Lausanne 2024 Abstract Submission

Title
From Vine to Wine: How Hand-Harvesting Shapes the Wine Quality Perceptions

I want to submit an abstract for:
Conference Presentation

Corresponding Author
InHaeng Jung

E-Mail Corresponding Author
Jungin@sonoma.edu

Affiliation
Sonoma State University

Co-Author/s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hailey Brooks</td>
<td>Sonoma State University</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E-Mail/s Co-Author/s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E-Mail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:brooksha@sonoma.edu">brooksha@sonoma.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Keywords
Hand-Harvesting, Perceived Naturalness, Quality Perceptions, Choice Experiment, Sustainability

Research Question
1) How do consumers’ experiences with wine affect their preference for hand-picked wines?
2) How can the visual and textual components of wine labeling influence consumer preferences toward hand-picked wine?

Methods
This study utilized a choice experiment to evaluate wine preferences across different purchasing scenarios, comparing the likelihood of purchase with that of organic and family-owned wine options.

Results
Preliminary results indicate that consumers perceive hand-harvested wine to have nearly the same value addition as organic wine, which is markedly distinct from their views on mass-produced wine.

Abstract
Historically, hand-harvesting was the exclusive method for grape harvesting until the 1960s, when technological advancements initiated a shift in viticultural practices (Gilby, 2018). Presently, machine harvesting represents over 80% of the grape collection, driven by technological innovations, labor shortages, and the evolving political landscape impacting undocumented workers (Bieler, 2022; Dominici, 2019). Despite scant research advocating for the superior quality of hand-picked wines, consumer preference for such wines, often linked to notions of
naturalness and quality, has remained strong (Dominici, 2019; Maesano et al., 2021). This study explored the influence of hand-harvesting on wine labeling and its subsequent effect on consumer perception, as well as the impact of consumer background on their perceptions. Wine labels are pivotal in influencing purchasing decisions, where elements such as price, style, and brand weigh significantly (Thomas & Pickering, 2003; Rasmussen & Lockshin, 1999). The research aimed to discern the sway of various visual and textual cues on labels, especially those signifying hand-harvesting, on consumer choices. Furthermore, the investigation probed how factors like education, income, gender, and political and economic perspectives molded consumer beliefs and purchasing behaviors (Lee et al., 2019).

The study was conducted in two phases to garner a comprehensive understanding of consumer preferences toward hand-picked wine, focusing on labeling, presentation, and demographics. In the first phase, surveys were distributed to 300 U.S. consumers, 21 years or older, who had consumed wine in the last three months. This survey, designed for brevity and depth, and lasting approximately ten minutes, explored participants’ wine purchasing experiences and included a choice experiment to evaluate wine preferences across different purchasing contexts. Responses were analyzed using SPSS to extract insights into consumer attitudes and preferences pertaining to hand-picked wines. Further, conjoint analysis was used to analyze the choice experiment. This phase sought to capture a current picture of consumer sentiments and behaviors related to perceived naturalness in the wine market. This study will be followed by the second phase, which will involve a laboratory experiment with blind tastings and surveys to emulate real-world purchase settings. We plan to recruit approximately 50 participants, assessing wine labels designed by researchers to control the information provided, such as the hand-picked status and other attributes like visual elements, textual information, weight, and pricing.

Initial analysis revealed a marked preference for hand-harvested wines over mass-produced ones, with hand-harvested wines considered almost as valuable as organic wines and significantly more so than mass-produced wines. Hand-harvested wines were perceived as offering higher quality (m_HH = 6.0 vs. OG = 5.9 and MP = 4.0) and greater economic impact to the community (m_HH = 5.3 vs. OG = 5.1 and MP = 4.4), despite facing challenges in perceived availability (m_HH = 4.2 vs. OG = 4.6 and MP = 6.1). Tasting notes, sustainability, and alcohol content emerged as primary factors in purchase decisions, indicating an increased consideration of environmental and health impacts alongside taste.

Anticipated to guide the wine industry's adaptation to changing consumer preferences, the study's outcomes are expected to offer insights into labor management in viticulture, essential in light of fluctuating labor demands in vineyard cultivation and harvesting. The research aimed to promote a sustainable, consumer-focused approach in the wine industry, questioning whether traditional quality indicators such as vintage, region, and grape variety retain their appeal against a backdrop of shifting consumer preferences towards naturalness and authenticity (Schäufele & Hamm, 2017).

File Upload (PDF only)

Consent
- I agree to the privacy policy.

