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## Hank Ashby is wine grape grower of the year in California

By Stephen E. Sowers

Hank Ashby, a former Rolla-St. James area grape grower, has been named the 2006 Wine Grape Grower of the Year by the Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance, Paso Robles, CA, in partnership with the Independent Grape Growers of Paso Robles and the San Luis Obispo Vinters Association.

Ashby, vineyard manager for French Camp Vineyards, is responsible for overseeing all phases of wine grape production at French Camp Vineyards. In addition to the day-to-day operations, Ashby has planted over 1,100 acres of new vineyards in recent years.

Ashby studied engineering at the United States Naval Academy and the University of Missouri-Columbia. He began growing grapes as a child raising Concord grapes on his family's vineyard east of Rolla. Before joining the French Camp Vineyard team in 1986, Ashby owned and operated a custom grape harvesting company and grew Concord grapes on his own vineyard.

Capitalizing on his engineering education and his extensive experience with all types of vineyard machinery, Ashby has become a leader in developing new equipment and products to increase vineyard mechanization while remaining focused on the quality of the resulting wines.

Ashby enjoys living in northern San Luis Obispo County because of the weather and the many opportunities for fishing and hunting. He lives on the vineyard with his wife Marilyn and their two sons, Nathan and Eric.

COMPLETES COURSE: Corina D. Delor, interior designer at Design & Conquer in Salem, has been issued a certificate for successfully completing the course of study in Professional Interior Design offered by the Sheffield School of Interior Design in New York, NY.

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