

**Sonoma County District 3 Local Winegrape Commission**

**Annual Report**

**July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008**

**The mission of the SCWC is to increase the value of Sonoma County winegrapes and to nurture and protect this agricultural resource for future generations**

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**Sonoma County Winegrape Commission**  
**July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008 Annual Report**

**President's Report**

It has been an honor to be your President for the Sonoma County Winegrape Commission. The Commission is committed to increasing the value of Sonoma County grapes for growers, wineries, and for consumers who buy Sonoma County wines. Growers want and need higher prices to remain economically viable. Increased demand for grapes from the 2008 harvest is helping, and those increases can only be sustained if your winery customers are able to successfully compete in the marketplace at higher price points. Fortunately, Sonoma County is recognized for its high quality wines, but the competition from other regions is fierce. To remain competitive, growers must continually improve grape quality and be rewarded for those efforts.

Your Commission's accomplishments are the result of the dedicated efforts of your Board, your staff, and the many volunteers who serve on committees and assist at events. I personally thank all of you for your many contributions.

The Commission's primary function is to promote Sonoma County grapes and wines. Eighty percent of the budget, including staff time, is to be dedicated to marketing. The remainder is to be used to fund Grower and Community Outreach, Sustainable Practices programs, and general operations of the Commission.

Grower and Community Outreach, which includes educational events like Dollars and Sense, the May BBQ, and other grower and vineyard manager programs. Community Outreach included representing grower interests during the General Plan update, on endangered species committees seeking regulatory clarity for landowners where California Tiger Salamander or salmonid species may be found.

Sustainable Practices includes grower Integrated Pest Management and Organic Producer meetings, PCA Breakfast meeting, Code of Sustainable Winegrowing self-assessment workshops, and the Employee Development Program for vineyard employees.

General Operations include rent and administrative operating costs, including accounting and legal fees. As reported in the Audited Financial Statement, assessment revenues from the 2007 harvest totaled \$1,115,182. An additional \$189,255 was contributed from Commission Sponsors, grants, events and royalties, or nearly 17% of total assessment revenues. Those monies further leverage grower assessments to promote Sonoma County grapes and wines.

The Commission ends its second fiscal year and the organization is committed to serving its growers and gaining momentum in marketing Sonoma County, its wine regions, grapes and wines. Those activities and results will be described in the remainder of this annual report.

Sincerely,  
Nick Frey

**Sonoma County Winegrape Commission  
July 1, 2007/June 30, 2008 Annual Report**

**Chairman's Report**

My Thoughts

By Duff Bevill

As the outgoing chairman of the Sonoma County Winegrape Commission, I want to thank all of my fellow Commissioners who have volunteered their time to serve on the board these past two years. Together, along with Nick Frey and his dedicated and inspired staff, we wrapped our arms around the challenging task of creating a reality from a vision. We recognized that we had an opportunity to solidify our position in the premium grape growing world and, more importantly, expand the recognition of Sonoma County along with the premier, world class grape growing regions found within its borders.

I also want to welcome and thank those who chose to run for the positions of Commissioner and Alternate, and will be seated for the next two years. As was the case with the past Commissioners and Alternates, these people bring with them the dedication, energy, and knowledge required to lead this grower organization into the future.

Finally, to the 1,800 District 3 growers like myself, I say congratulations for having the foresight to recognize the need for a commission with a focus on marketing, believing in its promise and acting when the opportunity was presented to them while understanding the risk of not doing so.

There is more work to be done and I am honored to be still serving as a Commissioner to help guide this organization as it blossoms.

## 2007-2008 Commission Board and Alternates

### Commission Board Members

### Commission Board Alternates

Mark Houser Hoot Owl Creek & Alexander Valley Vineyards Alexander Valley	Kevin Barr Redwood Empire Vineyard Management Alexander Valley
Jim Murphy Murphy Ranch Alexander Valley	Allan Nelson  Alexander Valley
Duff Bevill - <b>Chair</b> Bevill Vineyard Management Dry Creek Valley	Pete Opatz Silverado Premium Properties/Vino Farms Sonoma County
Richard Rued – <b>Secy/Treas</b> Rued Vineyards Dry Creek Valley	Mike Rowan  Dry Creek Valley
Joe Dutton Dutton Ranch Russian River Valley	Vicki Michalczyk Hawk Hill Vineyard Russian River Valley
John Balletto Balletto Vineyards Russian River Valley	Tim Carl Knights Bridge Vineyard Knights Valley
Steve Hill – <b>Vice Chair</b> Parmelee-Hill Vineyard Sonoma Valley	Bill Munselle Wasson Vineyards Alexander Valley
Steve Sangiacomo Sangiacomo Vineyards Sonoma Valley	Becky Jenkins Madrone Vineyard Management Sonoma Valley
Richard Mounts Mounts Vineyard Dry Creek Valley	Doug Lumgair Windsor Oaks Vineyard Chalk Hill
Mark Pasternak Devils Gulch Vineyard Marin County	Wells Wagner Sylvan Hills Vineyard Bennett Valley
Rhonda Smith UC Cooperative Extension Ex-Officio Member	

