

A Delaware Valley Fields Foundation Special Partnership

The American Whiskey Convention was founded in 2016 by the Delaware Valley Fields Foundation to support local agriculture through education of the public, outreach to the agricultural community, and economic stimulus to participating vendors. In other words, you come for the whiskey, but you can't help but learn all about the grain it's made from and meet the members of an agricultural supply chain that every distillery needs to function while you're there. The AWC demonstrates for every guest what's involved from grain to glass.

Proceeds from the American Whiskey Convention fund the DVFF's Seed Spark campaign, a partnership with Penn State's Agricultural Extension, which supports the research and development of heritage grains. This partnership with Penn State, which began over three years ago, has expanded to now include Stoll and Wolfe Distillery (based in Lititz, PA) in a very special project.

Work on this special project began in 2015 when the Delaware Valley Fields Foundation partnered with Greg Roth at Penn State's Agricultural Extension. The mission was to return Rosen Rye, a heritage grain that was once used to produce Pennsylvania rye whiskey, to Pennsylvania farmers and, in turn, to its distillers. The first very small amount of Rosen (5 ounces) from the USDA seed bank was planted in the fall of 2015. By 2016, Penn State had grown a few pounds of seed, and by the following year, they had nearly an acre! By harvest in the summer of 2018, there was enough Rosen rye to distill into whiskey with about 50 pounds of seed left over to replant in the fall. On September 24th, 2018, Stoll & Wolfe Distillery received a 350-pound delivery of milled Rosen Rye, care of the Delaware Valley Fields Foundation.

Why Stoll & Wolfe Distillery, you may ask? No one has produced rye whiskey using Rosen Rye since Michter's Distillery (in Shaefferstown, PA) closed its doors in 1990. Dick Stoll, who was the last distiller there, is now master distiller at Stoll and Wolfe. "It's amazing that the last person to use Rosen Rye, will be the first person to use Rosen Rye again," said Fields.

Three years of turning a handful of seeds into a harvest has finally come to pass. The milled Rosen will be mashed, fermented, distilled and barreled this winter. It will be the first time this heritage grain will be made into whiskey since Dick Stoll mashed and distilled Rosen rye at Michter's Distillery in Shaefferstown, Pa decades ago. How appropriate that the last man to distill at Michter's will be the first to bring Rosen back again.