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## Bird Control Group uses autonomous lasers to repel birds for California vineyard

**April 26**  
2018

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April 26, 2018 -  
Jim Griffin,  
Owner of  
Griffin's Lair,  
Sonoma County,

California has a 21 acres vineyard that suffered from bird damage to crops like many other vineyard owners. He spent around 25,000 USD per year on netting and labor costs to keep thousands of birds at a distance. This was labor-intensive and didn't solve the bird problems. The biggest disadvantage of bird netting is that it is not effective for areas where many birds are foraging or perching. The birds still can get under the net and damage the grapes. The net also makes it difficult to work on the grapes for annual pruning, fertilizing or removing damaged grapes.

Jim heard about laser technology, started with some research and was intrigued to discover the Agrilaser Autonomic. The automated laser is used at many vineyards around the world including Devonian Coast

Wineries in Canada, Bodega Catena Zapata in Argentina and Summerhill Road Vineyard in Australia. After having contacted Bird Control Group, Jim had 4 solar powered lasers installed on poles to cover the entire vineyard. As a result, Griffin's Lair saves around 25,000 USD every year and has a 99.8 % reduction in birds. "We tried many different bird deterrent measures but most are difficult to use, and lasers make it easier and very effective." says vineyard owner Jim Griffin.

The laser bird deterrent technology takes advantage of a bird's natural instincts. Birds perceive an approaching laser beam as a predator and take flight to seek safety when the laser beam passes by. There are more than 6,000 users of the bird deterrent lasers worldwide, but this is the first time the technology is being used on California wine grapes.

The United States wine grape industries contributed more than 162 billion USD annually to the American economy according to 2007 research. Despite the overall positive situation in the American grape industry, bird problems make the grape growers suffer losses in the millions of dollars every year. According to the research done by A. Anderson, C.A. Lindell, K.M. Moxcey and others, California and Washington states have the biggest grape damage caused by birds calculated at 49,099,613 USD for California and 12,892,063 USD for Washington. Current yield-loss percentage due to bird damage in grape growing in California is 2.9 % per year. The birds responsible for damage to grapes include American Robins and European Starlings.

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