**Sonoma County Winegrape Commissions  
Committees and Committee Members  
2007-2008**

**Finance Committee**

Richard Rued (Treas)	Dry Creek Valley
Doug Lumgair	Chalk Hill
Mike Rowan	Dry Creek Valley
Richard Mounts	Dry Creek Valley
Vicki Michalczyk	Russian River Valley
Becky Jenkins	Sonoma Valley
Thomas Rackerby	Contractor

**Grower and Community Outreach Committee**

Mark Houser (Chair)	Alexander Valley
Wells Wagner	Bennett Valley
Susan Lentz	Dry Creek Valley
Dennis Black	Russian River Valley
Ray Carlson	Russian River Valley
Randy Luginbill	Sonoma County
Diane Kenworthy	Sonoma Valley
Vicky Mulas	Sonoma Valley
Ginger Baker	Staff

**Marketing Committee**

John Balletto (Chair)	Russian River Valley
Tim Carl (Co-chair)	Knights Valley
Barb Stiling	Russian River Valley
Julie Lumgair	Chalk Hill
Judy Goldstrand	Sonoma County
Mike Rowan	Dry Creek Valley
Pamela Gunsalus	Russian River Valley
Paul Michalczyk	Russian River Valley
Robert Amox	Russian River Valley
Steve Sangiacomo	Sonoma Valley
Paul Novak	Sonoma County
Steve Hill	Sonoma Valley
Larry Levine	Staff

**Sustainable Practices Committee**

Rhonda Smith (Chair)	UCCE
Dana Grande	Alexander Valley
Keith Horn	Alexander Valley
Jim Cuneo	Alexander Valley
Sandy Henson	Alexander Valley
Mark Pasternak	Marin County
Dennis Devitt	Russian River Valley
Vicki Mickalczyk	Russian River Valley
Joan Griffin	Sonoma Coast
Tom Gore	Sonoma Valley
Lucia Varela	UCCE
Laura Breyer	PCA/IPM program leader
Judy Tuhtan	Staff

**I acknowledge and thank the Board, Board Alternates and Committee Members for all their work on behalf of all grape growers in Crush District 3. In addition a special thank you to all the growers who have volunteered to assist with Commission events throughout the year.**

## 2007 Final Grape Crush Report

Crush District 3, Sonoma and Marin Counties, harvested 8.2% fewer tons in 2007 than in 2006, but an average price increase of 4.1% (Table 10) helped offset some of the tonnage decline for some growers. The average price was \$2081/T (Table 6), topping \$2000 for the first time since 2002. Grape sales totaled \$413,147,000 or \$17 million less than in 2006.

The table below provides tonnage, percentage change from 2006, average price (Table 6), percentage change from 2006, and dollar value for the 6 leading varieties, which account for 89% of grape sales:

Variety	Tons	% Change	Average Price	% Change	Dollar Value
Chardonnay	58,433	-5.7%	\$1870	+8.3%	\$109,269,710
Sauvignon Blanc	10,893	-19.1%	\$1491	+2.9%	\$ 16,241,463
Cabernet Sauv	41,551	+8.2%	\$2238	-1.2%	\$ 92,991,138
Merlot	21,337	-18.0%	\$1452	-5.1%	\$ 30,981,324
Pinot Noir	29,487	-23.3%	\$2831	+12.9%	\$ 83,477,697
Zinfandel	14,592	-12.5%	\$2376	+2.9%	\$ 34,670,592

Information on all varieties and crush districts can be downloaded from [http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/California/Publications/Grape\\_Crush/indexgcb-final2007.asp](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/California/Publications/Grape_Crush/indexgcb-final2007.asp).

Clearly demand is strong for Sonoma County Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, leading to good price increases. Essentially all varieties other than Merlot (and Syrah) have come into balance. While Cabernet Sauvignon prices declined slightly, recent buying interest in Cabernet Sauvignon suggests it too is coming into balance and prices should increase in 2008. Given declining Merlot acreage and continued slow growth in Merlot wine sales on a very large base, Merlot demand should soon pick up, hopefully in 2008.

Grape buyers are searching the online **Grape Marketplace** and the **Wine Map** for grapes to purchase at [www.sonomawinegrape.org/advanced\\_search/grapes\\_for\\_sale](http://www.sonomawinegrape.org/advanced_search/grapes_for_sale) and [www.sonomawinegrape.org/map](http://www.sonomawinegrape.org/map). If you have grapes for sale, those should be listed on both the **Grape Marketplace** and the **Wine Map**. Commission advertisements in vineyard and winery trade magazines promoted these online listings to grape buyers and winemakers. Growers need to update their information regularly, including removing any listings if contracts have been signed. Growers and grape buyers need to take advantage of these grape marketing tools.

**Sonoma County Winegrape Commission  
Marketing Committee  
2007-2008 Annual Report**

The goal of the Marketing Committee is to increase the value of Sonoma County grapes. Our marketing programs must differentiate Sonoma County, its grapes and wines from those produced by other regions in California and elsewhere in the world. This value must be recognized by winery, trade and consumers if we are to increase demand for our grapes.

