



LODI RULES! PRESS CONFERENCE Honors First Certified Sustainable Growers

The first California Vineyards to achieve certification in the Lodi Rules for Sustainable Winegrowing were recognized January 17, 2006 during a press conference on the program. The *Lodi Rules* are California's first set of appellation-wide sustainable viticulture standards. These standards have been peer reviewed by scientists, academics and environmentalists, and are endorsed by Protected Harvest, a non-profit organization that independently certifies farmers' use of stringent environmental growing standards.

Honored during the event were Robert Pirie, Colligere Farm Management; Joe Dexter, Lobo Loco Wines; Bruce and Jerry Fry, Mohr-Fry Ranches; Robert Abercrombie, Sutter Home Family Vineyards, John Ledbetter and Kim Ledbetter Bronson, Vino Farms; and Keith Watts, Watts Family Vineyards. "I would like to congratulate the winegrowers who are being certified by Protected Harvest," said Erik Olson, Protected Harvest Board member and Senior Attorney with the Natural Resources Defense Council. "I am proud to be associated with the Lodi program which represents real environmental progress."

Over 75 industry members and wine media were on hand at the press conference to hear remarks from Art Baggett, Board Member, California State Water Quality Control Board; Mary-Ann Warmerdam, Director, California Department of Pesticide Regulation; Undersecretary A. J. Yates, California Department of Food and Agriculture; Kathy Taylor, Associate Director Agriculture Program, US EPA Region 9; Carolyn Brickey, Executive Director, Protected Harvest; Cliff Ohmart, Research/IPM Director Lodi-Woodbridge Winegrape Commission; and Mark Chandler, Executive Director, Lodi Woodbridge Winegrape Commission.

This innovative program caught the attention of various publications on both the trade and consumer side of the industry. Feature articles in *Practical Winery and Vineyard*, *Ag Alert*, *Wine Business Online*, *California Farm Bureau - Food & Farm News* and *Central Valley Business Times* raised awareness of the program within the trade. Articles in the *Lodi News Sentinel*, *Stockton Record*, *Taste California Travel*, and many other publications are helping to educate consumers about this program and what to expect in the future as wine is made with these grapes. The Lodi - Woodbridge Winegrape Commission booth at the Unified Symposium was also abuzz with Lodi Rules! questions and requests for Lodi Rules! stickers.

If you would like more information on the program please contact Cliff Ohmart or Chris Storm at the commission (209) 367-4727.

INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCES SEEK OUT LODI WINES

The Lodi Wine and Visitor Center welcomed two international audiences during the first week of April, as three local vintners took off to Costa Rica on a sales mission.

Russian Buyers Visit Lodi On a buying trip sponsored by Wine Institute fifteen of Russia's leading wine retailers toured the wine center, followed by a tasting of a wide variety of Lodi wines. On hand for the pouring were Delicato Vineyards, Jewel Wines, Campus Oaks, Ironstone, Lobo Loco, LangeTwins, and Michael-David Vineyards. Following the tasting the group toured Van Ruiten Winery and Talus Cellars. The buyers thought highly of the wines and felt that there was certainly a market for them in Russia.

Chinese Government Studies Lodi Model Ag Commissioner Scott Hudson brought a delegation of twenty-two Chinese provincial government leaders to tour the Wine Center and learn about Lodi wine and grapes. The group was interested in the public-private partnerships that the Winegrape Commission has forged, and wanted to learn more about how we've utilized federal, state, and private grants to develop our Sustainable Viticulture program.

Lodi Wineries in Costa Rica The three wineries venturing off to foreign lands were represented by Antonio Pasos of Pasos Wines, Craig and Sherry Watts of Watts Winery and Tim and Lani Holdener of Macchia Wines. A major tasting with wine trade and media in Costa Rica was arranged by Lodi grower Frank Gayaldo, who has business interests in Costa Rica. In addition to the sales opportunity the Costa Ricans are interested in emulating the Winegrape Commission's strategies to promote Costa Rican coffee. Late word is that Lodi wines will be poured at the inauguration of recently elected Costa Rica President Oscar Arias on May 8th. *Kudos!*