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SIERRA FOOTHILLS WINERY ASSOCIATION

POST OFFICE BOX 425, SOMERSET, CALIFORNIA 95684

July 8, 1985

Director, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms
Wine and Beer Branch, Room 6237
Department of the Treasury, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20226

Dear Sir:

The Sierra Foothills Winery Association requests that the Sierra Foothills be established as a viticultural area in accordance with the provisions of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 4.25. This proposed viticultural area includes portions of the counties of Nevada, Placer, El Dorado, Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, and Mariposa. The Sierra Foothills have been associated with viticulture since the California gold rush.

The area consists of roughly 2.6 million acres, or over 4000 square miles. It extends 150 miles in length from north to south and ranges from about 20 to 30 miles in width. Approximately 2,574 acres (4 square miles) are devoted to viticulture. Within the boundaries are 33 bonded wineries and 1 bonded wine cellar, and about 150 vineyards. Three approved viticultural areas are included: Fiddletown, California Shenandoah Valley, and El Dorado.

Major reasons why the Sierra Foothills are distinguished from other areas include: (1) the region is commonly referred to as the Sierra Foothills both in general literature and in wine/viticultural publications; (2) botanically the area is defined as the Upper Sonoran zone, characterized by pine-oak woodland and chaparral vegetation; (3) the area is part of the Sierra Nevada geomorphic province, with different geology and soils than the Great (Central) Valley province; (4) climatically the area has warm summer days and cool nights, with lower temperatures and higher rainfall than the Central Valley.

The attached pages contain information to support our petition for the establishment of the Sierra Foothills viticultural area.

Sincerely,

Lawrence L Cobb

Lawrence L. Cobb
President

1. Evidence that the name of the viticultural area is locally and/or nationally known as referring to the area specified in this application.

The names "Sierra Nevada" and "Sierra Foothills" have been used since 1776 when the Spanish missionary Pedro Font first located and named on a map the mountains he referred to as "una gran sierra nevada," a great snowy range. (Farquhar, p. 15) The term Sierra Foothills refers to that portion of the western slope of the Sierra Nevada rising above the Central Valley to the 4,000-5,000 foot elevation. By 1849 the Sierra Foothills had become nationally known as the site of the California Gold Rush.

References to the Sierra Foothills appear in countless books and descriptive literature. The following are a few selected examples from a variety of sources showing that the Sierra Foothills are both locally and nationally known.

In his book Wines of America, Leon Adams refers to the new vineyards and wineries in the "historic Mother Lode gold-mining country of the Sierra foothills." (Adams, p. 298)

Sunset's Guide to California's Wine Country discusses the Sierra Foothills:

> Vineyards and wineries in the Mother Lode country have established an identity of their own under the general district name of Sierra Foothills. . .Zinfandel from this region has enjoyed fame in every era of California wine making. Vines never have disappeared from the region altogether, and now they are perhaps at the zenith. (Sunset, p. 130)

Numerous newspaper articles use the term Sierra Foothills. For example, the Santa Cruz Sentinel carried a column entitled "Winners From Sierra Foothills," describing the Amador County Fair's first Sierra Foothills Commercial Wine competition in 1980:

> That initial success has led to considerable vineyard and winery expansion not only in Amador County but throughout what has become known as "Sierra Foothills Wine Country." (Mead)

A Sacramento Bee article called "Grapes: New Lure for Foothill Prospectors" refers to the Sierra Foothills and discusses the foothill wine country. (Dunne)

Many maps, newsletters, and publications geared to wine drinkers and persons interested in wineries and viticulture utilize the term Sierra Foothills and delineate the Sierra Foothills as a viticultural region. The Wine Spectator's Wine Maps, a guide to the California wine country by region, headlines one of its sections "Sierra Foothills." The 1983 Complete California Wine Maps & Directory (Sally Taylor & Friends) also defines the Sierra Foothills as a distinct region.

An article on top regional wines in the Wine & Spirits Buying Guide has a specific section on the Sierra Foothills, mentioning that it "has been a wine region since the middle of the 19th century." Wine West's article entitled "Wine-Rush in the Sierra Foothills" discusses in depth the area as a distinct viticultural region. A recent issue of Wine Trails includes a section on the Sierra Foothills, noting that the foothills "have been producing winegrapes for more than a century."

Although the historical term "Mother Lode" is sometimes used synonymously with the Sierra Foothills, the latter is the proposed appellation because it more accurately defines the area. It is a geographical term in keeping with the names of other approved and pending viticultural area appellations. Additionally, Sierra Foothills is the term most frequently used in connection with viticultural areas.

Samples of articles referring to the area as Sierra Foothills are shown in Appendix A.

2. Historical or current evidence that the boundaries of the viticultural area are as specified in the petition.

The proposed Sierra Foothills viticultural area includes those portions of Nevada, Placer, El Dorado, Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, and Mariposa counties lying between 1,000 and 4,000 feet with the additional inclusions of Jackson Valley in Amador County and Auburn Ravine in Placer County.

The north county line of Nevada County and the south county line of Mariposa County have been chosen as logical northern and southern boundaries of the area. The western and eastern boundaries basically follow the 1,000 and 4,000 foot elevations respectively. To make more definable, continuous boundaries, township, range, or section lines and roads have been used rather than the actual contour lines.

The 4,000-foot elevation was selected as the eastern boundary because at higher elevations viticulture is difficult or impossible due to climatic extremes and mountainous terrain. Most of the vineyards range between 1,000 and 3,500 feet, although there are plans to plant a vineyard at 3,700 feet.

The 1,000-foot elevation is used for the western boundary. Most of the historic and current premium wine grape growing is above this elevation. Many geographical characteristics distinguish the area above 1,000 feet from the valley regions below (see section 3). Exceptions to this are Jackson Valley and Auburn Ravine. Although these areas range as low as 400 feet, they are included because of their similarities to the rest of the area. Geographical features which make Jackson Valley and Auburn Ravine appropriate inclusions are discussed in section 3.

Jackson Valley is linked to the rest of Amador County politically and through tourism. Historically wine grapes have been grown in the valley since the 1880's. Currently there are approximately 250 acres of grapes. The same varietals are grown in Jackson Valley as in the rest of Amador County.

Auburn Ravine contains 1 bonded winery and 5 vineyards with a total of about 25 acres in grapes. Varietals grown include charbono, barbera, zinfandel, and chenin blanc.

The Sierra Foothills have a long history of viticulture. Grapes were planted probably as early as 1849. After the Gold Rush grape-growing and winemaking became an important industry. Foothill counties ranked among California's major wine producers during the 1870's and 1880's. Mine closures, population decline, phylloxera, and prohibition all contributed to the decline of viticulture in the foothills. During the 1960's and especially the 1970's this downward trend was reversed, as the Sierra Foothills became known for its zinfandel and more recently other premium varietals.

Historically the foothills have been distinguished viticulturally from the Central Valley to the west. For example, in researching the agricultural history of Calaveras County, Dr. Joseph Giovinco discovered the following:

> By the early 1860's outsiders were also considering the foothills suitable for grape culture. "The fact that the foothills of this state are admirably adapted to the culture of the grape, particularly for wine-making purposes, cannot be too often repeated," wrote the San Francisco Bulletin in a front page story on the "Vineyards in the Foothills." (Giovinco, p. 26)

In Wines of America, the viticultural history of the Sierra Foothills is described as follows:

> The Sierra foothills have a winegrowing history as old as the state. In Gold Rush days many miners planted vines around their diggings and turned to producing wine. El Dorado County alone had more vineyards in 1860 than either Sonoma or Napa. By 1890, more than a hundred wineries were operating at such locations as Nevada City, Colfax, Lincoln, Penryn, Auburn, Placerville, Coloma, Shingle Springs, Ione, Volcano, Jackson, San Andreas, Sonora, Columbia, and Jamestown. (Adams)

The section on wine geography in the Connoisseurs' Handbook of California Wines discusses the Sierra Foothills:

> East of the Central Valley rise the majestic 10,000-foot high Sierra Nevada Mountains. During the Gold Rush era, places like El Dorado, Placer, Calaveras, and Amador counties in the Sierra foothills developed a burgeoning wine industry that reached 10,000 acres at its peak. . .Recent years have seen a return to those foothills counties by vineyardists and winemakers alike. . . (Olken, pp. 53-54)

Currently the Sierra Foothills area has a total of approximately 2,574 acres devoted to viticulture, listed below by county:

County	Acreage (approx.)	No. of vineyards (approx.)
Nevada	167.5	17
Placer	49.7	13
El Dorado	562	44
Amador	1,634	53
Calaveras	132	13
Tuolumne	3.5	2
Mariposa	25	8
Total	2,573.7	150

Varietals grown include barbera, charbono, chardonnay, chenin blanc, cabernet sauvignon, French colombard, merlot, petite sirah, reisling, ruby cabernet, sauvignon blanc, and zinfandel.

Thirty-three bonded wineries and 1 bonded wine cellar are located in the Sierra Foothills area. A listing by county is shown on page 7.

LIST OF BONDED WINERIES AND BONDED WINE CELLARS IN PROPOSED SIERRA FOOTHILLS VITICULTURAL AREA

County	Number	Name
Amador	BW-CA-4518	Amador Winery
	BW-CA-4963	Amador Foothill Winery
	BW-CA-4713	Argonaut Winery
	BW-CA-4913	Baldinelli Shenandoah Valley Vineyards
	BW-CA-4907	Beau Val Wines, Corp.
	BW-CA-5216	Chapin Vineyards
	BW-CA-2459	D'Agostini Winery
	BW-CA-5035	Greenstone Winery
	BW-CA-4967	Karly Wines
	BW-CA-4900	Kenworthy Vineyards
	BW-CA-4622	Montevina Wines
	BW-CA-4836	Santino, Inc.
	BW-CA-4809	Shenandoah Vineyards
	BW-CA-4712	Stoneridge
	BW-CA-4644	Story Vineyards
	BW-CA-5071	TKC Vineyards
	BW-CA-5186	Winterbrook Vineyards
	BWC-CA-5232	Deaver Ranch, Inc.
Calaveras	BW-CA-4705	Chispa Cellars
	BW-CA-5222	Malvini's Winery
	BW-CA-4839	Stevenot Winery
El Dorado	BW-CA-4978	Bertram and Fitzpatrick Winery (FBF)
	BW-CA-4652	Boeger Winery
	BW-CA-4743	El Dorado Vineyards
	BW-CA-5073	Granite Springs Winery
	BW-CA-5005	Madrona Vineyards
	BW-CA-5142	David and Meryl Salter Winery
	BW-CA-4791	Sierra Vista Winery
	BW-CA-5084	Stoney Creek Vineyards (Grewer Winery)
Nevada	BW-CA-5063	Nevada City Winery
Placer	BW-CA-4789	Ferreira Wines
	BW-CA-5218	Virginiatown Winery
Tuolumne	BW-CA-4196	California Cellar Masters (Columbia)
	BW-CA-4797	Yankee Hill Winery

Source: BATF

L. W. Richards
Grewer
Herbert
Spinetta
Pidgeon Creek
Greenstone
St. Amant

As a result of testimony given by growers and wineries in the area on pricing and marketing similarities, the Sierra Foothills were identified by the California Department of Food and Agriculture as one of the 16 grape pricing districts in 1979. The counties of Nevada, Placer, El Dorado, Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, and Mariposa were grouped together in Grape District 10 (see map on page 9.)

The average grower returns are much higher in District 10 than in the districts of the Central Valley. According to the Final Grape Crush Report for 1983, the weighted average grower return in District 10 was $396 per ton, as distinguished from the valley districts to the west (numbers 9, 11, and 12), in which the average prices per ton ranged from $150 to $193.

Since 1978 the University of California Cooperative Extension and the Foothills Counties' Farm Advisors have hosted an annual Sierra Nevada Foothill Wine Grape Day, including Nevada, Placer, El Dorado, Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, and Mariposa Counties. The letter of invitation to the Fourth Annual Sierra Nevada Foothill Wine Grape Day states that "the Foothills of the Sierra Nevada, from Mariposa north to Nevada County, are having a rebirth and new identity as a region capable of producing premium quality table wines."

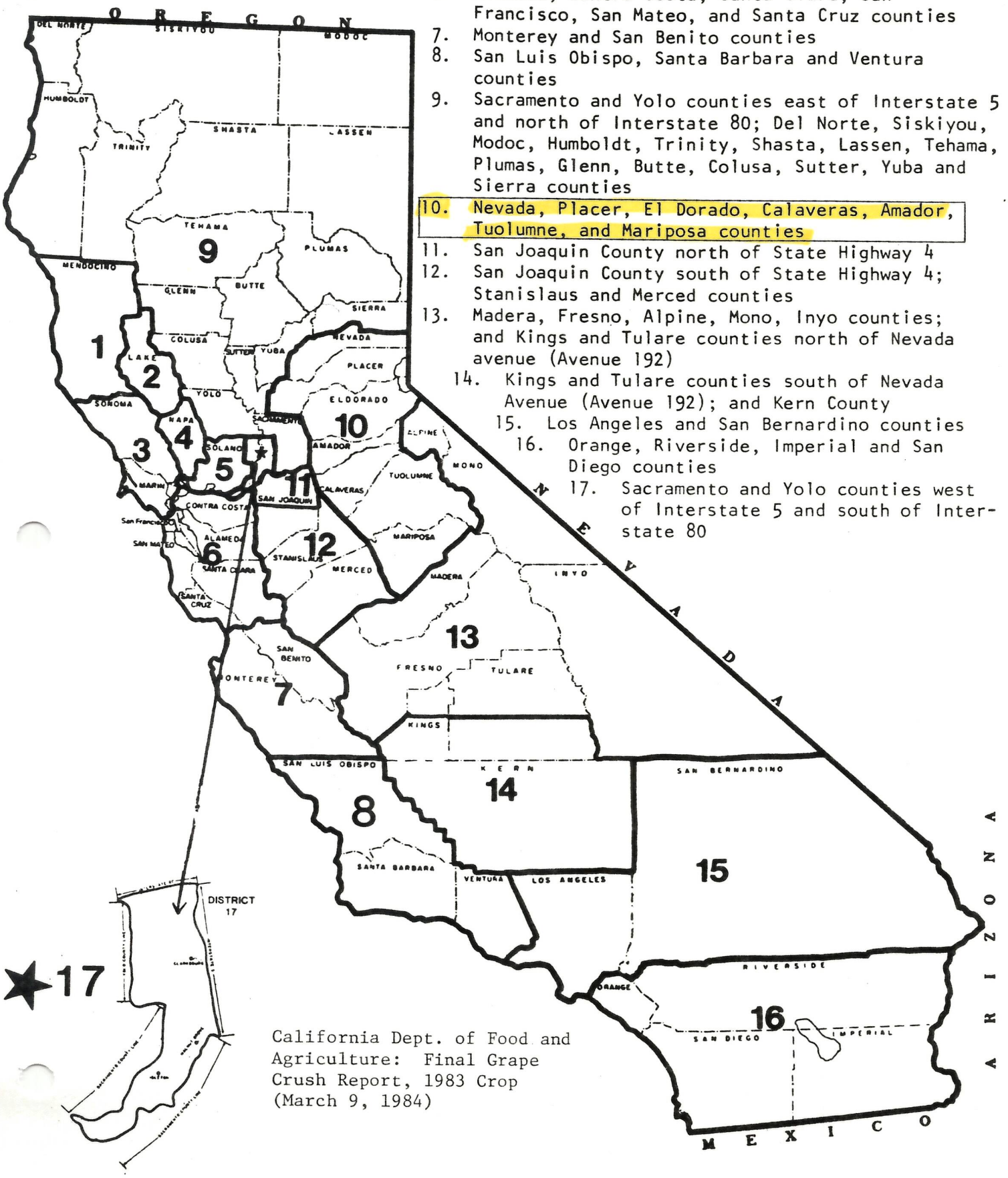
Organizations in the area include the Sierra Foothills Winery Association and grape growers' associations in Nevada, Placer, El Dorado, Amador, and Mariposa counties.

The 1985 California State Fair wine judging competition divides the state into 9 viticultural regions, one of which is the Sierra Foothills. This region consists of Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, and Tuolumne Counties.

Mariposa?

DEFINITION OF DISTRICTS

1. Mendocino County
2. Lake County
3. Sonoma and Marin counties
4. Napa County
5. Solano County
6. Alameda, Contra Costa, Santa Clara, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Cruz counties
7. Monterey and San Benito counties
8. San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura counties
9. Sacramento and Yolo counties east of Interstate 5 and north of Interstate 80; Del Norte, Siskiyou, Modoc, Humboldt, Trinity, Shasta, Lassen, Tehama, Plumas, Glenn, Butte, Colusa, Sutter, Yuba and Sierra counties
10. Nevada, Placer, El Dorado, Calaveras, Amador, Tuolumne, and Mariposa counties
11. San Joaquin County north of State Highway 4
12. San Joaquin County south of State Highway 4; Stanislaus and Merced counties
13. Madera, Fresno, Alpine, Mono, Inyo counties; and Kings and Tulare counties north of Nevada avenue (Avenue 192)
14. Kings and Tulare counties south of Nevada Avenue (Avenue 192); and Kern County
15. Los Angeles and San Bernardino counties
16. Orange, Riverside, Imperial and San Diego counties
17. Sacramento and Yolo counties west of Interstate 5 and south of Interstate 80



California Dept. of Food and Agriculture: Final Grape Crush Report, 1983 Crop (March 9, 1984)

3. Evidence relating to the geographical characteristics (climate, soil, elevation, physical features, etc.) which distinguish the viticultural features of the proposed area from surrounding areas.

The western boundary of 1,000 feet was selected because the foothills are generally considered to begin at approximately this elevation. (Lantis, p. 112) Although there is a gradual transition from the foothills to the Central Valley, there is a noticeable vegetation change at about 1,000 feet. Below this elevation there are mostly grasslands grading into the valley floor, with interior live oaks and valley oaks. Above 1,000 feet chaparral and open digger pine/blue oak woodland predominate. (Lantis, pp. 88-89)

The eastern elevation of 4,000 feet has been chosen as the upper limit for feasible viticulture. According to General Viticulture, in California the "upper limit of grape growing is 5,000 to 6,500 feet below the timber line." (Winkler, p. 59) In this part of the Sierra, timberline averages between 8,000 and 10,000 feet. (Storer and Usinger, p. 29)

The proposed viticultural area can be described botanically as the foothill or digger pine-chaparral belt/Upper Sonoran life zone as defined in Sierra Nevada Natural History. Zone designations are given to distinctive geographical areas of similar climate and topography which tend to have certain typical plants and animals. The Upper Sonoran zone ranges from 500-3,000 feet in the north, 800-4,000 in the center, and about 1,250-5,000 feet in the south, and extends lower along major streams. Characteristics of this zone are the pine-oak woodland and chaparral vegetation and a climate of dry summers and moderate winters.

The western boundary of the proposed viticultural area extends below the 1,000-foot elevation to include the grape growing areas of Jackson Valley and Auburn Ravine.

Although as low as 400 feet, Jackson Valley is part of the foothills botanically, having pine and oaks characteristic of the Upper Sonoran zone. The climate in Jackson Valley is more like that of the 2,000 to 2,500 foot elevation for several reasons. It has more fog than other areas at 400 feet, making it cooler for longer periods during the day. Jackson Valley is also cooled by night downward airflow from the mountains and by breezes from the Carquinez Straits. The temperature is moderated by the cooling effects of Jackson Creek, nearby reservoirs (Camanche, Pardee, Lake Amador), and water ponds from mining operations in the area. The top layer of white sand in much of the area does not absorb heat as much as darker soils, leading to cooler night temperatures. The heat summation is equivalent to some of those at 2,500 feet. All the above results in grapes with higher acid and later ripening times, more like grapes grown at higher elevations in Amador County. Jackson Valley thus has more similarities to areas above 1,000 feet than to the Central Valley, and is logically included in the proposed Sierra Foothills viticultural area.

In Placer County the western boundary drops below the 1,000-foot elevation to include Auburn Ravine. This area, ranging from 400 to over 1,000 feet, is appropriately included in the Sierra Foothills viticultural area for several reasons. The area is in the Upper Sonoran zone, with pine-oak woodland and chaparral vegetation. With

the cooling effect of its all-year stream, Auburn Ravine has temperatures which classify it as a heat summation region III (high). Cooling night down-canyon winds result in as much as a 50-degree drop in nighttime temperatures.

Geographical location, elevation, and weather patterns interact to make the Sierra Foothills a distinct area for the growing of premium wine grapes. In the Guide to California's Wine Country, Sunset editors state that "theirs is an altogether different weather from that of the San Joaquin Valley floor below." (Sunset, p. 130) One county farm advisor notes that the Sierra Foothills' "unique climate of warm sunny fog free days moderated by Delta breezes" and "cool nighttime breezes from the high Sierras make an ideal growing and maturing climate for premium quality wine grapes." (Irving)

General weather patterns in the Sierra foothills result in dry summers and relatively warm winters. The Sierra Nevada catches the winter storms which move easterly from the ocean across California. Most of the precipitation falls in the winter, with less than 3% occurring in the summer. Usually there is a temperature decrease of 1 degree F. for each 300 feet of rise in altitude. As the air is cooled, precipitation increases 2 to 4 inches annually for each 300 foot rise. (Storer and Usinger, pp. 12-14) Thus the elevation of the foothills provides for cooler temperatures and greater rainfall than in the Central Valley regions below. The elevation also leads to greater temperature extremes with large fluctuations between daytime highs and nighttime lows.