The Commission has invested in programs to provide growers with tools and information they can use to market their grapes, vineyards and themselves. Web-based tools include the **Grape Marketplace** at [www.sonomawingrape.org](http://www.sonomawingrape.org). Growers can post grapes for sale and grape buyers can post grapes wanted information on the site. The site is being searched by potential grape buyers with nearly 1,400 page views in June 2008 and increasing to over 1,750 page views in July (Figure 1). Growers can also put their vineyards on **The Wine Map**. There is a link to the map from [www.sonomawingrape.org/map](http://www.sonomawingrape.org/map) where growers can register and then add their vineyard information directly to the map. In addition to the online map, printed maps are available for the trade or consumers.

The Grape Marketplace and Wine Map were marketed in print advertising and direct mail to grape buyers. Publications included: *Practical Vineyard and Winery*, *Vineyard and Winery Management*, *Wines and Vines*, and *Wine Business Monthly Magazine* and online. The ads ran from January – August and helped drive people to these websites. **These marketing tools are provided to help growers sell their grapes in a creative way and it's only available for Sonoma and Marin County growers!** We encourage all growers to take advantage of these tools to market their 2009 grapes. Please keep listings current so the Grape Marketplace is an efficient way to source Sonoma County grapes.

**Branding Sonoma County**

The Commission and Sonoma County Vintners worked together to implement the Murray Brand Communications marketing strategy from 2007 for Sonoma County grapes and wines. **Our goal is to develop messages that differentiate Sonoma County and its AVAs from other wine regions.** The distinct AVAs within Sonoma County make Sonoma County unique among wine regions. Murray Brand recommended that we adopt a “**branded house**” approach where Sonoma County serves as an endorsing brand to be used along with the regional brands for our AVAs. We encourage AVA marketing groups and wineries to include Sonoma County along with the AVA name in marketing materials and on wine labels, e.g. Alexander Valley, Sonoma County.

Messaging was developed to differentiate Sonoma County from other wine regions, highlighting our diverse agricultural products and wine regions, proximity to the Pacific Coast, our unparalleled history, friendly personality, and artisan producers. You are seeing that consistent messaging in our advertising programs, print materials and media stories on our region (Figure 2).

**Sonoma County is a million acres of small towns, back roads, pastures and vineyards, major highways, rustic inns and luxury resorts. It all begins across the Golden Gate Bridge, just 30 miles north of San Francisco.**

**Touch the grapes, smell the air, see the vineyards, taste the wine, hear the passion of the people who reach deep into their heritage--more than 200 years of family farms.**

**A country disguised as a county, Sonoma Wine Country is home to the Pacific Coastline, redwood forests, fertile valleys and a variety of distinctive winegrowing regions producing a wide range of exceptional wines.**

**Sonoma County evokes the feeling of wine countries half a world away, with its own unique spirit. It is a land filled with journeys---for a day, a week, or a lifetime.**

The endorsing brand strategy where Sonoma County is used with AVA designations and this messaging have been shared with our AVA's. Consumer research reinforced the validity of this approach. US consumers have heard of or tried Sonoma County wines (99%). Unaided awareness of wine regions within California was 28% or less for Sonoma County AVAs compared to 77% for Sonoma County. These data strongly support using Sonoma County as an endorsing brand along with AVA names. In addition, when consumers were asked if they think Sonoma County is "Wine Country," 92% agreed.

AVA groups have been asked to develop unique messaging that differentiates their AVA from other wine regions and that reinforce the Sonoma County positioning. The Commission Cooperative Marketing Program provides matching dollars for AVA marketing programs that extend the reach of marketing efforts to key media, trade gatekeepers and consumers in order to increase sales of wines over \$20 per bottle. The Commission expects that its core messaging will be incorporated into AVA marketing programs along with the AVA messaging in the next year.

These programs provide the foundation for future marketing programs to promote Sonoma County and its grapes and wines. The Commission's promotional efforts are designed to increase the value of Sonoma County grapes.

### **Marketing Programs**

In addition to the branding and positioning work, the Commission marketing programs that were developed and/or implemented with our marketing partners are summarized below.

### **Ongoing Programs**

- **Sonoma Wine Stars:** This program was developed by the Commission to recognize and acknowledge both Sonoma County restaurants (now expanded to the Bay Area and Sacramento) and wineries that promote Sonoma County wines. For restaurants, we had **20** restaurants that have at least 50% (or 25 wines for restaurants outside the area) of their wine lists containing Sonoma County wines. We also have **34** restaurants that were "Four Star Restaurants" that have 75% (or 50 or more wines for restaurants outside Sonoma County) of their wine lists with Sonoma County wines. We had **38** wineries that had "Sonoma County" on over 95% of their wine labels in addition to AVA and vineyard designations. **This was more than double what we achieved last year.** In 2009, the program will be available for restaurants nationally to participate.
- **Sonoma County Grape Camp September 29-October 1:** In its second year, Grape Camp is a 3-day media and consumer grape camp developed to provide a behind-the-scenes-opportunity to experience the harvest both in our vineyards and in wineries. The campers have become ambassadors for Sonoma County around the country and media coverage of the event

promoted Sonoma County harvest experience locally, nationally and internationally in print and broadcast mediums. The program is a partnership of the Commission, Sonoma County Vintners, Sonoma County Tourism and Relish Culinary School. For 2008, we have filled the goal of 25 campers and 5 top media placements. Last year's camp generated media coverage in Germany, Belgium and *NBC-Chicago, The Wine Enthusiast and Luxury Las Vegas Magazine*. To date, more than 25 parties have expressed interest in the 2009 grape camp.

