
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Shortly after taking office, Comptroller William Donald Schaefer addressed the fact that the growth of Maryland's wine industry has lagged far behind wineries in other states in the region. He quickly formed a partnership with Maryland wineries and grape growers in an effort to remove regulatory barriers hampering the development of the state's wine industry.

Maryland's system of alcoholic beverage regulation is designed to promote efficient distribution and taxation. Comptroller Schaefer and industry partners believe that minor changes in regulatory laws will boost Maryland winery growth and related wine festival tourism without significant effects on the regulatory system.

The Comptroller outlined a legislative proposal that will open up three marketing windows for the state's ten commercial wine producers by allowing them to showcase products at licensed restaurants and hotels, conduct sales at community festivals and special locations, and sell wine by the glass to visitors at licensed wineries.



Seeding growth. Comptroller William Donald Schaefer discusses his legislative proposal to help winemakers during a tour of Boordy Vineyards in Baltimore County, Maryland's oldest vineyard and winery.

With Maryland's agricultural resources for grape growing comparing favorably with France's Bordeaux region, industry experts believe that a growing wine industry in Maryland may encourage farmers—including tobacco planters—to diversify their crops.