The upper foothills are classified as having a cooler-summer subtropical climate, as distinguished from warm-summer subtropical Mediterranean climate of the valley. (Lantis, p. 88) The climatic differences between the foothills and the Central Valley are summarized in the descriptions of the two zones in Sierra Nevada Natural History:

Great Central Valley (Lower Sonoran Zone)		Foothill/Digger Pine-Chaparral (Upper Sonoran Zone)
88-101 degrees F.	average summer maxima	75-96 degrees F.
34-38 degrees F.	average winter minima	29-34 degrees F.
often tule fog	fog	little fog
6-20 inches	rainfall	15-40 inches
7-11 months	growing season	6-10 months

(Storer and Usinger, pp. 26-27)

According to General Viticulture:

> Moderately cool weather, under which ripening proceeds slowly, is favorable for the production of dry table wines of quality.
>
> Cool weather fosters a high degree of acidity, a low pH, and a good color, and in most table wine varieties it brings to the mature fruit optimum development of the aroma and flavoring constituents and the precursors of the bouquet and flavoring substances of the wines. (Winkler, p. 60)

Grapes grown in cooler areas tend to have more acid than the same variety grown in a warmer region. Red grape varieties will

usually have more color in the cooler area, and grapes are generally fruitier than those grown in warmer climates. (Amerine and Singleton, pp. 49-50)

One of the important elements of climatic effects on grapes is heat summation, a method of classifying grape-growing areas developed by Professors Amerine and Winkler at the University of California at Davis. This system uses the sum of mean monthly temperatures above 50 degrees from April to October. According to this heat or degree-day summation method, California grape growing areas are divided into five climatic regions, with Region I being the coolest and V the hottest. The proposed Sierra Foothills viticultural area is categorized mostly as Regions II and III, whereas the Central Valley is classified mostly as Regions IV and V. A sample of various stations indicates categories for the following locations in the Sierra Foothills:

Grass Valley (Nevada County)	Region II
Placerville (El Dorado County)	Region II
Jamestown (Tuolumne County)	Region III
Mokelumne Hill (Calaveras County)	Region III

In contrast, stations in the Central Valley to the west, such as Stockton, Modesto, Merced, Lodi, and Sacramento, have higher heat summations and are classified as Regions IV and V. (Winkler, pp. 60-66)

Another unifying and distinguishing feature of the proposed Sierra Foothills viticultural area is the common geologic structure. The foothills are located on the lower, gradual western slope of the Sierra Nevada. In simple terms, the Sierra Nevada consists of a large block of granitic rock, overlain with volcanics and remnants of older metamorphic rocks which have been severely folded and faulted.

The Sierra Foothills are included in the Sierra Nevada geomorphic province, and in general are composed of metamorphic and granitic rocks. The Sierra Nevada is distinguished from the Great Valley geomorphic province to the west which has mostly sedimentary rocks. (California Geology)

Soil formation is greatly influenced by landform and geomorphic processes. Generally the foothill soils correspond to the Sierra Nevada geologic province, being formed from metamorphic, granitic, and volcanic parent material. For the most part they are residual soils, developed in place as the bedrock weathered, in contrast to the alluvial soils of the Central Valley which generally are more productive agriculturally. (Donley, p. 128)

Other soil formation factors such as relief, climate, and biological activity have led to a large diversity of specific soil types in the foothills; however, the parent material remains a major influence overall and determines the range of chemical and mineralogical composition for the soil.

Even as early as the 1860's the soils of the Sierra Foothills were recognized for their distinctness:

> Mountain wines were touted as possessing superior flavor owing to the red and granitic quality of the foothill soil. (Giovinco, p. 26)

Each of the counties in the proposed viticultural area has similar topographical features common to the Sierra Foothills. The terrain gradually becomes more rugged from west to east. As the elevation rises, stream dissection increases and rolling hills graduate into steep ridges

and canyons. Warm sunny hilltops alternate with moist draws where cool air accumulates. This diversity of terrain provides for a variety of microclimates with slope, aspect, and elevation influencing soil moisture, humidity, and temperature.

Drainage is generally toward the southwest. The entire area is within the watershed of the San Joaquin-Sacramento River system.

4. A description of the boundaries of the viticultural area, based on features which can be found on United States Geological Survey (U.S.G.S.) maps of the largest applicable scale.

The proposed Sierra Foothills viticultural area is delineated on the attached U.S.G.S. topographic maps, each with a scale of 1:250,000, or roughly 4 miles to the inch (Series V502):

Chico	1958, revised 1970, edition 3
Mariposa	1957, revised 1970, edition 4
Sacramento	1957, revised 1970, edition 5
San Jose	1962, revised 1969

To provide more detail of certain sections of the boundaries as needed, the following 15-minute quadrangles are also attached, each with a scale of 1:62,500 (Series V795):

Auburn, 1954	Grass Valley, 1949
Sutter Creek, 1962	Valley Springs, 1962

The proposed Sierra Foothills viticultural area consists of those portions of the counties of Nevada, Placer, El Dorado, Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, and Mariposa, in the state of California, lying approximately between the 1,000 and 4,000 foot elevations as shown on the attached U.S.G.S. maps, more particularly described as follows (please see description on next page):

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED BOUNDARIES OF SIERRA FOOTHILLS VITICULTURAL AREA

In the following description, all township (T.) and range (R.) references are Mount Diablo Base and Meridian (M.D.B.&M.).

Beginning at a point being the intersection of the Yuba River and the west line of T.17N., R.7E., M.D.B.&M.;

1. thence generally in a northeasterly direction along said Yuba River and the Middle Yuba River which is also the north boundary of Nevada County, to the point of intersection of the Middle Yuba River and the east line of T.18N., R.10E.;

2. thence southerly along said line to the northwest corner of T.17N., R.11E.;

3. thence easterly along the north line of T.17N., R.11E., to the northeast corner of said township;

4. thence southerly along the east line of R.11E. to the northeast corner of T.11N., R.11E.;

5. thence easterly along the north line of T.11N., R.12E., to the northeast corner of said township;

6. thence southerly along the east line of said township to the southeast corner of said township;

7. thence easterly along the north line of T.10N., R.13E. to the northeast corner of said township;

8. thence southerly along the east line of T.10N., T.9E., and T.8N., all R.13E., to the northwest corner of T.7N., R.14E.;

9. thence easterly along the north line of said township to the northeast corner of said township;

10. thence southerly along the east lines of T.7N. and T.6N., both R.14E., to the southeast corner of T.6N., R.14E.;

11. thence easterly along the north line of T.5N., R.15E., to the northeast corner of T.5N., R.15E.;

12. thence southerly along the east lines of T.5N., T.4N., and T.3N., all R.15E., to the northwest corner of T.2N., R.16E.;

13. thence easterly along the north line of T.2N., R.16E., to the northeast corner of said township;

14. thence southerly along the east lines of T.2N. and T.1N., both R.16E., to the northwest corner of T.1S., R.17E.;

15. thence easterly along north line of T.1S., R.17E., and T.1S., R.18E., which is also the Mount Diablo Base Line, to the northeast corner of T.1S., R.18E.;

16. thence southerly along the east line of T.1S., R.18E., to the southeast corner of said township;

17. thence easterly along north line of T.2S., R.18E., to the northeast corner of said township;

18. thence southerly along the east lines of T.2S. and T.3S., both R.18E., to the northwest corner of T.4S., R.19E.;

19. thence easterly along the north line of T.4S., R.19E., to the northeast corner of said township;

20. thence southerly along the east line of said township to the southeast corner of said township;

21. thence easterly along the north line of T.5S., R.20E., to the northeast corner of said township;

22. thence, southerly along the east lines of T.5S. and T.6S., both R.20E., to the point of intersection with the south boundary of Mariposa County;

23. thence westerly and southwesterly along the Mariposa County line to the point of intersection with the southeast corner of T.7S., R.18E.;

24. thence westerly along the south line of T.7S., R.18E., to the southwest corner of said township;

25. then northerly along the west line of said township to the northwest corner of said township;

26. thence westerly along the north line of T.7S., R.17E., to the northwest corner of said township;

27. thence northerly along the west line of T.6S., R.17E., to the northwest corner of said township;

28. thence westerly along the south line of T.5S., R.16E., approximately 2.0 miles to the point of intersection with Indian Gulch Road;

29. thence along the east side of Indian Gulch Road to the junction with Hornitos Road;

30. thence along the north side of Hornitos Road to the junction with Bear Valley Road at Hornitos;

31. thence along the east side of Bear Valley Road to the junction with Exchequer Dam Road;

32. thence along east side of Exchequer Dam Road to the intersection with the west line of T.4S., R.16E.;

33. thence northerly along the west line of said township to the northwest corner of said township;

34. thence westerly along the south line of T.3S., R.15E., to the southwest corner of said township;

35. thence northerly along the west line of said township to the northwest corner of said township;

36. thence westerly along the south line of T.2S., R.14E., to the point of intersection with the east side of La Grange Road (J59);

37. thence northerly along the east side of La Grange Road to the point of intersection with the south line of T.1S., R.14E.;

38. thence westerly along south line of said township and continuing westerly along the south line of T.1S., R.13E., to the southwest corner of T.1S., R.13E.;

39. thence northerly along the west line of said township to the point of intersection with the south line of T.1N., R.13E.;

40. thence westerly along the south line of T.1N., R.13E., to the southwest corner of said township;

41. thence northerly along the west line of T.1N., R.13E., to the northwest corner of said township;

42. thence westerly along the south line of T.2N., R.12E., to the southwest corner of said township;

43. thence northerly along the west line of T.2N., R.12E., to the northwest corner of said township;

44. thence westerly along the south line of T.3N., R.11E., to the southwest corner of said township;

45. thence northerly along the west lines of T.3N. and T.4N., both R.11E., to the northwest corner of T.4N., R.11E.;

46. thence westerly along the south line of T.5N., R.10E., to the southwest corner of section 33, T.5N., R.10E.;

47. thence northerly along the west line of section 33 to the northwest corner of said section;

48. thence westerly along the south lines of sections 29 and 30, T.5N., R.10E., and sections 25 and 26, T.5N., R.9E., to the southwest corner of section 26, T.5N., R.9E.;

49. thence northerly along the west lines of sections 26 and 23, T.5N., R.9E., to the northwest corner of section 23;

50. thence westerly along the north lines of sections 22, 21, and 20, T.5N., R.9E. (also being the south boundary of Rancho Arroyo Seco), to the point of intersection with the west boundary of Amador County;

51. thence northerly along the west boundary of Amador County to the intersection with the south line of T.6N., R.9E.;

52. thence easterly along the south line of T.6N., R.9E., to the southeast corner of said township;

53. thence northerly along the east lines of T.6N. and T.7N., both R.9E., to the intersection with the east side of Latrobe Road;

54. thence along the east side of Latrobe Road to the intersection with the west line of T.9N., R.9E.;

55. thence northerly along the west lines of T.9N. and T.10N., both R.9E., to the northwest corner of T.10N., R.9E.;

56. thence westerly along the south line of T.11N., R.8E., to the southwest corner of section 33, T.11N., R.8E.;

57. thence northerly along the west lines of sections 33, 28, 21, 16, 9, and 4, all in T.11N., R.8E.;

58. thence continuing northerly along the west lines of sections 33, 28, 21, and 16, all in T.12N., R.8E., to the point of intersection with the north side of Interstate 80;

59. thence in a general southwesterly direction along the north side of Interstate 80 to the intersection with Highway 193;

60. thence in a general westerly direction along the north side of Highway 193 to the point of intersection with the west line of section 16, T.12N., R.7E.;

61. thence southerly along the west line of section 16, T.12N., R.7E., approximately 0.2 mile to the point of intersection with the 400-foot elevation contour line as shown on U.S.G.S. topographic map NJ 10-6 (Sacramento, 1:250,000) and U.S.G.S. 15 minute quadrangle of Auburn, 1954;

62. thence generally in a southwesterly direction along said 400-foot contour line to the point of intersection with the west line of section 19, T.12N., R.7E., at the southwest corner of said section;

63. thence northerly along the west lines of sections 19, 18, and 7, all in T.12N., R.7E., to the northwest corner of said section 7;

64. thence easterly along the north lines of sections 7, 8, and 9, all in T.12N., R.7E., to the northeast corner of said section 9;

65. thence northerly along the west lines of section 3, T.12N., R.7E., and of sections 34, 27, 22, 15, 10, and 3, all in T.13N., R.7E., to the point of intersection with the north line of T.13N., R.7E.;

66. thence westerly along the north line of T.13N., R.7E., to the southwest corner of T.14N., R.7E.;

67. thence northerly along the west lines of T.14N. and T.15N., both R.7E., to the northwest corner of T.15N., R.7E.;

68. thence westerly along the north line of T.15N., R.6E., approximately 2.0 miles to the point of intersection with the Nevada County line;

69. thence northerly along the Nevada County line approximately 2.5 miles to the intersection with the Yuba River;

70. thence northeasterly along the Yuba River to the point of beginning.

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Benincasa, Jerry, Tuolumne County Agricultural Commissioner.

Bethell, Dick, El Dorado County Farm Advisor.

Breen, Mike, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, Washington, D.C.

Bush, Richard, Madroña Vineyards.

Clarke, C. Robert, grape grower, El Dorado County.

Dal Porto, Enid, Recording Secretary, Amador County Wine Grape Growers Association.

Harty, Harly M., Argonaut Winery.

Heltzel, Gordon, Chief, Bureau of Market News, California Department of Food and Agriculture.

Herbert, Frank, Past President, El Dorado Wine Grape Growers Association.

Hermann, Gail E., former Recording Secretary, Sierra Grape Growers Association.

Heyburn, Elizabeth, Stevenot Winery.

Irby, Pearl, Vice President, El Dorado Wine Grape Growers Association.

Lee, Wendell C. M., Attorney, The Wine Institute, San Francisco.

Johnson, Wain, Mariposa County Farm Advisor.

Locker, Carl, Deputy Agricultural Commissioner, El Dorado County.

Long, Bob, U.S. Department of Agriculture/Soil Conservation Service, Jackson.

Metzger, Randy, Calaveras County Assessor's Office; grape grower.

Norskog, Tony, Nevada City Winery.

Radanovich, George P., grape grower, Mariposa County.

Rankin, Peggy, grape grower, Tuolumne County.

Roberts, Jan, Winterbrook Vineyards.

Stevenot, Barden E., Stevenot Winery.

Stevenson, Wade, The Wine Institute/Economic Research Department, San Francisco.

Smith, Ben, grape grower, Tuolumne County.

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Washburn, Paul, Dr., President, El Dorado Wine Grape Growers Association.

Willy, Henry, Secretary-Manager, Jackson Valley Irrigation District.

The help of those listed above and the many others contacted during the preparation of this petition is greatly appreciated.

APPENDIX A

SAMPLES OF ARTICLES
REFERRING TO THE SIERRA FOOTHILLS

WINE-RUSH in the Sierra Foothills

Winewest
Jan/Feb. 1984

Story & Photos **by Mike Dunne**

To the California tourist, the Sierra foothills east of Sacramento and Stockton constitute the historic Mother Lode where James Marshall discovered gold in 1848. His happenstance find triggered the Gold Rush, the first of many migratory waves to what has since become known as the Golden State, a description as apt in terms solar, economic, romantic and even enological as mineral.

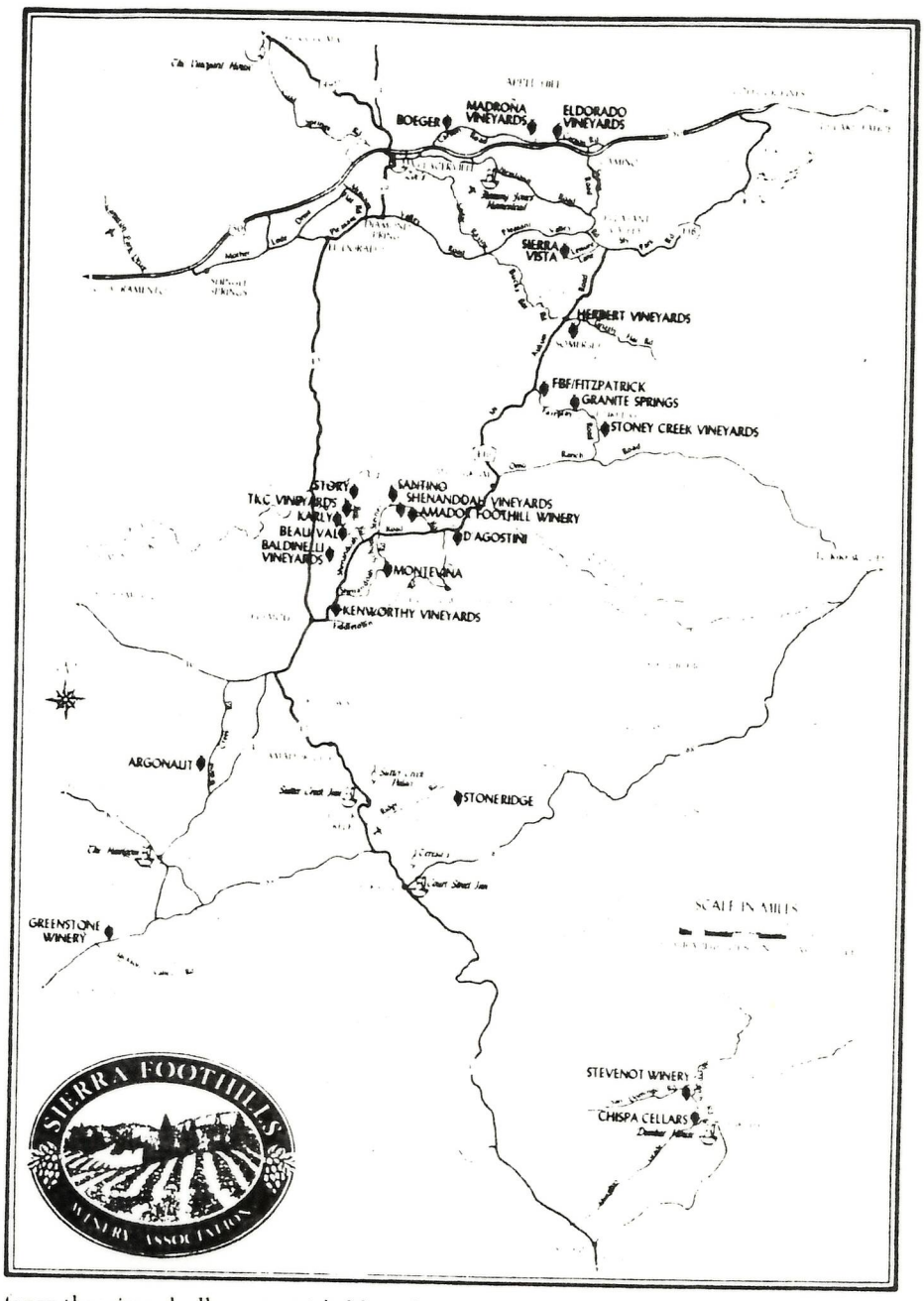
While much of the rest of California has been transformed repeatedly and dramatically by population shifts and industrial innovation, the foothill belt continues to live largely by its historic heritage: most of the gold mines have been closed since World War II, sure, but antique shops, country inns, ancient hotels, restored landmarks and ethnic restaurants thrive amidst the poison oak and digger pine.

Nowadays, the area commonly, if erroneously, called the Mother Lode meanders some 300 miles from Vinton in Plumas County at the north to Oakhurst in Madera County on the south. It parallels Highway 49, the Golden Chain Highway, a series of dusty and rusty, historic and evocative links to the region's colorful past: Nevada City, Placerville, El Dorado, Drytown, Sutter Creek, Mokelumne Hill, Angels Camp, Jackass Hill, Mt. Bullion.

Technically, the Mother Lode originally was but an imaginary rich vein in the Southern Mines, the lower half of the Golden Chain. The upper half, fittingly, was known as the Northern Mines.

As far as wine lovers are concerned, the two strips might better be renamed the Northern Wines and the Southern Wines. The nuggets being exploited in the Gold Country these days, in other words, are growing on vines. The argonauts of 1849 should have been so lucky.

Actually, wine grapes have been tended along the Sierra's western slope since the Gold Rush, but only during the past decade has the region gained a foothold as a distinct viticultural region. Ten years ago, just two wineries flourished quietly in the Gold Country. At latest count, 27 wineries dot the hillocks and line the ravines in a strikingly attractive 100-mile stretch south from the piney hollows outside Nevada City in Nevada County to the banks of San Domingo Creek near Murphys in Calaveras County.

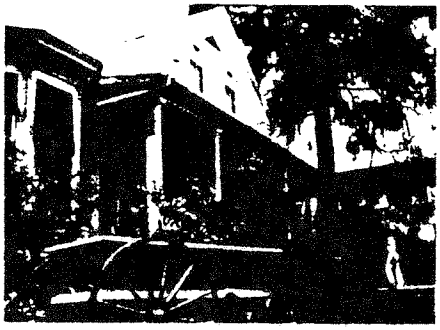


As fast as wineries have been abuilding, manzanita is being ripped from ridges and scrub oak is being gouged from gullies as parcel after parcel is cleared for yet another vineyard. The total acreage planted to wine grapes along the foothills is open to debate, but informed sources put it close to 3,000. That's small by Napa and Sonoma standards, but large enough for wine grapes to start shouldering aside the region's other major agricultural commodities—apples, pears, cattle and Christmas trees. Since 1978, the University of California Cooperative Extension and the farm advisers of Calaveras, Amador, El Dorado, Placer and Nevada counties have organized an annual Sierra Nevada Foothill Wine Grape Day. Each has attracted some 300 neophyte growers who want advice as they set aside three acres here, 10 acres there for vines. Three of the counties—Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado—have initiated commercial wine judging at their county fairs.

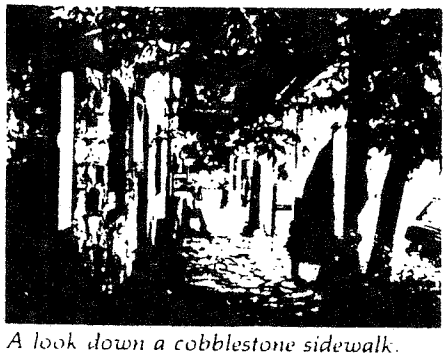
The geographical, historic, political

Leon Sabon trims vines he is transplanting at his Shenandoah Vineyards vineyard.