- **Sonoma in Chicago Harvest Celebration September 8-14:** With the success of the harvest celebration in New York City last year, the Commission organized a program to bring the winegrape harvest to Chicago this year and hold two days of consumer, trade and media events showcasing the 2008 harvest report. It included winegrape tastings with a grape grower, winemaker and chef to speak and prepare meals. Events were conducted at the historic Allerton Hotel on Michigan Avenue. Additionally, a Chicago-based public relations firm was retained to arrange for media participation and interviews. A noted local charity, Common Threads, was selected to be the local benefactor from the consumer events. This year the harvest celebration also included an 11-restaurant *Sonoma in Chicago* promotion and for each Sonoma County wine served during the week, \$3 will be donated to Common Threads. The participants again included grower **Jim Murphy** of Murphy Vineyards, **Joel Peterson** of Ravenswood Winery, **Bruce Riezenman** of Park Avenue Catering. This was created to be an annual event. The events and the wine promotion were successful in meeting their marketing goals. More than 70 people attended two consumer events and 40 trade/media were also hosted. Publicity has, or will be generated, in the *Chicago Tribune, Chicago Sun-Times, Reuters, Forbes.com, North Shore Magazine, Metrolink Chicago, Dow Jones Marketwatch, Timeout Chicago* and several on-line publications.

#### **New Programs:**

- **Grape Marketplace Advertising and Direct Mail:** An aggressive advertising program was created to reach winegrape buyers. Ads ran from January through August in all the major trade publications. Additionally, a direct mail piece was sent to all the winegrape buyers in the early spring. Traffic on the **Grape Marketplace** on our website has increased significantly with this program (see figure 1).
- **Sonoma County Ad Boards in San Francisco Airport and Trolley Cars:** Two attractive and eye-catching Sonoma County billboards were designed and placed in the San Francisco Airport and on 10 trolley cars in San Francisco. Additionally, the Commission's billboard on Highway 101 at the first Petaluma exit going north was redesigned with more vibrant colors and a beautiful cheese and wine photo to highlight the wine and food experiences to be found in Sonoma County.
- **Sonoma and Marin Counties Wine and Cheese Guide:** An intensive Sonoma and Marin Counties Wine and Cheese Guide was developed by the Commission with the cheese expert Laura Werlin. A marketing partnership was created with Cowgirl Creamery that will distribute 30,000 of the brochures in its retail outlets in San Francisco, Washington, D.C. and Petaluma. The brochures are also being distributed to media, trade, wineries and at all events that the Commission, Sonoma County Tourism Bureau and Sonoma County Vintners participate in. It has been very favorably received.
- **Sonoma County Grower's Choice Chocolates:** A partnership with Los Angeles-based Chocolates a la Carte has created a line of 16 premium chocolate truffles infused with wine grapes from Sonoma County's wine growing regions including Chalk Hill, Russian River

Valley, Alexander Valley and Knights Valley. The chocolates sell for \$15 per box and are available on the Commission website. In October, they will be sold nationally in the wine departments of Cost Plus stores. Note: There was no cost to the Commission to develop the chocolates and we receive a royalty for product sold that goes to the vineyard employee education fund.

#### **Tie-in Event Programs:**

- **Pebble Beach Wine and Food Festival, March 29-30:** The Commission participated in this very upscale inaugural event sponsored by *Food & Wine Magazine*. We shared an area with the Russian River Valley Winegrowers and distributed the new Commission materials with the Sonoma County messages.
- **Sonoma in the City, May 22 at the Four Seasons Hotel, San Francisco:** Featured an extensive AVA tasting for top media and trade, a seminar program with both growers and vintners and a tasting from more than 100 Sonoma County wineries. It was produced by the Sonoma County Vintners, the Commission and several AVA groups.
- **Aspen Food and Wine Classic, June 13-15:** The Commission participated in this most prestigious national event sponsored by *Food & Wine Magazine*. We shared an area with the Russian River Valley Winegrowers and we distributed the new Commission materials with the Sonoma County messaging to thousands of people from around the country.
- **Pinot Forum, Russian River Valley, August 10-12:** This year the Commission was a major sponsor of this nationally prestigious educational event that brings 61 top sommeliers to Russian River Valley. As part of our sponsorship, the Sonoma County messaging developed by the Commission was communicated in the Forum print materials, seminars and one of the tastings where all Sonoma County wines and AVAs were included.
- **Sonoma County at State Fair in Sacramento, Aug. 15-21:** the Commission was a sponsor of the county booth to promote Sonoma County at the California State Fair. The booth received a Silver Medal; the highest ever for Sonoma County.
- **The Sonoma County Wine Country Weekend, Aug. 29-31:** This will be bigger and better than ever with the Sonoma County Showcase and Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction joining forces for a Labor Day weekend extravaganza. On Saturday, the Commission sponsored a working grape crush pad and a wine and chocolate station in the wine store. Additionally, the Commission is involved with hosting the more than 40 visiting media that attended the festivities.
- **Sonoma Summit Trade Program (Nov. 11-12):** The Commission is partnering with the Sonoma County Vintners to begin a new 2-day trade seminar on Sonoma County. Full Circle Wine Solutions with master sommelier Evan Goldstein have been retained to assist the organization and production of this program. Thirty five top trade representatives from the United States and Japan will attend. Seminars and tastings will include all the wine growing regions of Sonoma County and there will be direct participation of top growers and vintners. It is hoped that this becomes an annual event to reach this important wine market sector. The annual harvest report will also be held during the Summit and local media and trade will be invited to attend.
- **Food and Wine Chicago Entertaining Showcase, November 17:** The Commission will participate in this very upscale event sponsored by *Food & Wine Magazine*. We will again share an area with the Russian River Valley Winegrowers and distribute the new Commission materials with the Sonoma County messages.

