the pandemic disruption did force Ponzi Vineyards to rethink forecasting, and having a collaborative partner in TricorBraun WinePak allowed the winery to adapt quickly and persevere.

“The pandemic prompted so many unknowns for us. Yet Amanda and her team already had the knowledge and foresight to predict how COVID-19 would affect the market and our wine business,” said Bruening. “As a result, TricorBraun WinePak quickly and proactively recommended a strategic plan for the forthcoming year to ensure no glass supply disruption.”

Bruening added that as Ponzi Vineyards continued to endure the unknowns of the pandemic, TricorBraun WinePak was instrumental in helping the winery stay agile by recommending solutions to mitigate potential challenges. For example, TricorBraun WinePak presented different scenarios that could force the winery to pivot to other glass packaging suppliers – and already had a process in place to prequalify those potential suppliers for Ponzi Vineyards.

“Our team understands that Max needs to focus solely on managing all the different facets of Ponzi Vineyard’s business during this uncharted time,” said Alicia Sanner, Packaging Consultant, TricorBraun WinePak. “Therefore, we are constantly on the pulse of anything that could impact shipping — the global economy, energy, and supply chain. When we can connect the dots to optimize the winery’s ability to serve its customers, it’s one less thing Max and Ponzi Vineyards have to worry about.”

Bruening said that while other vendors experienced issues navigating pandemic disruption, TricorBraun WinePak had the astounding ability to proactively communicate and coach the winery to stay the course.

“I can always rely on TricorBraun WinePak because they are constantly direct about what is possible and when there’s no flexibility. This candor is a huge foundation of our relationship,” added Bruening.



Bruening also attributes Ponzi Vineyard’s perseverance during the pandemic — and its overall success — to TricorBraun WinePak’s attention to the winery’s operations. For example, TricorBraun WinePak provides a dedicated Account Coordinator. Elenor Tsao, TricorBraun WinePak’s Account Coordinator for Ponzi Vineyard, is the backbone of the collaborative infrastructure, managing operations logistics, including overseeing orders, scheduling shipments and resolving delivery issues, providing quotes, and fulfilling requests promptly when changes are needed.

“Being part of this collaborative partnership is very important to me. Wine industry professionals often lose sight of the importance of business relationship building — especially as digital and virtual communication becomes more pervasive,” added Bruening. “Yet, fostering and maintaining relationships in person is at the core of the TricorBraun WinePak team, which is why this longstanding partnership continues to thrive.

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TricorBraun WinePak takes the complexity out of the design, packaging, and distribution process. [Click here](#) to speak with a packaging consultant and learn more about our extensive range of products, services, and resources.