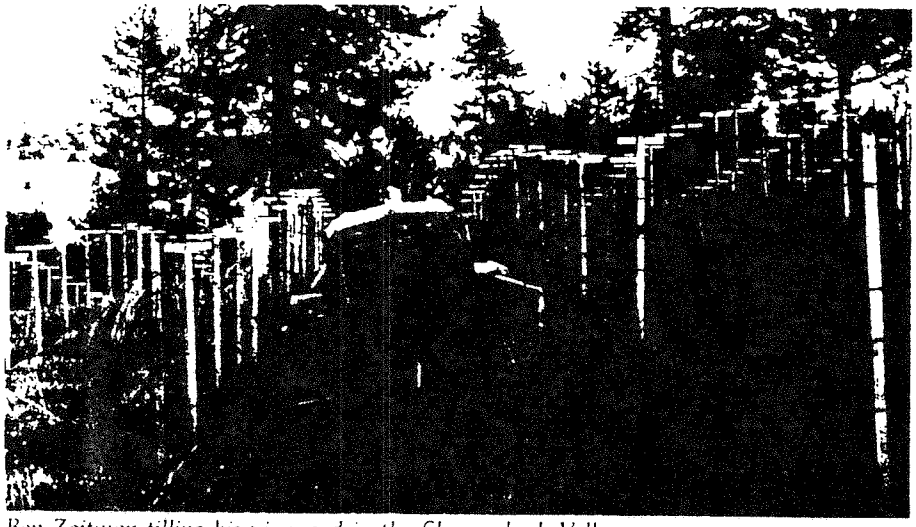
Henry D'Agostini tightening a cover on a 465-gallon oak cask, one of the D'Agostini Winery's original casks made from native white oak in 1856.



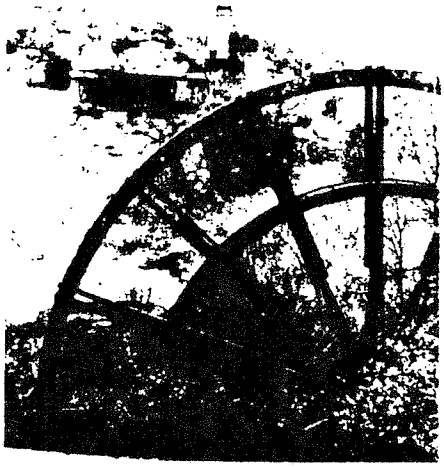
Sutter Creek Inn, Amador County.



A look down a cobblestone sidewalk.



Ben Zeitman tilling his vineyard in the Shenandoah Valley.



Kennedy Mine, with 60-foot tailing wheel, one of four, in the foreground

and esthetic heart of the foothill wine country is Amador County's Shenandoah Valley, which isn't a valley at all, but rather a series of shallow depressions and gentle slopes on a bench above the Cosumnes River 40 miles east of Sacramento. Prospectors from Virginia's Shenandoah Valley settled the area during the Gold Rush, and because of its apparent resemblance to their homeland named it Shenandoah. The replication led to the longest and most acrimonious debate during the federal government's recent efforts to define viticultural appellations. Winemakers and grape growers in both California and Virginia attempted to seek exclusive use of the Shenandoah Valley appellation for their respective region. After two years of controversial deliberation, federal agents in late 1982 decreed that Shenandoah Valley could be used by both areas, but not without qualification. Labels on bottles of wine made from grapes grown in California's Shenandoah Valley need also carry the notation "California," such as "Shenandoah Valley of California." Labels on bottles of wine made from grapes grown in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia need not carry any state designation, and simply can read, "Shenandoah Valley." Federal authorities based the ruling principally on historic reputation. That is, Virginia's Shenandoah Valley long has been celebrated in song, play, story, poetry, history text and travel brochure, thus when wine consumers see Shenandoah Valley on a bottle label without further qualification they instinctively think Virginia, concluded federal officials.

Of the 27 wineries in the Sierra foothills, nearly half are in the Shenandoah Valley. What's more, another 40 wineries far from the foothills — indeed, as far as Los Angeles have been

plucking grapes from the valley over the past decade. The state's fourth oldest winery, D'Agostini, founded in 1856, is in the Shenandoah Valley. Two of the state's older vineyards, established around the same time, also are in the valley, along with the largest premium winery in the foothills, Monteviña.

Zinfandel is the most distinct and celebrated grape grown in the Shenandoah Valley. It is credited with producing a style of the breed unparalleled in intensity, robustness, richness and spiciness, characterized by an unmistakable dry and dusty earthiness on a foundation of berry fruitiness. So big have been these Shenandoah Zinfandels—thick, tannic, alcoholic—that in recent years some of them have been criticized for being practically unpalatable, particularly with respect to matching with food. That criticism, however, coupled with the dip in the popularity of red wines generally, the surfeit of Zinfandel plantings and releases throughout the state and the diverse albeit confusing stylistic interpretations to which Zinfandel lends itself, among other factors, have prompted foothill winemakers to tame the beast. By adopting such viticultural practices as cluster thinning, earlier harvesting and innovative trellising, the Shenandoah Valley's Zinfandel specialists are releasing more Zinfandels characterized by artful elegance, readily drinkable finesse and a restrained intensity that nonetheless preserves the area's dusty/fruity signature. What's more, several winemakers both in and out of the valley are cashing in on the public's continuing infatuation with white wines by dramatically escalating their production of the mellowest of all Zinfandels—White Zinfandel. To be sure, the brawny old Shenandoah Zinfandels of the not too distant past have their fans, and to appease them, as well as retain a historic link to the style that first brought attention to the region's enological gold mine, several winemakers continue to produce at least some big and bold Zinfandel.

Although some valley growers are grafting their Zinfandel to other varietals, most are sticking with the foothill king, confident that in the long run it will remain the area's most esteemed grape. Foothill growers and winemakers also were instrumental in helping form California's new Zinfandel Guild, which hopes to cultivate consumer support, understanding and enjoyment of wines made from the state's most extensively planted red wine grape.

The Shenandoah Valley, as much of the rest of the foothill vine region, is a dry microclimate characterized by a growing season that is intensely hot during the day, then cooled sharply at night by backbreezes off the Sierra to the east. Several ravines and hollows in the foothills also benefit during the day by cooling zephyrs off the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta to the west.

Foothill plantings generally range in elevation from 1,000 to 3,000 feet. Except for the past two extraordinarily wet winters, rainfall generally is moderate, and dry farming tends to be the rule once new vines are firmly established. Decomposed granite constitutes most of the region's soil, although vineyards also are thriving on iron-laced loam and limestone-rich clay.

While Zinfandel remains the grape of choice among growers and winemakers in the Shenandoah Valley, large blocks of Sauvignon Blanc have been introduced over the past few years following successful experimental plantings. Several early releases of the varietal, particularly by Monteviña, Shenandoah Vineyards, Fitzpatrick and Pigeon Creek (the latter is simply labeled White Table Wine), have been well received by critics and consumers and appear to confirm the varietal's promising prospects in the foothills. Smaller plots of Chenin Blanc, Cabernet Sauvignon and Barbera also have been added. Cabernet appears to be doing well, and Barbera can boast one stunning success story: the 1980 Monteviña Special Selection Barbera has won eight medals in 1983 wine competitions, including gold at the Orange County Fair, the Riverside Farmer's Fair and the Sierra Foothills competition, and a silver at the Los Angeles County Fair.

Other than the Shenandoah Valley,

the most promising foothill wine-grape area looks to be the higher elevations (2,500 to 3,000 feet) of El Dorado County, where Cabernet Sauvignon is producing wines of exquisite delicacy and finesse. Chardonnay, Gewurztraminer and Johannisberg Riesling also have turned in encouraging results at higher elevations, but several more vintages need to be sampled before confirming their potential. Boeger Winery just outside Placerville is producing consistently fine Merlots, Chardonnays and Johannisberg Rieslings, while Madrona Vineyards between Placerville and Camino is showing that 3,000-feet elevation isn't too high for respectable Chardonnays, Zinfandels and Cabernet Sauvignons.

Elsewhere in the foothills, Argonaut Winery southwest of Plymouth has been producing a consistently popular Barbera; Greenstone Winery southwest of Ione produced a 1982 French Colombard rarely herbaceous, oaky and intriguingly complex for the variety; and Stevenot Winery at Murphys at the southern reach of the foothill wine country has had popular success with Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc, Zinfandel and, most recently, its 1980 Calaveras County Cabernet Sauvignon.

Nothing so much gives the foothills their enological flavor as diversity and experimentation. Inherent diversity is reflected in the range of the region's soils as well as the breadth of its microclimates, from hot and arid hilltop to chilly and soggy meadow. Anyone who ever has jogged in the foothills can't help but be impressed by the quick and unpredictable shifts in temperature, humidity, soil composition and direction of breezes. The experimentation that is going on among foothill winemakers is to a large extent an outgrowth of this diversity. Thus, a test plot of Pinot Noir is planted in a cool Nevada County hollow, an experimental vineyard of Chenin Blanc covers most of one side of a large and sunny hill, and a tenuous spread of several Portuguese varieties stands out starkly among the pine and oak of a distant ridge.

By and large, the innovative growers and winemakers drawn to the foothills reflect the usual blend of professionals who are getting involved in the wine industry these days—an attorney here, an orthopedic surgeon there. The largest single group seems to consist of former aerospace engineers who have found that their scientific and technological backgrounds dovetail nicely with the exact and methodological demands of winemaking—winemakers such as Leon Sobon of Shenandoah Vineyards, John Kenworthy of Kenworthy Vineyards and Ben Zeitman of Amador Foothill Winery. They are attracted to the foothills, as opposed to better-known wine regions, primarily because arable land still is available at affordable prices: $3,500 per acre in El Dorado County and $7,000 in the Shenandoah Valley compared with $20,000 in the Napa Valley.

They have found that prospecting for gold may have been an easier and more profitable pursuit: irrigation water for setting young vines can be difficult to secure; the voracious appetites of deer, gophers and rabbits can be especially troublesome; frost, snow and, by contrast, drought aren't unknown; several soils are so fragile that they can be scarred with deep ruts in a winter of heavy rains. Nevertheless, the foothill wine industry thrived once before, and perhaps it will again. During the Gold Rush, French, Italian, German, Spanish and other prospectors with a cultural heritage of grape tending and winemaking started planting vines as they exhausted the region's deposits of gold. At one time, some 8,000 acres were planted to vines in El Dorado County alone. By 1890, notes Leon Adams in his book "Wines of America," more than 100 wineries were operating in such Gold Country settlements as Nevada City, Placerville, Shingle Springs, Volcano, Columbia, Sonora and Jamestown. Today, a few Muscat, Mission and Zinfandel vines more than a century old continue to survive in the foothills. But over the years, the foothill wine industry has had more ups and downs than the stagecoach from Sacramento to Mokelumne Hill. Economic depressions, population shifts, market-deflating gluts of grapes, invasions of insects, outbreaks of phylloxera and the scourge of Prohibition have conspired over the past century to make the trip more down than up. Now, however, the nation's growing wine appreciation appears to be reversing that spiraling descent in the foothills. Curiously, few foothill wineries are capitalizing on the Gold Country's romantic and historic heritage, particularly with respect to its potential colorful appellations: Murderer's Gulch, Desperado Creek and Stringbean Alley, to name a few. Exceptions are Boeger Winery, which releases proprietary blends under the Hangtown label, an old name for Placerville, and Granite Springs Winery, which releases proprietary blends under the Dry Diggins label, also an early name for Placerville.