### **AVA Marketing Support Programs:**

The Commission initiated a new program to financially support the marketing efforts of the AVAs. A budget was created where AVAs could apply for matching funds for their marketing programs up to \$25,000 if they incorporated the Sonoma County marketing messages along with their AVA messages. Those receiving matching dollars include the following:

Winegrowers of Dry Creek Valley  
Alexander Valley Winegrowers  
Russian River Valley Winegrowers  
Sonoma Coast  
Green Valley  
Sonoma Carneros (Carneros Wine Alliance)

### **Marketing Tools:**

#### Website

During this year, the Commission has continued to develop and update its website that serves as a resource for buyers of winegrapes and as an educational tool for growers, wine trade, media and consumers. A new “grower/winemaker hub” has been added to the top of the home page to make it easier and faster for growers to access weather and other timely information. The important **Grape Marketplace** has been enhanced and made easier for growers and buyers to use. With an in-house webmaster now, we are able to keep the content up-to-date and timely. It also is a vehicle for trade, media and consumers to obtain current information about Sonoma County vineyards and growers.

#### Newsletter—*Vine Times*

*Vine Times* was created to be the voice of the Commission. It features timely information about Commission activities, along with other information on grape growing issues and wine and grape market trends. This year, an electronic version is being offered as part of our sustainability effort to reduce printing. If you would like to only receive an electronic copy, write [info@sonomawinegrape.org](mailto:info@sonomawinegrape.org) or call 707-522-5864.

#### New Sonoma County Brochure

The popular ***Exploring the Wine Regions of Sonoma County*** has been updated and refreshed with new information and photos.

#### Media Outreach:

An aggressive media outreach program has been implemented about the Commission and its activities. Also Nick Frey and Larry Levine are contacted on a regular basis by media concerning Sonoma County and its winegrapes. During this year, there were a total of 270 local, national and international articles that contained information from the Commission or on the Commission. A sampling of the media included: *The Wine Spectator*, *Wine Enthusiast*, *Wine Business Monthly*, *Wines and Vines*, *Practical Vineyard and Winery*, *Vineyard and Winery Management*, *USA Today*, *Boston Herald*, *Washington Post*,

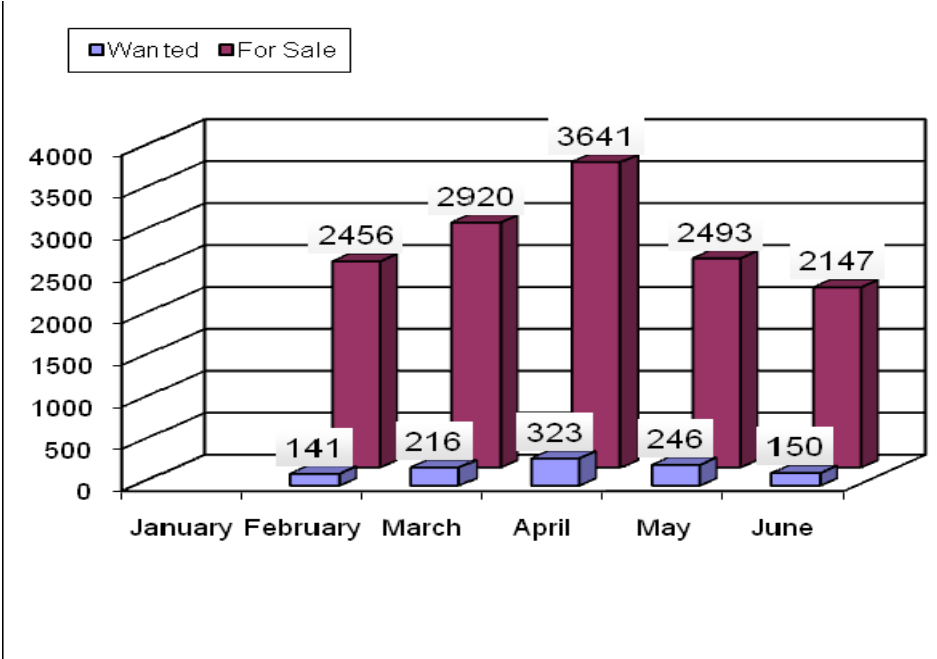
*Associated Press, San Francisco Chronicle, Financial Times England, Forbes online and Businessweek online.* There was also broadcast coverage from all bay area television stations and the major radio news stations.

