

## WIGA 2023 Conference – Speaker Bios

**Felix Egerer** is the Viticulturist at Unsworth Vineyards in Mill Bay. He spent the last several years working in winemaking and viticulture in the North Okanagan, after having chased harvests around the world for some time. Felix studied agroecology under Nicole Masters of Integrity Soils as well as viticulture and enology at UC Davis and Geisenheim University. His focus lies on regenerative agriculture, systems thinking, and coaching.

**Christopher Mark** is the founder of Vintality Tech Inc., a precision viticulture company that helps vineyards farm more sustainably, more profitably, and achieve higher-quality fruit. He accomplishes this through the use of targeted technologies and approaching farming and winemaking holistically. You'll find Christopher working at numerous vineyards in the valley, across BC, and outside of Canada.

**Daniel Pambianchi** is a well-known winemaking author, lecturer and consultant, and seasoned winemaker both as an amateur and professional having owned and operated a small commercial winery in Niagara Wine Country in Ontario, Canada. His bestselling book *Techniques in Home Winemaking* and recently published *Modern Home Winemaking* have become the go-to reference textbooks by advanced amateurs and small-winery operators alike. His area of expertise is wine chemistry in which he performs extensive studies in his wine analysis lab with a special focus on oxygen management. He is a member of the American Society for Enology and Viticulture, the Australian Society of Viticulture and Oenology, and the American Wine Society.

**Mark Hopley** is a rare breed: an Okanagan local. Mark grew up in the Okanagan and has been interested in the craft for as long as he can remember. After studying winemaking and viticulture at Okanagan College, Mark worked at Sumac Ridge Estate Winery, at Kraze Legz winery in Kaleden, then as Assistant winemaker at Road 13 in Oliver. He started at Hester Creek in January 2013, where he's thrilled to have access to an incredible vineyard, cutting-edge equipment and a state-of-the-art cellar. Mark aims to make wines that are fruit-driven with soft tannins and integrated oak — wines that can be laid down but also enjoyed now. He lives in Penticton with his wife Sue, twin daughters, Emma and Nicola, and a wheaten terrier named Brady. In his time off, he enjoys gardening, raising Koi, golfing, fishing, spending time with his family and of course, a great bottle of wine.

**Ken Kupperman** As vice president of Oregon vineyard operations, Ken Kupperman oversees all aspects of vineyard and land management for Jackson Family Wines' properties in Willamette Valley.

After graduating from the University of Kansas with a bachelor's degree in environmental studies he worked in Israel studying drip irrigation and gaining experience in the production of apples, pears and kiwifruit. Following this he received a master's degree in horticulture from the University of Arkansas.

Later Ken worked in the Washington apple industry before moving to the wine industry in 1998 when he joined Wente Family Estates. There as director of viticulture he oversaw 3,000 acres of vineyards in the Livermore Valley, Napa, Arroyo Seco and Monterey appellations.

In 2007 he accepted a position with Premier Pacific Vineyards managing their Willamette Valley properties, including Gran Moraine and Zena Crown Vineyard, which Jackson Family Wines would later purchase.

In 2013 Ken joined Jackson Family Wines as director of vineyard operations and was promoted to vice president of vineyard operations in 2018. He feels fortunate to work with some of the best vineyard sites in the Willamette Valley and finds great satisfaction in delivering fantastic fruit, and in building a team that does so year in and year out.

**Lamont Brooks** and his wife Pat George founded Symphony Vineyard in Saanich in 2011. They use only Saanich-grown grapes for their wines, primarily from their own 2004 planting of several varietals. Lamont has been producing monthly WIGA climate summaries for many years, and is interested in quantifying the influence of global warming on the future of our growing area.