As an attraction for touring wine lovers, the foothill wine belt is still more detour sidetrip than intentional destination. As the marketing of wines gets increasingly competitive, however, more foothill wineries are reaching out to attract enophile and tourist alike by extending tasting hours, adding picnic facilities and so forth. Thanks to the area's other tourist attractions, the region already is a rich lode of bed-and-breakfast inns, restored Gold Rush hotels, antique shops, nifty restaurants and recreational pastimes ranging from whitewater rafting to gold panning.

Most of the area's wineries are members of the Sierra Foothill Wineries Association, which in exchange for a stamped, self-addressed envelope will forward a brochure that includes a detailed map of the foothill wine country, brief vignettes of the wineries, a list of wines produced by each, and a rundown of the days and hours they are open to the public. Write the association at P.O. Box 438, Somerset, CA 95o84.

The Sacramento Bee Wednesday, May 19, 1982

Anyone with a half-acre of land seems to be spending weekends digging in the dirt

Grapes: New Lure For Foothill Prospectors

By Mike Dunne
Bee Staff Writer

"BOYS, I BELIEVE I've found a gold mine."

James Marshall reputedly said that Jan. 24, 1848, as he pondered a few glistening specks of gold snagged in the tailrace of John Sutter's new sawmill along the South Fork of the American River in the Sierra foothills.

Thus was spawned the California Gold Rush.

Marshall, were he alive today and strolling through a foothill vineyard, well might use those same words as he fondled and inspected a cluster of wine grapes.

They are the new nuggets of a viniferous Mother Lode stretching north from the banks of San Domingo Creek near Murphys in Calaveras County to the piney hollows outside Nevada City in Nevada County.

A decade ago, just two wineries flourished quietly in the Gold Country. Today, 26 dot the hillocks and line the ravines. Some are small and simple, housed in rustic, ramshackle, century-old barns. Some are complex and sophisticated, occupying modern, energy-efficient steel structures plugged into cool hillsides as snugly as corks in bottles.

What's more, manzanita is being ripped from ridges and poison oak is being gouged from gullies as parcel after parcel is cleared for yet another vineyard. Anyone with even a half-acre of idle but viticulturally promising land seems to be spending his weekends digging in the dirt.

No one knows for sure just how many foothill acres are planted to wine grapes, but informed sources put it close to 2,500, small by Napa, Sonoma and Central Valley standards, but enough for wine grapes to start shouldering aside the region's other major agricultural commodities — apples, Christmas trees and cattle. The "cow counties," in short, are offering something to drink with their beef.

The rising popularity of the foothill wine industry is more resurgence than beginning. Most of the 26 wineries were built during the past 10 years, but one — D'Agostini — is the fourth oldest winery in the state. Founded in 1856, it's a sturdy survivor of plagues ranging from leafhoppers to Prohibition.

What's more, a few Muscat, Mission and Zinfandel vineyards in the foothills are more than 100 years old, when some 10,000 Gold Country acres were in vines. During the Gold Rush, French, Italian, German, Spanish and other prospectors with a cultural heritage of grape tending and winemaking started planting vines as they exhausted the region's deposits of gold.

At its peak in the 1890s, the wine-grape industry in El Dorado County included some 8,000 acres of vines. In 1870, some 50,000 gallons of wine and 1,200 gallons of brandy were produced in Nevada County.

Over the decades, however, the foothill wine industry has had more downs than ups. Economic depressions, population loss, market-deflating gluts of grapes, invasions of insects, outbreaks of phylloxera and the scourge of Prohibition conspired to make it a tough trip.

But once again, "Oh, Susanna!" is whistling from the lips of foothill prospectors.

THE HEART OF the foothill wine country is Amador County's Shenandoah Valley, a series of shallow depressions and gentle slopes 40 miles east of Sacramento. At latest count, more than 50 wineries, most of them outside the foothills, have been plucking grapes from the valley. (Other areas with increasingly substantial plantings are Apple Hill and Somerset in El Dorado County, Murphys in Calaveras County and Ridge Road east of Sutter Creek.)

With respect to soils and microclimates, the foothill belt is nothing if not diverse. Plantings range in elevation from 1,000 feet to 3,000 feet. Soils range from coarse gold to decomposed granite to iron-laced loam to limestone-rich clay. Climate, exposure, rainfall and breezes change with nearly every dip and curve of back country road. During the growing season, days generally are hot and nights warm, although some areas cool considerably during the night because of back breezes off the Sierra or zephyrs streaming up from the Delta. (The combination of hot days and cool nights generally is credited with producing exceptionally well-balanced wines with high sugars and lively acids.)

Over the past decade, the Shenandoah Valley, with 10 wineries, has become nationally recognized as the breeding ground of a Zinfandel grape that produces wines unparalleled in intensity, robustness, richness and spiciness. At their best, they are fruity enough to draw fruit flies even before the cork is pulled, yet they are stamped with the valley's unmistakable signature, a dry and dusty earthiness.

Some Shenandoah Zinfandels are so thick they could pass for raspberry yogurt, with alcohol replacing sugar. They routinely are described as heroic, rugged and powerful, the nectar of the Conans in the crowd. Rare is the competitive judging in which a Shenandoah Zinfandel doesn't finish high. Montevina, for example, produced a 1979 Zinfandel that won a gold or silver medal

Grapes

Continued From Page B4

in each of five competitions in which it was entered last year.

In the past few years, however, several Shenandoah Zinfandels have been criticized as too harsh, strong and forceful, loaded with so much tannin and alcohol as to be undrinkable before the end of the century — the 21st.

But the modern foothill wine industry is young, flexible and innovative, characterized largely by a bold spirit of experimentation, a winey echo of the same spirit that prompted the argonauts of '49 to leave Virginia valleys and the backwoods of Ohio to try their luck at prospecting in the California gold fields.

Whether prompted by that spirit, the recent criticism, the vagaries of the vintage or the fluctuations of fashion ("finesse" and "elegance" are in; "big" and "brawny" are out), Shenandoah winemakers, by and large, are toning down their Zinfandels. Alcohol is being brought in under 14 percent, and descriptives being used to define the style, even when the alcohol is higher, tend toward "rounder, lighter and smoother."

MORE SIGNIFICANTLY, varietals other than Zinfandel are being planted and are starting to garner the kind of recognition formerly reserved for the Barbarian Conqueror. Zinfandel still is the area's most widely planted grape — accounting for approximately 75 percent of the 1,600 vineyard acres in Amador County alone — but all kinds of new neighbors are bunching up around it.

Despite the long if sporadic history of grape growing in the foothills, even professional viticulturists know little about which varietals — other than Zinfandel — will adapt well to the region.

Nevertheless, the area's daring new wine growers aren't hesitating to experiment with an amazingly wide range of grape varieties. At least two growers have planted several Portuguese grape varieties for the anticipated production of California Port. One grower has just planted five acres of Muscato Blanco for what is expected to be the first sparkling wine to come out of the foothills, a wine in the style of an Italian Asti Spumante.

Chardonnay, Riesling and even Gewurztraminer are being planted at higher foothill elevations. A small parcel of Pinot Noir in Nevada County shows promise. The principals of Nevada City Cellars are ecstatic about a Charbono to be released this fall, to be marketed under the grape's French name, Douce Noir, meaning "gentle black."

Greg Boeger of Boeger Winery on Apple Hill has grown a Flora that struck gold in home-winemaking competitions last year. He also recently planted parcels of Muscat Canelli and Symphony, a new hybrid developed by viticulturists at the University of California, Davis; it's a combination of Grenache and Muscat of Alexandria for the anticipated production of a dry or off- dry Muscat.

EACH WINEMAKER seems to have a different opinion about which grape shows the most promise. Among those often mentioned are Barbera, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, White Riesling, Chardonnay, Ruby Cabernet, Chenin Blanc and Petite Sirah.

The consensus, however, favors Sauvignon Blanc. Early efforts have produced a wine strongly representative of the variety but free of the grassy and herbaceous accent that attends many California Sauvignon Blancs. As a measure of the area's confidence in the varietal, Montevina is gearing up to crush 300 tons of Sauvignon Blanc annually by 1984, when it expects to be processing 400 tons of its prime varietal, Zinfandel.

As often as not, a grower, when asked why he planted a particular varietal, is apt to say that he simply likes that kind of wine, regardless of whether it has an established record in the foothills. Charles Spinetta, for example, recently planted 22 acres of Shenandoah Valley range land to Chenin Blanc, a variety with no history in Amador.

"I like Chenin Blanc and I can't stand Sauvignon Blanc," said Spinetta. (On a ridge opposite Spinetta's slopes, however, fellow grower Frank Alviso, who *does* like Sauvignon Blanc, has put in 140 acres of the varietal over the past two years. His taste accounts in part for the planting, but so does the acclaim that foothill Sauvignon Blanc has won and so does his desire for a balanced mix of grapes during this era of experimentation.)

By and large, growers and winemakers drawn to the foothills reflect the usual blend of professionals who are getting involved in the wine industry these days — an attorney here, an orthopedic surgeon there. The largest single group seems to consist of former aerospace engineers who have found that their scientific and technological backgrounds dovetail nicely with the exact and methodological demands of winemaking.

They are attracted to the foothills, as opposed to better-known wine regions, primarily because arable land still is available at affordable prices: $3,500 per acre at Somerset, $7,000 in the Shenandoah Valley; by comparison, undeveloped vineyard property in the Napa Valley sells for around $20,000 an acre.

The wineries are small and the plantings tiny — 5 acres on this ridge, 10 in that meadow. No large wineries have established a substantial vineyard in the foothills, although R.&J. Cook of Clarksburg is buying a 350-acre parcel in the Penn Valley of Nevada County for a vineyard of Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Cabernet Sauvignon.

Compared with developing a foothill vineyard, gold prospecting was a snap. Although most of the vineyards are dry farmed, irrigation water can be difficult to secure for setting the vines during their first few years. The voracious appetites of deer and gophers are especially troublesome. Frost isn't unknown (or snow; Dick Bush's Madrona Vineyards, at 3,000 feet on Apple Hill, believed to be the highest vineyard in the state, was under 15 inches or more of snow several times this past winter). Several soils are so fragile that winter rains scarred some vineyards with the kinds of ruts that haven't been seen in the Gold Country since hydraulic mining was banned.

As an attraction for touring wine lovers, the foothill belt has yet to establish itself. As the marketing of wines gets increasingly competitive, however, more wineries are reaching out to attract enophile and tourist alike. For example, Stevenot Vineyards has expanded its tasting room into a rustic, primitive log cabin that formerly housed a pottery studio, and is opening a second tasting room at Columbia State Historic Park. Montevina has added shaded redwood picnic tables. The Wineyard in Rescue, El Dorado County, and The Pasty Place in Sutter Creek, Amador County, feature wine bars that pour foothill wines exclusively.

Sacramento Bee, 1980

? Santa Cruz Sentinel

Mead on Wine

by Jerry D. Mead

Sierra Foothills Winners

ABOUT 10 YEARS AGO, WINE MERCHANT Darrell Corti told the winemaker at a small Napa Valley winery about tasting some very special homemade wines produced from 70- to 80-year-old Zinfandel vines in Amador County.

Sutter Home Winery made wine from that vineyard, owned by the Deaver family, and Amador County Zinfandel became an instant consumer success.

That initial success has led to considerable vineyard and winery expansion, not only in Amador County but throughout what has become known as Sierra foothills wine country.