You find the link to our privacy policy at the bottom of the page. In the privacy policy you find a link for exporting and/or erasing your personal data stored in our database.
From Vine to Wine: How Hand-Harvesting Shapes the Wine Quality Perceptions

Hailey Brooks
School of Business and Economics
Sonoma State University

and

InHaeng Jung
School of Business and Economics
Sonoma State University
From Vine to Wine: How Hand-Harvesting Shapes the Wine Quality Perceptions

Abstract
This study investigated consumer perceptions of hand-harvested wines, influenced by a growing preference for natural products. It examined how wine labeling affects consumer choices and how different backgrounds and experiences shape purchasing behaviors. Surveys with U.S. consumers were utilized to understand the impact of labeling on preferences, aiming to guide the wine industry in adapting to changing consumer needs and labor market dynamics for a sustainable, consumer-responsive approach.

Keywords: Hand-Harvesting, Perceived Naturalness, Quality Perceptions, Choice Experiment, Sustainability

Introduction
Hand-harvesting, deeply entrenched as a tradition in wine production, was the predominant method of grape harvesting until the 1960s. Technological advancements during this era began to significantly alter these traditional practices (Gilby, 2018). The shift towards machine harvesting, which now accounts for over 80% of grape harvesting, has been primarily driven by advances in technology, labor shortages, and evolving political landscapes that impact undocumented workers (Bieler, 2022; Dominici, 2019). Despite a scarcity of research conclusively proving the superior quality of hand-picked wines, consumer preference for wines produced through hand-harvesting continues to be strong. This preference is often linked to perceptions of naturalness and a higher quality of the product (Dominici, 2019; Maesano et al., 2021).

This study focuses on two critical aspects: firstly, the influence of the hand-harvesting process as displayed on wine labeling and its subsequent impact on consumer perception, and secondly, the role of consumer background in shaping these perceptions. The role of wine labels in the decision-making process of consumers is substantial, with factors such as price, style, and brand playing significant roles (Thomas & Pickering, 2003; Rasmussen & Lockshin, 1999). Our research is dedicated to understanding the effect of various visual and textual elements on labels, especially those indicating hand-harvesting, on consumer choices. Additionally, the study will delve into how factors like the consumers’ level of education, income, gender, and their political and economic viewpoints contribute to forming their beliefs and, consequently, their purchasing behaviors (Lee et al., 2019).

Methodology
The study, aimed at gaining a detailed understanding of consumer preferences and perceptions towards hand-picked wine, was conducted in two distinct phases, focusing on factors such as labeling, presentation, and demographics. In the first phase, comprehensive surveys were distributed to a sample of 300 U.S. consumers aged 21 and above, who had recently consumed
wine (within the past three months). This survey, designed to be brief yet thorough and approximately 10 minutes in length, delved into participants' experiences with wine purchases. It included a choice experiment to assess wine preferences in various purchasing scenarios. The responses gathered were systematically analyzed using SPSS to draw meaningful conclusions about consumer attitudes and preferences related to hand-picked wines. This phase aimed to capture a snapshot of current consumer sentiment and behavior related to perceived naturalness in the context of the wine market.

**Initial Findings**

Preliminary findings indicated a strong preference for hand-harvested over mass-produced wines, rating hand-harvested wines comparably to organic wines and higher in quality (m_HH = 6.0 vs. OG = 5.9 and MP = 4.0) and community economic impact (m_HH = 5.3 vs. OG = 5.1 and MP = 4.4), yet lower in perceived availability (m_HH = 4.2 vs. OG = 4.6 and MP = 6.1). Tasting notes, sustainability, and alcohol content were pivotal in purchasing decisions, emphasizing the growing significance of environmental and health considerations.

**Implications**

Understanding consumer values is essential for organizational success, as noted by Sánchez-Fernández & Iniesta-Bonillo (2006), and aligns with the increasing preference for natural products (Vecchio et al. 2021). This study is designed to offer insights into evolving practices and marketing strategies in the wine industry, particularly focusing on how consumers perceive hand-picked wines and the impact of labeling on their choices. It seeks to explore whether traditional wine quality indicators like vintage, region, and grape variety (Schäufele & Hamm 2017) hold the same appeal in the face of shifting consumer preferences towards naturalness and authenticity.

The outcomes of this research are expected to guide the wine industry in adapting to the changing needs and preferences of consumers. In addition to enhancing marketing and production strategies, the study will also address the broader implications of consumer preferences for hand-harvested wines. By evaluating the true consumer demand for hand-harvested grapes, the findings will provide valuable insights into managing the labor forces involved in viticulture. This aspect is particularly crucial given the fluctuating demand for labor in vine growing and harvesting. Overall, the study aims to contribute to a more sustainable and consumer-responsive approach in the wine industry.

**Word count:** 744  words
Reference