**Success Measures:**

The Marketing Committee has created success measures to assess the value of Commission marketing programs. Those measures include:

- Consumer Research – the 2007 research provides a baseline for future research to measure changes in consumer awareness and trial of wines from Sonoma County and its AVAs relative to other wine regions in the US and internationally.
- Relative changes in grape prices and tonnage by variety from the *CA Grape Crush Report* and other sources compared to other regions in California.
- Media tracking of the quantity, reach and quality of stories on Sonoma County, its grapes and wines.
- Cooperative Marketing programs that provide matching dollars require that AVAs establish and report on success measures for their marketing programs.
- Increase the number of Sonoma County Wine Stars.
- Attendance and media coverage at SCWC-sponsored events.
- Website statistics on unique visits, page views and downloads.

Figure 1. Grape Marketplace page views at [www.sonomawinegrape.org](http://www.sonomawinegrape.org).



**Sonoma County Winegrape Commission**

Figure 2 Marketing materials to promote Sonoma County grapes, wines and the American Viticulture Areas within the county.



GRAPE DIRECT-MAIL PIECE

**Need Grapes?**

Find what you need in Sonoma County—  
60,000 acres of growing possibilities

Over 60 varieties—  
Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon,  
Chardonnay, Zinfandel and more.

With its diverse soils, Sonoma County  
has the soil, terroir, location and climate  
to produce a variety of wine-grade grapes  
for world-class wines. At no one else's  
commercial county.

Get the Sonoma County Winegrape  
Commission's new interactive sourcing  
map, when you need growing, vineyard  
planted information.

You'll find online by the way. Literally.  
Just visit [sonomawinegrape.org](http://sonomawinegrape.org).

**Coming soon!**  
Look for our new  
interactive sourcing  
sourcing map, coming  
in February 2008.

**Sonoma & County**  
WINEGRAPE COMMISSION

**Need Grapes?**  
Find Sonoma County's best grapes  
with our new interactive wine country map.

**Grapes on demand**  
You know the routine. Traveling from  
wheeler to wheeler in search of just the  
right wine grapes to buy, collecting bottles,  
and documents, maps and data, putting  
a lot of miles on your car—and you...  
It's time to put down the car keys, and save  
time, gas and money with an interactive  
wine map made just for your needs.

Find the right grapes in the right location,  
plus soil and climate conditions and other  
critical information—all your information  
at your convenience, anytime, day or night.

Go visit us today!  
[sonomawinegrape.org/map](http://sonomawinegrape.org/map)

**Sonoma & County**  
WINEGRAPE COMMISSION

TRADE ADS

**Sonoma Wine Country**  
*(Now appearing on Michigan Avenue)*

**September 8 – 14**  
**Sonoma in Chicago Harvest Celebration**  
 A showcase of Sonoma County's finest wines & food

**EXPERIENCE THE HARVEST—TASTE WINEGRAPES FRESH FROM SONOMA**

<b>Taste of Sonoma Seminar</b> September 10 The Allerton Hotel	<b>Sonoma Harvest Feast Dinner</b> September 11 The Allerton Hotel
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For event details, menus and wines, visit [SonomaInChicago.com](http://SonomaInChicago.com)

**EMBRACE THE TASTE ALL WEEK AT THESE TOP RESTAURANTS**

Custom House Frontiers Grill Green Zebra Le Lan	Les Nomades Lula Café M Avenue Shaw's Crab House	Spring Table Fifty-Two Topolobampo
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**SPREAD AND SUPPORT**  
 For each bottle of Sonoma County wine purchased at any of the above restaurants, \$3 will be donated to **Common Threads**

[www.sonomawinegrape.org](http://www.sonomawinegrape.org)

SONOMA IN CHICAGO AD

**SONOMA COUNTY**  
**WINE REGIONS**  
 FROM WINE AND FOOD LOVERS WORLDWIDE

**what's your pleasure?**

A rare variety of vineyards & farms, landscapes & lifestyles. Let nature & local wine-making traditions form the perfect pair.

A wide spectrum of winegrowing regions, producing varieties from French Chardonnay to Cabernet. From Pinot Noir to Zinfandel.

A land filled with remarkable journeys. No trip is ever so ordinary.

Start your adventure [www.SonomaWineGrape.org](http://www.SonomaWineGrape.org)

**SONOMA COUNTY**  
**WINE REGIONS**  
 A MILLION ACRES OF GROWING POSSIBILITIES

**a country disguised as a county**

An expansive array of natural and distinctive growing regions, including farms, farms and urban vineyards.

Best growing locations for wine grapes of all types, from cool coastal climates to those closest to hot valleys.

Home to world-class wines for every taste, including world-winning Chardonnay, Cabernet, Pinot Noir, Zinfandel and more.

Explore the possibilities [www.SonomaWineGrape.org](http://www.SonomaWineGrape.org)

**SONOMA COUNTY**  
**WINE REGIONS**  
 A SUSTAINABLE REGION

**we're always thinking ahead**

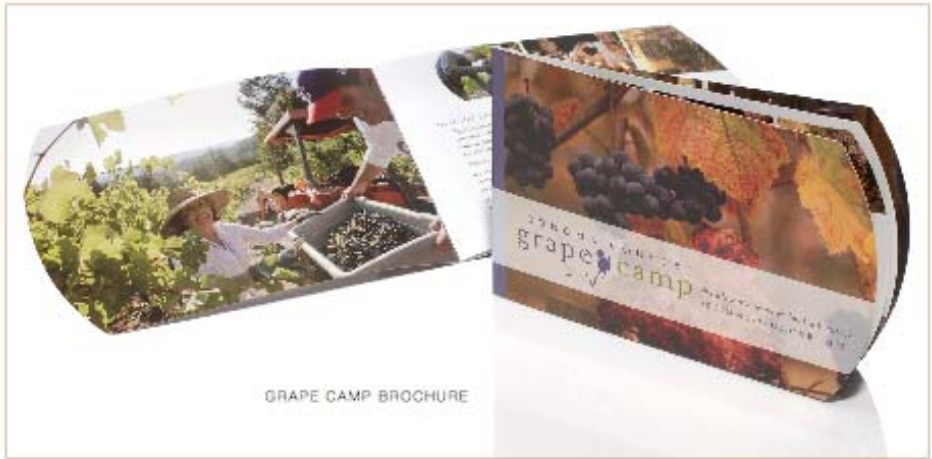
A leader in sustainable winegrowing, with over 200 grape growers participating in the California Code of Sustainable Winegrowing Practices.

Consistently recognized for leadership in sustainable winegrowing, high quality wines for every taste.

The perfect blend of innovation and tradition, coupled with modern techniques to ensure sustainable growth for generations to come.

See it all today [www.SonomaWineGrape.org](http://www.SonomaWineGrape.org)

TRADE BOOTH PANELS





BILLBOARD



SFO AIRPORT DIORAMA



WINE & CHEESE BROCHURE

**Sonoma County Winegrape Commission  
Grower and Community Outreach Committee  
2007 – 2008 Annual Report**

**The primary objectives of the Grower and Community Outreach Committee are to:**

- Provide grape growers with timely information important to their business
  - Sponsor events that provide growers information on grape marketing, business issues, and market conditions
  - Maintain communications with growers
- Educate community leaders, government regulators, and other government officials about issues important to grape growers
- Recognize Commission Sponsors for their financial support at SCWC events, on the website and in the newsletter
- Interface with wineries to help them obtain Sonoma and Marin County grapes and to assist them in collection of grower assessments

Sustainable grape growing includes being economically viable. Clearly, that requires more knowledge than merely how to grow grapes. The Grower and Community Outreach Committee provides growers with information on grape and wine markets, on how to better market their grapes and on new regulatory requirements that will impact their business. Dollars and \$ense seminar and tradeshow in January, the June Barbeque and Tradeshow and evening seminars on grape marketing are all designed to provide growers with information that allows them to make better business decisions that will increase their profitability. The quarterly *Vine Times* newsletter is mailed to over 3000 growers and wineries and keeps readers informed of Commission activities and news important to growers. Weekly e-mail messages insure growers receive information in a timely manner. If we do not have your e-mail address, send a message to [info@sonomawinegrape.org](mailto:info@sonomawinegrape.org) so that you receive these timely communications.

The Committee also represents grower interests with local, state and national governments. The Commission actively participated in the General Plan 2020 update as it worked through final revisions before approval by the Supervisors. The Commission has also represented grower interests on the Salmon Coalition, which is seeking a consultation with National Marine Fisheries for cooperative conservation programs for salmon and steelhead recovery such that landowners would have greater regulatory clarity and potentially incidental take protection under the Endangered Species Act. The Commission hosted government employees and elected officials at a Community Leader Tour in Dry Creek Valley. The tour and lunch highlighted the impacts of frost on growers as well as the work of the Salmon Coalition to restore salmon and steelhead habitat and to secure water rights for off-stream diversions.

In addition, the Commission hosted evening seminars, including Smart Marketer Workshops with the California Association of Winegrape Growers, to share grape marketing and business tactics and to provide market information important to growers. Monthly midday programs for Small Growers and Winemakers provides networking opportunities for small growers and winemakers. Vineyard Manager Breakfasts are offered to keep vineyard managers current on key topics such as new products or important labor related issues. Contact Ginger Baker for information on these programs at [info@sonomawinegrape.org](mailto:info@sonomawinegrape.org) or 707-522-5864.

The Commission greatly appreciates our Commission Sponsors who invest in Commission programs to support their grower customers. Their contributions leverage grower dollars to increase our marketing and grower education efforts. Patronize our Commission Sponsor businesses when you need products and services for your vineyard operations. They can be found in the Sponsor section of [www.sonomawinegrape.org](http://www.sonomawinegrape.org).

