



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 25, 2020

Media Contact: Nichole Cardinale
Director of Marketing
Direct: 330.433.2930 / Mobile: 330.265.8665
ncardinale@gervasivineyard.com

Gervasi Vineyard Launches Hand Sanitizer Production in Distillery

Canton, Ohio (March 25, 2020) – Gervasi Vineyard announced they are in the process of procuring the necessary ingredients and packaging supplies for production of hand sanitizer. The estate's newest addition, the distillery, known as The Still House, has most of the equipment and ingredients, including grain alcohol, to produce this much needed product during the pandemic.

“As soon as we learned we were permitted to convert our distillery operation to making hand sanitizer, we knew this was something we wanted to do,” said Scott Swaldo, General Manager, GV Destinations. “Repurposing the distillery gives us a unique way to really help our community with something desperately needed during this crisis.”

The winery and distillery teams are working together to collect the necessary blend of ingredients to create the hand sanitizer. In addition, research for the correct formula and following the legal guidelines are a top priority.

“Gervasi Vineyard wants to help. We want to be a part of the solution,” said Andrew Codispoti, Director of Winemaking & Distilling Operations, who is spearheading the project.

“We decided the FDA formula should be followed to make the hand sanitizer. This special formula was obtained from the World Health Organization, and allows companies to produce the product in a time of crisis, with the proper guidance from head experts,” said Codispoti.

The key ingredients for the formulation being followed by Gervasi Vineyard include: ethanol, glycerol, hydrogen peroxide and purified water.

“We reached out to our community asking for leads on supplies and the response was amazing! We received over 30 direct leads and hundreds of messages of support,” said Swaldo.

Ohio-based companies and local partners have stepped up to assist in ascertaining the proper supplies for production, including bottles, labels and key ingredients. Gervasi is working with Berlin Packaging to purchase (at a discount) a food-grade bottle that is designed to be used for barbeque sauce, with a screw cap.

“Due to the high demand for hand sanitizer, the traditional bottles were too difficult to source,” said Codispoti. “It’s not ideal for administering hand sanitizer, but we felt it was more important to get the product in circulation.”

In addition, the demand for ethanol (a key ingredient to make hand sanitizer) is extremely high at this time. Therefore Gervasi will need to make its own ethanol to manufacture hand sanitizer.

“It’s touching to see how the community has pulled together with this effort,” said Codispoti. “Swartz Farm is donating the corn, which will provide the grain necessary to make the ethanol, and Hartville Elevator has agreed to donate their services of testing, milling and delivery.”

The boutique distillery was designed to be a low volume producer for craft spirits, and is not set up for high volume production. As a result, the distilling process will take more time for the alcohol to reach the appropriate stage of proofing from grains.

The initial production will generate nearly 800 bottles for local distribution, which will be distributed to a combination of front-line medical facilities, as well as to the general public.

“Our team is working diligently and as fast as possible to make this happen,” said Swaldo. “Due to delivery schedules, production and packaging time, along with the FDA requirements, we expect to have initial product by late next week.”

Label Aid, the company’s current partner for their wine labels, has agreed to print and donate the labels for the hand sanitizer. However, the bottling operation will be done by hand, including the label application.

“It is an all-hands on labor operation, one piece at a time,” said Codispoti. “It is encouraging to know that every person that applies a label is doing their part to help their neighbors.”

With the additional supplies being made in the boutique distillery, the goal is to produce an additional 2,500 bottles for distribution within the next three weeks.

“We’re grateful to live in a community that wants to help one another,” said Swaldo.

###

Gervasi Vineyard is located at 1700 55th Street NE, Canton, Ohio, 44721. For more information about Gervasi Vineyard and GV Destinations, visit www.gervasivineyard.com @gervasivineyard on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube or call 330.497.1000.