Most of the wineries are small, and many of the grapes from the area are sold to wineries all over the state.

Still best known for Zinfandel, the region also is developing a reputation for Sauvignon Blanc and Cabernet Sauvignon, and both Barbera and Chardonnay show future promise.

To draw still further attention to the area, the Amador County Fair sponsored its first Sierra Foothills Commercial Wine Competition Aug. 7. Wines from Amador, El Dorado, Calaveras and Tuolumne counties were eligible.

While lacking impact of the Los Angeles or Orange County judgings where a broad scope of wines is examined, regional competitions such as this one certainly have value in more ways than one.

NOT ONLY DO THEY PROVIDE CONSUMERS with an insight to the best wines of the region, but a healthy spirit of competition and camaraderie is encouraged among competing wineries. There is nothing like coming in second to inspire a winery to do better next year.

The panel of 20 judges at Amador was well qualified, featuring University of California at Davis professors, members of the retail trade, producers from other areas, and wine writers, including me.

Scoring was by the UC Davis 20-point system, with each judge scoring the wines individually and making medal recommendations. Fair officials then tallied the scores, awarding medals based on average scores and number of medal recommendations.

The 70-some wines were divided between two panels for judging. The wines had qualified for entry by bearing any appellation representing the Sierra foothills, no matter where the producing winery was located.

The winning wines appear below, in no particular order, and you will note more thorough comments on the wines which I tasted.

ZINFANDEL TABLE WINES, THE CATEGORY that started all the interest a decade ago, saw gold medals awarded to Ahern Winery, Argonaut, Geyser Peak, Montevina and Sutter Home. All were '78 vintage except the Geyser Peak, a '77.

All medalists in this class were produced from Amador County grapes. Three of the five winning wineries are based outside the area.

Ahern is the tiny operation of a former home winemaker who operates the only winery in the San Fernando Valley. Geyser Peak is the Sonoma County winery owned by Schlitz Brewing, and it seems more than appropriate for Napa Valley's Sutter Home Winery to capture a gold since it is credited with pioneering commercial production from the area's vineyards. Montevina is the largest winery in the area, while Argonaut is one of the smallest.

Silver medals in the same class went to '77 Veedercrest, '77 Richard Carey and Montevina's '78 Montino label. A single bronze to Shenandoah Vineyards '78.

White Zinfandel, a relatively new style being produced by more and more wineries, offered four winners, but only one gold medal. The gold went to Sierr Vista 1979 El Dorado Zinfandel Blanc. Silvers to Montevina and Shenandoa (both '79s), and a bronze to Beau Val '79. The latter three are all from Amado A wine that didn't win, and which I thought particularly attractive, was a 197 Santino semidry White Zinfandel.

STEVENOT 1979 EL DORADO DRY CHENIN BLANC captured the only gol medal for Chenin Blanc. It is the wine's second such honor, having won a gol at the highly competitive Orange County judging.

Montevina 1979 Sauvignon Blanc won the only gold and the only medal in t category. It's a huge wine, high in alcohol, oaky, intensely flavored, and showin superb balance. A white wine to lay away for at least a couple of years.

The event's lone grand award, a sort of sweepstakes winner, did not earn m enthusiasm. It is Stevenot 1979 El Dorado Chardonnay, which seemed to me t be a too young, too fruity, not particularly complex example of the variety, an certainly not the best wine of the day. Judge for yourself.

I preferred the bronze medal winning Chardonnay, 1979 Boeger El Dorad which showed more oak and a steely, austere style.

Stevenot and Boeger, both with El Dorado County entries, battled it out wit '79 Johannisberg Rieslings. Stevenot won a silver, Boeger a bronze.

In a miscellaneous white category Boeger earned a gold for El Dorado Sierr Blanc 1979, a proprietary label. Montevina received a silver for 1979 Amado White Cabernet Sauvignon.

CABERNET SAUVIGNON, as a class, saw three medal winners, one each o gold, silver and bronze. Gold to '78 Shenandoah, silver to '78 Montevina, bronz to '77 Boeger. My top score went to the Montevina wine, for its leaner, harde style, showing less of the over-ripe almost late harvest flavors evidenced by th two others.

In the category that included miscellaneous reds, I found little occasion t agree with the consensus of scoring. I do not understand the gold medal rankir of Shenandoah's non-vintage Black Muscat. it was simply too much. A thick sy upy texture delivered a wine so sweet and heavy as to make it useless even fo dessert. Cloying sweetness hung on the palate after several water rinses.

The '78 Montevina Barbera, which also won a gold, was nice, though po sessed of a somewhat tart finish that may or may not soften with age.

Of three bronze medalists, I thought two deserved higher ranking, and on deserved no award at all.

Montevina 1978 Ruby Cabernet was a huge red wine in color and body, stai ing even the glass it was served in. The wine showed some signs of complexi and enough fruit and body to handle the high alcohol and tannins. I did not ca for the 1979 Montevina Zinfandel Nuevo, an attempt at a Beaujolais style th went astray. There is far too much alcohol for a wine of this type.

Boeger's Hangtown Red 1977 received my top score in the category, showin lots of class against primarily varietal competition. The wines were all taste blind, with no awareness of either brand or price. Using hindsight, and knowin this wine's modest price, I'd score it even higher with value taken into conside ation.

Other winners:

A gold medal to 1979 Baldinelli Zinfandel Rose.

In the late harvest Zinfandel class, gold to '78 Carneros Creek Late Pick si vers to '77 Argonaut and '78 Sierra Vista, bronze to '78 Shenandoah.

Also a gold to Shenandoah for a non-vintage Zinfandel Port.

SIERRA FOOTHILLS

The Sierra Foothills are clearly divided into two growing regions. The lower, warmer slopes near Plymouth, Fiddletown, Amador City, Sutter Creek and Jackson are renown for intense, briary Zinfandels. More recently, simple White Zinfandels and aggressive Sauvignon Blancs have been produced, this area's entries into the white wine market. In the vicinity of Placerville, the cooler, higher elevations are producing buttery Chardonnays, intensely fruited Cabernets, and lovely Rieslings.

The Foothills have been producing winegrapes for more than a century, when immigrants settled the land in the wake of the Gold Rush. Many vineyards date back to the turn of the Century. The D'Agostini Winery is the oldest winery in the area, being established in 1856 by Adam Uhlinger and purchased by the D'Agostini family in 1911. Today, nearly two dozen wineries dot the lower slopes with production led by Monteviña Wines of Plymouth. Montevinã makes 40,000 cases of wine annually from grapes grown on 450 acres of vineyards at the 1700 foot elevation. While most of its output is in big, full-bodied Zinfandels, recent entries have included some delicate whites and Cabernet Sauvignon.

The Shenandoah Valley in Amador County received a lot of attention the last two years during the controversy over the rights to use the appellation of origin "Shenandoah Valley". The Shenandoah Valley of Virginia laid claim to the title as did the California Valley of the same name. The BATF, after hearings and reams of documentation had been collected, ruled in favor of the Virginia claim. Therefore, wine bottled in the California Valley must be labelled "Shenandoah Valley, California", while that which comes from the Virginia region need only be labelled "Shenandoah Valley."

Whatever the name, the Shenandoah Valley of California is the center of Amador county wine production with the biggest and best known Foothill wineries located there. Along with Monteviña and D'Agostini is Shenandoah Vineyards. Leon and Shirley Sobon's winery is not only well-known for blockbuster Zinfandels, but equally for its dessert wines—Port, Black Muscat and Mission del Sol. Santino Winery has made a lovely Sauvignon Blanc, a full line of different styles of Zins, as well as a very nice Cabernet from El Dorado County. Baldinelli Vineyards has two stylish entries in its latest Amador Zin and Shenandoah Valley Cab. One of the newest entries in the area's winegrowing camp is ClockSpring Vineyards whose fruit is used by several wineries and is bottled under their own label, Pigeon Creek.

In the higher elevations of El Dorado County, several wineries flourish using fruit from their own vineyards. Madroña, Boeger, and El Dorado wineries are all located in the Apple Hill area outside of Placerville. (See *Wine Trails' Volume I, Issue* #3). Madroña Vineyards continues to put out lovely, round, well-balanced wines, as does Boeger Winery in its larger, broader list of wine offerings. But newer wineries have entered the market and have made their mark in the past two years. Fitzpatrick is the label of FBF Winery of Somerset, a small town on the Consumnes River south of Placerville. From a small, inauspicious start in 1981, Bill Bertram, Brian Fitzpatrick and Michael Fitzpatrick have upgraded their quality and style rapidly, producing fine quality wines this past year from purchased grapes. The next two years their vineyards will produce an estate Chardonnay and Cabernet. Sierra Vista and Granite Springs both produce fine quality wines from El Dorado grapes. Sierra Vista Winery, founded in 1977 by John and Barbara MacCready, has come on strong with a full line of wines in the past two vintages. At Granite Springs Winery, located just east of Somerset, Les and Lynne Russell have made award winning wines from Sauvignon Blanc and Zinfandel and have introduced a Cabernet this year as well.

Most of the wines produced by the Foothill Wineries are from Foothill grown grapes. This dependency on their own grapes has given the wines of Gold Country a generally consistent and unique character. The El Dorado wines possess good fruit and fine acid balance. The Amador wines, big and forward as they are, have been tamed a bit, giving them a degree of finesse that they have needed to gain wider acceptance. Amador wineries are also getting onto the white wine bandwagon and have extended their line with Sauvignon Blanc and White Zinfandel.

Amador County vineyards have produced fruit for many wineries in other areas of California. Two of the best known are Sutter Home of Napa Valley, who has made its name on Amador Zins and was the first to make White Zin on a large scale, and Ridge Vineyards of

from Wine Trails, edited and published by Bob Bortfeld and Susan Ledak, Aug./Sept., 1983.

Cupertino in the Santa Cruz Mountains, whose Fiddletown and Shenandoah Zins are among their long list of vineyard designated and regionally labelled wines.

Sierra Foothill wines also represent very good values. Most wines are fairly priced in the $5 to $8 range, with a few very nice wines at $3.75 to $4.75. Herewith, some of our comments on current releases.

Zinfandel is without a doubt the king of Sierra Foothill grapes. Understandably, it leads our list in quantity and variety of styles.

1980 Amador Foothill Winery Amador Zinfandel *($6.50)* and the more intense **Fiddletown Zinfandel** *($8.00)*. Both are nicely made, oaky wines with good berry flavors.

1980 Argonaut Winery Amador Zinfandel *($5.50)*. Almost claret in style, this medium-bodied wine has nice fruit, good balance and a lovely berry finish.

1980 Baldinelli Amador Zinfandel Lot #1 *($6.00)*. The wine is complex with good tannin support. Fresh berries abound. The grapes were from 60 year old vines, giving the wine good depth and rich flavor.

1980 Beau Val Amador Zinfandel *($5.75)*. Lush fruit with berries, cherries and currants everywhere! Bursting with flavors and finishing with finesse, this is a memorable wine.

1981 Herbert Vineyards El Dorado Zinfandel *($6.00)*. A lovely wine with big, fruity flavors of berries and candied apples.

1981 Karly Wines Amador Zinfandel *($7.50)*. Recently bottled, this wine is awkward now, but has the makings of a fine wine in a year or so. Good balance, good fruit and modest complexity.

