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Kennewick farming family to build winery at Suncadia

By Eric Degerman, Wine Press Northwest

KENNEWICK — Don Watts, a long-time Columbia Valley vineyard owner, plans to begin building a winery at [Suncadia Resort](#) in Roslyn, Wash.

[Swiftwater Cellars](#) is scheduled to open the winery in fall 2010, and [Tony Rynders](#), is the winemaker.

The winery's initial release, made at the Artifex complex in Walla Walla, will be 2,500 cases. It will include a Syrah and red blend from the 2007 vintage and Columbia Valley appellation, a 2008 Pinot Noir from the Willamette Valley and a 2008 Sauvignon Blanc/Semillon blend from the Columbia Valley. The Suncadia facility will have a capacity to produce 7,000 cases annually.

In February 2008, Watts sold [Watts Brothers Farming and Frozen Foods](#) of Kennewick, Wash., to [ConAgra Foods](#). Watts Brothers holdings of 20,000 acres of farmland made it one of the largest privately held family farms in the Mid-Columbia. The Watts still own Zephyr Ridge Vineyard, a 300-acre site in the Horse Heaven Hills they have farmed for 15 years with long-time Washington vintner/viticulturalist Wade Wolfe.

Rynders crafted highly acclaimed Pinot Noir and Chardonnay for Domaine Serene Vineyards & Winery in Oregon's Dundee Hills from 1998 to 2008. Prior to that, the Wisconsin native served as assistant winemaker at Hogue Cellars in Prosser, Wash., and also worked at Argyle Winery in Dundee, Ore. Rynders is an owner of [Octave Vineyard in the Walla Walla Valley](#) as well as [Tony Rynders Consulting](#).

Swiftwater Cellars is being built on top of Coal Mine No. 9 and will overlook [Rope Rider Golf Course](#), a 7,300-yard layout with youth tees on each hole. The course is under construction and scheduled to be open in conjunction with the winery.

Groundbreaking ceremonies for Swiftwater Cellars are scheduled for Friday. [Bethlehem Construction Inc.](#), which has offices in Cashmere, Wash., and Shafter, Calif., is building the winery.