

Professor's 'A-plus' wines showcased at the Big E

What does a college professor know about making wine? Apparently quite a lot.

Just ask American International College marketing professor Marshall Epstein, who recently took home three medals for his wine making efforts and will have them on display in the Young Building on the grounds of the Eastern States Exposition, better known as the Big E, in West Springfield, through Oct. 4.

Epstein, whose family-run Rosedale Farms in Simsbury, Conn., has produced fresh fruits and vegetables each summer since 1920, decided to get into the wine making business a few years ago.

"I was talking to a neighbor one day and he asked me why we don't grow grapes. It sounded like a good idea so we started, and now we're making award-winning wines," he said.

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Three of his wines took top prizes at the 2009 Big E Northeast GoldWine Competition held in June on the grounds of the Eastern States Exposition.

Epstein's "Lou's Red" won a gold medal and was voted Highest Ranking State Wine. His "Farmington River Red" took the silver medal, and "Serendipity" received a bronze medal.

Combining a career in academe with a career in farming is no easy task.

Epstein said he puts his marketing expertise to use every day and not just in the classroom.

"In order to survive in the business world you have to develop a solid business plan and know the demographics of your market," Epstein said.

Both careers are time con-

suming, and Epstein admits sometimes it is a balancing act.

"Most of the agriculture business is done between April and October, while college is in session from September to May. It is the overlapping months that can get a little tough, so I rely on my family and our staff to help out," he said.

"It's a lot of hard work running a farm, producing wine and teaching at the college level," Epstein said. "But I love it and wouldn't give any of it up," he said.

Epstein said he offers the public a chance to sample his award winning wines each weekend. Cost is \$5 per person.

"Every Saturday and Sunday from July through December from 12 to 5 p.m., we invite people to come and enjoy a sampling of our vintages, served with gourmet cheeses and crackers," he said. This summer Max's Oyster Bar in West Hartford, teamed up with Rosedale Farms & Vineyards to offer "Chef to Farm Dinners."

These events featured a farm tour, wine tasting, and a four- to six-course feast crafted from Rosedale farm-fresh ingredients.

Epstein has taught at American International College since 1981.

He has served as chair of the marketing department and assisted the college in new program development. He was instrumental in developing the entrepreneurship ma-

for in 2002.

In addition to teaching and managing the internship program, Epstein has continued to be very active in the business field.

In 1983, he was named president of Rosedale Farms, in 1998 co-founded Mindwing Concepts located in the Springfield Enterprise Center, and in 2005 has established Rosedale Vineyards LLC.

For more information, visit the Web site www.rosedale1920.com/

Submitted by American International College



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Staff photo by **DON TREEGER**

**Marshall Epstein, a marketing professor at
American International College, poses with a few
of his favorite vintages.**