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WILLCOX
ARIZONA

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Willcox Chamber
of Commerce & Agriculture

June 30, 2025

Regarding: Cochise College Viticulture Program

Dr. James D. Perey, Ed.D.
President, Cochise College
901 N. Colombo Ave.
Sierra Vista, AZ 85635

Dear Dr. Perey,

On behalf of the City of Willcox, we want to express our appreciation and excitement upon hearing the recent announcement regarding Cochise College's new viticulture program, made possible through the generous private endowment, your largest in history. This is a significant investment in Cochise County and for Arizona's wine industry.

As the heart of winemaking in Arizona, Willcox is home to over 75% of the state's wine grape production. Our city council and local business community have invested years in marketing and promoting Willcox as a premier wine destination. This program represents a significant step forward in strengthening the region's viticulture economy.

However, we were disappointed to learn that many of the classroom-based courses for this program will be held at the Douglas campus, while only the hands-on vineyard components will take place locally. Given that Willcox is the epicenter of wine production in the state, we strongly believe that Willcox should be the instructional hub for the viticulture program.

Hosting these courses in Willcox would:

- Deepen the connection between the College and the very industry it seeks to support;
- Provide students with a fully immersive experience in Arizona's most active wine region;
- Support our local economy, as students and faculty would spend time in our community; and
- Acknowledge and reward the contributions our residents make to Cochise College through property taxes and support.

We respectfully request that Cochise College offer the viticulture classroom instruction here in Willcox, in addition to the vineyard internships. Our community is eager to assist in providing space, support, and promotion for this important program. We believe this adjustment would better serve students, the wine industry, and the long-term success of the program itself.

We look forward to the opportunity to partner further in support of education and agriculture in our region.

Sincerely,

Mayor Greg Hancock,
City of Willcox

President Monica Preston
Willcox Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture