



GRAPE PRESS

June 2019

info@mendowine.com | 707.901.7629



Of the 70 wines tasted, these 6 were selected to represent Mendocino County.

Mendocino Wines Rock Whole Foods Market

It all started with a blind email from Whole Foods Market (WFM) Wine Buyer Melanie Mann inquiring about Mendocino wines for a WFM promotion. Were we interested and could MWI help facilitate the program?

Needless to say...this is totally in line with MWI's mission "to promote the quality and image of Mendocino County grapes and wine with three target audiences: 1) decision makers who buy grapes, 2) press and trade groups who write about, sell, or recommend wine, and 3) consumers who buy wine." And, a few short months later, over 2000 cases of Mendocino wines were sold thru 44 stores in Northern CA and Reno!

The process was very straightforward and expedient. We sent an email to all MWI winery members who produce wine in Mendocino County detailing the specific requirements that WFM outlined for wines to be considered (quantity and distribution). There were of course some obligations for MWI: coordinating the wine tasting to evaluate the wines, helping to underwrite the instore demo program, and development of promotional materials.

In short order Melanie was here to taste through no less than 70 wines that were submitted for consideration. It was a big day! Melanie narrowed the field to just 10 wines, and then ultimately 6 wines to be included

in this 60-day program (March – April) for a Mendocino promotion in 44 WFM stores in Northern California and Reno.

Here are Melanie's reflections:

"Six months ago, I googled 'Mendocino Wine' and the first site to pop up (after the inevitable Total Wine!) was Mendowine.com. I sent an email to info@mendowine.com and from there, a 2000+ case, \$300,000 + promotion was executed, in less than 90 days.

Mendocino Winegrowers was everything I had hoped for in a marketing and planning partner and then some: enthusiastic, progressive, organized, patient, generous with time and resources, and knowledgeable in all things Mendocino. I never once heard "I can't" or "I'm sorry I forgot to..." from Bernadette or any of the amazing wineries I worked with. In fact, the bar was set so high, I'm not sure we'll be able to continue with the AVA program, as we are beginning to think Mendocino

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Theodora Lee of Theopolis enjoying the instore Whole Foods Market demos.

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Economic Summit & Trade Show

MWI hosted an Economic Summit and Trade Show on May 9th at the Redwood Empire Fairgrounds in Ukiah. This was the biggest wine business trade show ever in Mendocino County, featuring well over \$1.5 million worth of farming equipment with a huge display of harvesters and tractors from Belcorp Ag, Noble Custom Harvesting and Garton Tractor. Solectrac was a popular vendor with their electric tractor.

The Economic Summit featured a "The State of the Mendocino Grape Market" presentation by Glenn Proctor of Ciatti Company, and Chad Clark of Allied Grape Growers. How to adapt to the new market reality? Adjust your expectations. Strengthen your relationships with your winery buyers. Manage inputs and assets for profitability...short term and long term.

The current grape marketplace is challenging. Lise Asimont, currently Director of Vineyard Operations for Cakebread Cellars and previously Director of Grower Relations with Francis Ford Coppola Winery gave sage advice on how to differentiate your grapes in this very competitive market. Some ideas: reposition yourself in quality, be the noise to the winery you want to sell to, think sustainability, vineyard designation and conjunctive labeling.

Trucking is a major concern for grape growers. G3 Enterprises Yvonne Sams spoke about current challenges and upcoming regulations involved in transporting grapes. What might be ahead grape hauling? Driverless trucks! Yvonne presented some ideas that might help deal with upcoming regulations and a shortage of drivers.

Labor issues and how to save money on farming costs are always hot topics. Vineyard mechanization is one solution and industry experts to spoke about the newest technology. What is around the corner for farming? Innovation equals automation!

Water is a critical resource for our industry. Janet Pauli of the Mendocino County Inland Water and Power Commission will give an update on the status of the Potter Valley Project. How do we secure the future of water for our inland growers?

If you were not able to attend...all the presentations are available online at mendowine.com/events.



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Conjunctive Labeling Proposal Needs Your Vote!

All Mendocino County growers and vintners will receive ballots this July asking them to vote to approve or reject conjunctive labeling for our County. Ballots will be collected and tallied by the CPA firm Wipfli (formerly Price Waterman). If the community votes in favor of conjunctive labeling, MWI will then initiate the legislative process for implementing conjunctive labeling in Mendocino County. The MWI Board encourages you to take time to vote on this important issue.

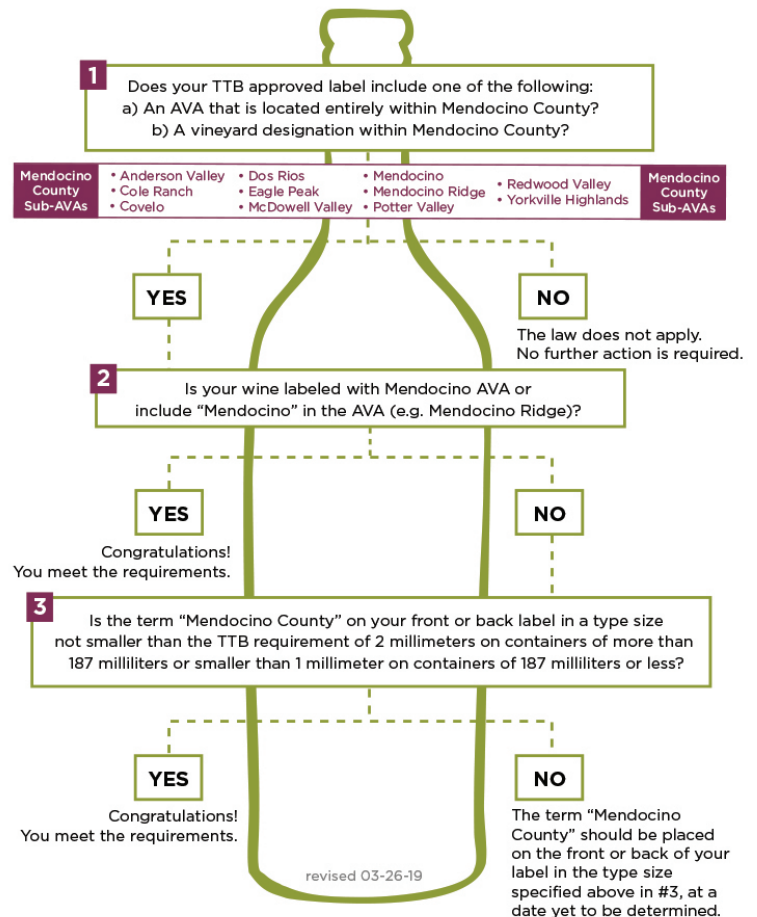
To recap our efforts, the MWI Board of Directors began exploring the potential value of conjunctive labeling (CL) for Mendocino County about a year and a half ago. The Board held several community meetings with stakeholders during the summer of 2018 to assess interest and listened to concerns relating to CL for our County.

In an effort to address the community's concerns, the MWI developed and/or shared educational materials that specifically targeted the areas of concern. Those materials continue to be available as pdf files to anyone that might be interested. Please contact our office at 707-901-7629, visit our website or email info@mendowine.com if you would like to see those materials.

This past November, MWI hosted a symposium on CL which was held at the Ukiah Valley Conference Center. We brought in wine business researchers from Sonoma State, a marketing research firm, a lawyer familiar with TTB/ABC regulations, and individuals who have direct experience with CL in other regions (Sonoma and Monterey). We asked them to share their findings with the audience regarding the pros and cons of CL.

After the symposium, the Board continued to solicit thoughts and concerns about the proposal from wineries and growers in the County. As a result of our outreach and the feedback we received (including letters of support from Mendocino County Farm Bureau, Destination Hopland, Visit Mendocino County and the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors) the MWI Board unanimously agreed on April 2 to submit the CL proposal to a vote by the Mendocino County wine and grape growing community. Ballots will go out in July and the MWI Board urges you to take the time to vote on this important issue.

As always, the Board remains interested in your thoughts on conjunctive labeling. Are you in favor of it? Still on the fence? Opposed? Do you still have unanswered questions? Please contact us with questions, concerns or support: info@mendowine.com or 707-901-7629.



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will be forever unmatched, a singular triumph of 6 wines in the right stores at the right prices. And yet, experience tells me it is more than just providence that made the Mendocino AVA program such a success at Whole Foods Market; this AVA is generations in the making. The consumer's willingness to embrace the wines didn't happen solely because we put them out there, but because the marketing, storytelling, and excellence in winemaking here were waiting to burst forth like a volcano.

Hitting all marks for transparency, lower alcohols, higher acid, amazing price points, and family farming, the inherent values of Mendocino are aligned with what many wine drinkers are seeking - wines with intent, purpose, and integrity.

I believe that Mendocino Winegrowers is one of the finest marketing organizations in the world; in fact, I know it is. All members should be aware and proud of the fine reputation Mendocino wines have, and I will continue to encourage and support Mendocino wines for the rest of my life."

- Melanie Mann, Whole Foods Market Regional Wine Buyer for Northern California and Reno

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TASTE Mendocino 2019

The annual Taste of Mendocino was held on April 27 at Fort Mason Center for the Arts and Culture in San Francisco and featured an extensive tasting of wines sourced from vineyards throughout Mendocino County. MWI partnered with Visit Mendocino and created a new more modern Mendo vibe with the rebranded name Taste Mendocino.

This year's format broke the tasting into two sessions with the early session an opportunity for members of the trade and media to taste through the wines before the public arrived. More than 100 attended the morning session and by all accounts the attendees and the exhibitors were thrilled with the attention and the turn out.


As the hour for the general public to enter approached a line of enthusiastic guests lined the walk in front of the entrance. By the end of the day more than 200 ticket buyers had happily sampled their way through the event.

Taste Mendocino is a unique event meant to showcase the best of Mendocino County, bringing together not only wineries but representatives from many other businesses as well. This year's event featured 31 wineries plus Gowan's Heirloom Cider and Tamar Distillery. Red Tail Ale was back and the perfect table mate with the new Hopland Tap & Grill. A few destination properties such as Heritage House, Little River Inn, Noyo Harbor Inn and the Madrones wowed the crowd with chef created small bites. Black Oak Coffee was on hand to offer guests a chance to sip their fine brews while Old Chatham Ranch provided tasty samples of their estate grown olive oil. A local's favorite, Crush Ukiah made the trip to SF to join us and served up some delicious bruschetta that paired perfectly with the Italian varietals being poured nearby. MWI was pleased to have Chef Nicholas Petti participate with Mendocino College's Culinary Arts Program students who served an outstanding bison slider with meat sponsored by JS Bison Ranch. Attendees lined up to have a sweet bite to finish the day at Kemmy's Pies.

Radio station KOZT promoted Taste Mendocino for the weeks leading up to the event and was on site to meet and greet local listeners and support the Mendocino winegrowing community.



Taste Mendocino is more than just a wine tasting event - it has been "designed to evoke the spirit of our county, and to highlight the enthusiasm of its winemakers, artisans, hoteliers, farmers, and personalities." As always, the event was a terrific showcase for the diversity of our beautiful region with the intent to lure Bay Area residents to "Visit Mendocino County"!

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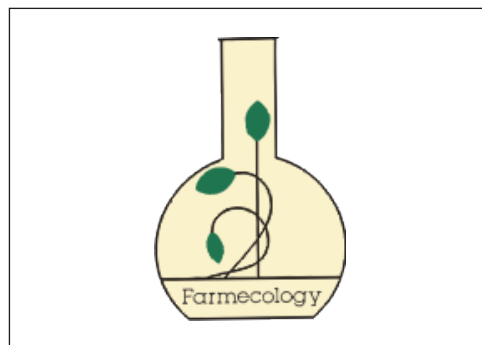
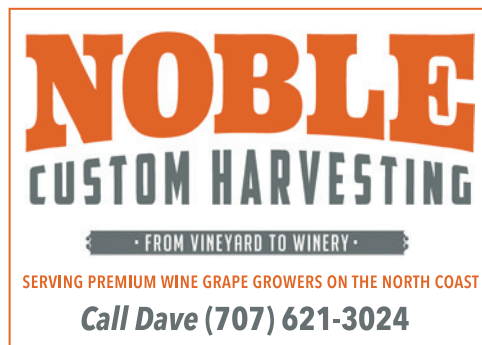
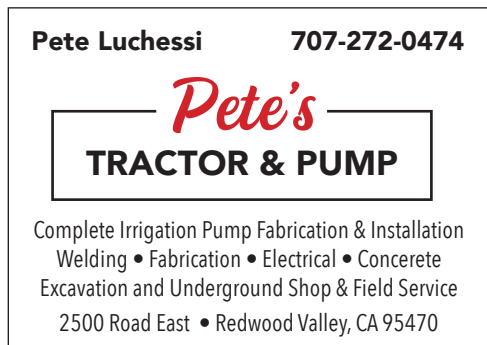
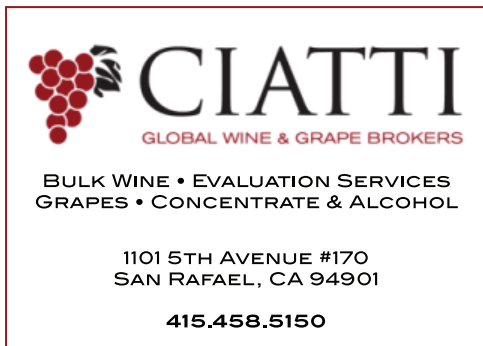
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MWI's New Website



One of the highlights of the summer will be the launch of our new MWI website, designed and built by associate member Brandhound Marketing. The new mobile-friendly site features an expanded and enhanced member directory, beautiful photography, wine and grape marketplace, and lots of useful resources for the trade, members and consumers.



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Call for Entries!

41st Annual Mendocino County Fair Wine Competition

Enter your wines in the 41st Annual Mendocino County Fair Wine Competition - join the long list of famed wineries who have submitted their wines for evaluation by professional wine buyers and judges. New judges this year - Melanie Mann / Wine Buyer for Whole Foods Market, Kristina Spencer-Kessler / Wine Buyer for Cost Plus World Market, Elaine Chuckan Brown / wine writer, and Michael Cervin / wine writer.

The 2019 Competition will be held on Friday, August 2nd at the Mendocino County Fairgrounds in Boonville. All competition details including rules, categories and deadlines (July 17th for receiving entries at Brutocao Cellars - Philo) are located online at mendowine.com/events.

Mendocino County Fair Wine Competition Awards Reception

Friday, August 2, 2019

Roederer Estate

5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Join the Mendocino wine community and choose from over 200 wines to taste as we celebrate the winners of this year's competition. In addition to the myriad of wines (bring a designated driver!), enjoy a sumptuous and abundant appetizer buffet created by local favorites Croux & Co. All Best of Show and Best of Class winners will be revealed and announced. All in all, it will be the perfect summer evening, enhanced by gorgeous views overlooking the vineyards from the beautiful terraces of Roederer Estate. Tickets are \$35 per person. Purchase tickets online at mendowine.com/events.



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Technical Tasting

Pinot Noir & Mediterranean Varietals

2019 started out strong with two technical tastings set in the first quarter of the year. The first tasting topic in March was Pinot Noir. We were lucky enough to have Sommelier Chris Sawyer lead us through some of the best Pinot Noir from Burgundy, Oregon, and appellations across California. Our local Mendocino winemaker panel impressed everybody with wines that easily rivalled the quality of the wines from and the other regions.

Our second tasting in April consisted of Mediterranean varietals from Arneis, Aglianico, and Prim-

itivo to Grenache, Syrah, and Viognier. We had more than 15 winemakers pouring and discussing their own wines which were grown from areas all over the county. Our ability to showcase wines from across the world in comparison to our own local wines is an incredible learning experience and is only made possible with your continued support.

Looking forward to more exciting topics (sparkling or red blends...) in 2020!



Mendocino WineGrowers, Inc.
390 West Standley Street
Ukiah, CA 95482

SAVE THE DATE

June 15 & 16: TASTE OF REDWOOD VALLEY - Wine & Whiskey

Taste of Redwood Valley is a group of wineries and distilleries that get together to host fun events every year in the beautiful Redwood Valley area right off HWY 101!

July 17: MENDO MIXER @ TESTA VINEYARDS

Mendocino County Farm Bureau and MWI are teaming up to bring you fun, social and educational events! Great food, great wine, some education and great fun!

July 20 & 21: ANDERSON VALLEY BARREL TASTING

Unprecedented access to winery cellars, taste yet-to-be-released wines, and purchase futures of your favorites at a special barrel tasting weekend price! Explore the area, discover new wineries, and enjoy a beautiful summer weekend in the Anderson Valley. Visit avwines.com for more info.

August 2: MENDOCINO COUNTY WINE COMPETITION AWARDS RECEPTION @ ROEDERER ESTATES

Join the Mendocino wine community and choose from over 200 wines to taste as we celebrate the winners of this year's competition. An abundant appetizer spread will only enhance the evening on the beautiful terrace at Roederer Estates.

September 6 & 7: WINESONG

Celebrating 35 years! Friday afternoon celebrate pinot noir at Little River Inn, and Saturday stroll through the lush Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens while enjoying vintages poured by world-class wineries. Tickets at winesong.org

September 13 - 16: MENDOCINO COUNTY FAIR - Boonville

Taste Gold Medal winning wines from the 41st Annual Mendocino County Fair Wine Competition. More information available at mendocountyfair.com

For details about these events see the MWI calendar at mendowine.com