We also appreciate the support our wineries provide the Commission. We want your winery customers to achieve market success with wines produced from Sonoma and Marin County grapes. We also want to assist them in locating Sonoma and Marin County grapes to meet their production needs. The Grape Marketplace on our website provides listings of grapes currently for sale as well as grapes and bulk wine being sought by wineries. It is important for growers to keep their information current and remove grapes that go into contract so that wineries can efficiently contact only growers with grapes for sale. If you have grapes to list for the 2009 harvest, contact Ginger Baker at [info@sonomawinegrape.org](mailto:info@sonomawinegrape.org) or 707-522-2864.

We also appreciate the support our wineries provide by collecting grower assessments and forwarding those to the Commission. Those winery efforts allow us to focus on promoting Sonoma County and its grapes and wines for the benefit of growers and their winery customers.

The Commission is here to serve **all growers** in Sonoma and Marin Counties. We want you to take pride in being a winegrape grower. And we want to provide information important to your grape growing success. Thank you for your support of the Commission and its programs.

### **Sonoma County Winegrape Commission Sustainable Practices Committee 2007 – 2008 Annual Report**

The Sustainable Practices Committee develops programs for all grape growers in Sonoma and Marin Counties to help them improve the sustainability of their farming operations. Those programs include Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and Organic Producer Group grower meetings and Pest Control Advisor (PCA) Breakfast meetings during the summer, an IPM and Organic Field Day in August, and an annual Erosion Control Workshop. In addition, the committee oversees the Employee Development Program for our vineyard employees and the annual Sonoma County Pruning Contests. The committee has also collaborated with the Agricultural Commissioner by conducting exotic pest trapping programs for Glassy Winged Sharpshooter and in 2008, Western Grape Leaf Skeletonizer.

Sonoma County grape grower participation in the Code of Sustainable Winegrape Growing program now totals 341 organizations since the program began in October 2002. Of those 271 growers submitted assessment data on 26,416 acres or 43% of the county's total for inclusion in the statewide Sustainability Report. Sonoma County has been a leader in promoting sustainable farming practices through self-assessment workshops and through ongoing targeted education. And in today's consumer market, sustainability is an expectation. The Code is also easily adapted to address emerging issues. Most recently a chapter on Air Quality was added to address new requirements for air quality improvement. Public concerns about climate change and California's recent passage of AB32 mandating reduced emissions are requiring industries to assess their carbon footprint and seek ways to reduce it. Wine Institute and the California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance are developing a standard wine industry tool for grape growers or wineries to use to assess their greenhouse gas footprints.

Grower participation at IPM meetings in 2008 totaled 385, with 96 new growers participating. These meetings allow growers to share their vineyard experiences and learn about new IPM approaches. In addition they provide a venue for timely topics, such as water conservation strategies to achieve necessary water conservation in the Russian River watershed. A special thank you goes to Laura Breyer who leads these meetings each month; our vineyard hosts, Gallo Family Vineyards' Laguna Ranch, Mel and Angela Dagovitz's Barricia Vineyard, Rued Vineyards and Jordan Vineyards; and the California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance who provides partial financial support. The August IPM and Organic Field Day was attended by 150 growers in August 2007.

The Organic Producer Group meetings were attended by 197 growers, 65 of whom were new attendees in 2008. We thank our hosts, Kaz Vineyard and Winery, Lentz Polesky Vineyards, St. Mark's Vineyard and Puma Springs Vineyard. Weed identification and control were emphases this year and several tillage implements were demonstrated for the group.

The Employee Development Program teaches vineyard employees about viticulture and why vineyard practices are done to produce high quality winegrapes. The objective is to attract and retain vineyard employees to agriculture careers. Attendance in 2007/2008 totaled 592. This program is open to any vineyard employee in Sonoma or Marin Counties. Advanced classes were implemented in 2008 in order to provide in-depth training for key vineyard employees. A computer /internet class was held for the first time to introduce vineyard employees to the information available on the internet that is important to their work.

The Sonoma County Pruning Contest provides vineyard employees the opportunity to showcase their pruning skills, and the contests reinforce the importance of pruning as a critical first step in quality grape production. Seventy-eight vineyard employees competed in five regional contests, with the top two pruners for each region competing in the Sonoma County Pruning Championship. We thank our pruning contest sponsors who generously support these contests, providing cash prizes and other gifts to the contestants. The Sonoma County Pruning Championship also is part of our marketing program for Sonoma County grape growers. The 2007 event received national press coverage with a feature article and photos in the *New York Times*. The 2008 contest was covered by Bay Area TV and Univision. This event was the kickoff to Sonoma in Spring countywide promotional events by Sonoma County Vintners, Sonoma County Tourism Bureau, Sonoma County Winegrape Commission, and the Artisan Cheese Festival.

If Sonoma County is to maintain its position as a top wine producing region in the world, growers must continually improve their winegrape production practices to increase quality of our grapes for winemakers and to meet consumer expectations for sustainable production. All growers are encouraged to participate in these Sustainable Practices programs and events.