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Grower of the Year Award

Charlottesville, VA – Spring 2009, the Virginia Vineyards Association Grape Grower of the Year award was presented to Mr. Doug Flemer of Ingleside Vineyards. Doug was chosen based on criteria established in 2005 with the first presentation of the award. The criteria are: an active member of the Virginia Vineyards Association with at least seven years experience managing or operating a commercial vineyard of at least 5 acres. The nominee must be an active participant in the Virginia viticulture community with a history of service to our industry and must be well respected by his or her peers. Doug exceeded the criteria for this award.

Doug studied horticulture at North Carolina State University. After graduation, Doug had the pleasure of traveling to France where he had the good fortune to visit some of the finest wineries and vineyards in Bordeaux and Burgundy. It was during these travels that he fell in love with winemaking and grape growing. After returning to the states, he made his home on the family farm and began to help his father expand the vineyard that he had initially planted in 1978, as well as lay out plans for a winery. The first commercial harvest was 1980 with a production of 1500 cases, and Ingleside Vineyards, one of the first six wineries in the state, was born. Shortly thereafter Doug took over the reigns of the family winery and production took off.

From his early years, Doug has been a leader in the Virginia wine industry. He has served as past president of the Virginia Wineries Association and a founding member of the Virginia Wine Advisory Board and later the Virginia Wine Board. He served on the board of directors of Wine America as well as a member of the American Society of Enology and Viticulture and American Wine Alliance of Research and Education. Perhaps last but certainly not least, Doug has been a long time member of the Virginia Vineyards Association. He has been a friend and mentor to many of our colleagues throughout the Virginia wine industry. Doug has always shown a deep understanding of the issues that face our industry. He has always displayed a true willingness to work with his fellow winegrowers to try and find solutions to the many problems our industry has faced over the years. Doug and his wife Nancy, and two children, currently live at Roxbury on the historic Ingleside Plantation.