1980 Kenworthy Amador Zinfandel *($7.00)* from Potter Cowan Vineyards. Well-balanced, lush fruit, tannic. Needs time.

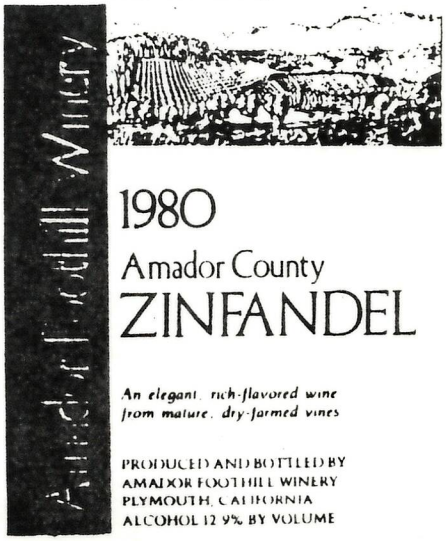
1980 Santino Shenandoah Valley Zinfandel *($6.50)*. A complex, claret-styled, full-bodied wine. Excellent fruit and a long lush finish. Excellently balanced.

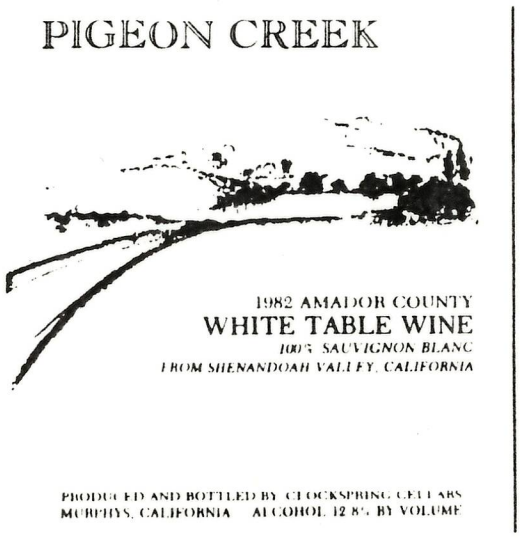
1980 Santino Fiddletown Amador Special Selection Zinfandel *($7.50)*. This is a big, huge wine with finesse. 14% alcohol. Well-made and well-behaved, this big wine carries the style typified by Amador Zins over the past decade.

1980 Stoneridge Amador Zinfandel *($4.75)*. This is a nice simple wine. Good fruit flavors, well-balanced with acid. A pleasant sipper or barbeque wine.

Cabernet Sauvignon from El Dorado has shown well in the past two years, while Amador Cabs are trying to find themselves. Styles are just beginning to develop as winemakers learn to deal with the uniqueness of the Foothill fruit.

1980 Baldinelli Shenandoah Valley Cabernet Sauvignon *($7.00)*. This is an austere, angular wine that should come together nicely with another year or two in the bottle. Toasty, oaky flavors overlaid on earthy, coffee-flavored fruit.





1980 Granite Springs El Dorado Cabernet Sauvignon *($8.00)*. Earthy and aggressive, this wine has good Cab flavors. A nice wine.

1980 Santino El Dorado Cabernet Sauvignon *($8.00)* from Mirande's Stonebarn Vineyards. An herbaceous wine, round and mellow on the palate, it demonstrates the high acid typical of El Dorado Cabernets. Rich berry nose, light claret style.

1980 Stevenot Calaveras County Cabernet Sauvignon *($7.50)*. Austere and well-balanced, this Cab is earthy and exhibits a hint of cedar and tobacco in the nose. Aggressive, it has a bit of bellpeppers on the palate along with green olives and good fruit. Nicely finished.

With Zinfandel being the king of Foothill red wines, one would think that **White Zinfandels** would be among the best of the whites. Not so! Many white Zins we have tasted from this area are flavorless, cloying, or just plain lacking in character. Foothill winemakers have to learn to preserve the lush fruit flavors of this grape both in the vineyard and in the winery. We did recently find two that have done just that.

1982 Fitzpatrick Amador Zinfandel Blanc *($5.00)*. A well-made, well-balanced blanc de noir with excellent fresh Zinfandel fruit flavors—strawberries and raspberries. Only a touch of sweetness appears on the palate and a fresh, crisp finish makes this a lovely wine for summer sipping and simple meals.

1982 Santino Amador White Zinfandel "Semi-Dry" *($5.50)*. Fresh strawberry flavors and a touch of sugar are balanced with crisp acidity. A nice wine.

Sauvignon Blanc has become the leading white wine from the Foothills. Several wineries have made lovely aggressive wines, including Boeger Winery and Sierra Vista Winery which we commented on in an earlier issue.

1982 Fitzpatrick Shenandoah Valley Sauvignon Blanc *($7.00)* from ClockSpring Vineyard. This is a very nice wine, filled with lovely varietal flavors throughout. The grape's grassy character comes through without being overly aggressive. Fresh, crisp and yet full-bodied.

1982 Granite Springs California Sauvignon Blanc *($6.50)* is 60% from El Dorado grapes and 40% Amador grapes. Nicely made with a complex, stoney character and good appley fruit. The flowery nose and finish are contributed by a small amount of Semillon that has been added.

1982 Karly Amador Fume Blanc *($7.50)*. Good fruit flavors are married nicely with oak in this wine which, while aggressive, is tamed by the oak and a hint of residual sugar. A bit hot in the finish, but an otherwise stylish wine.

1982 Pigeon Creek Amador County White Table Wine *($4.95)*. This wine is 100% Sauvignon Blanc from ClockSpring Cellars' H.F.H. Ranch in the Shenandoah Valley. This first offering is flowery, appley and crisp. Finished almost dry with a pleasant grassiness. A nice wine and a good buy.

1982 Shenandoah Vineyards Amador Sauvignon Blanc *($7.50)*. Full-bodied with lots of varietal character—flinty, grassy, flowery. Crisp and well-balanced on the palate with a long finish.

Other white wines made from Foothill grapes include these:

1981 Madroña Vineyards El Dorado Chardonnay *($8.50)*. This is the second beautiful Chardonnay from this new winery. More stylish and less forward than the 1980, this wine is full of buttery flavors, toasty components and a long, spicey finish. A beautiful wine at an attractive price!

1981 Madroña Vineyards El Dorado White Riesling *($5.00)*. Lovely with flavors of fresh apricots and peaches. Good complexity and a touch of sweetness.

1981 Stevenot El Dorado Chenin Blanc *($4.75)*. While lacking the lush fresh fruit of the Delta Region Chenin Blanc, this relatively dry Chenin is full-bodied and oaky with good balance.

1982 Story Vineyards Premiere White Wine *($3.75)*. This is a lovely sipping wine made from a blend of Mission and New Zinfandel grapes. Medium sweet at 1.5% residual sugar.

For more information on Sierra Foothill wineries, a visitor's guide to the wine country of the Mother Lode can be obtained from the Sierra Foothill Wineries, P.O. Box 438, Somerset, CA 95684.

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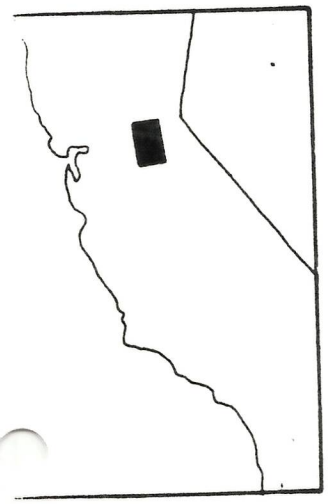
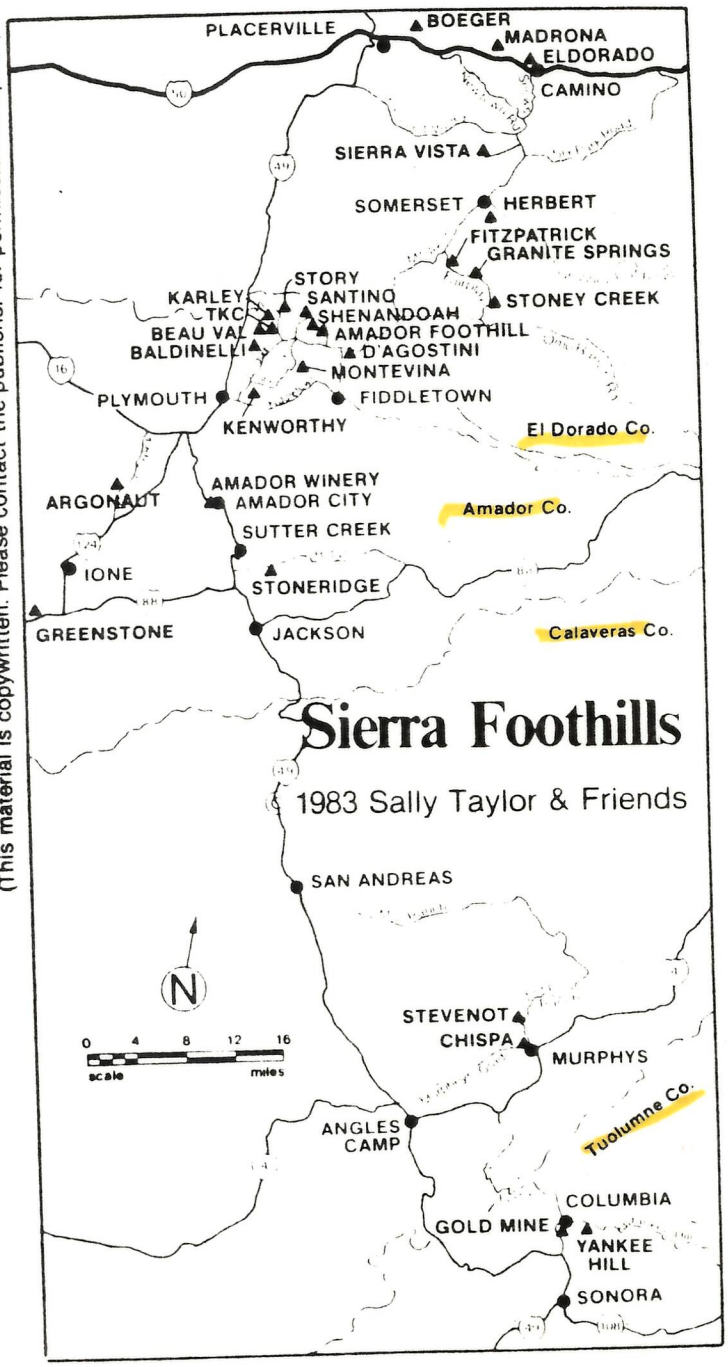
Sierra Foothills

in Winewest
May/June, 1983.

Nevada ?
Placer ?
Mariposa?





AMADOR FOOTHILL WINERY,
12500 Steiner Rd., Plymouth 95669, (209) 245-6307.
Generally open weekends, please call ahead to be sure

AMADOR WINERY,
PO Box 65, Amador City 95601, (209) 245-3756.
Mountain Jubilee spiced wine, created as a skiers' wine to serve piping hot is an excellent table wine chilled and is exceptional with barbequed foods. Tasting room open 7 days a week, 10-6.

ARGONAUT WINERY,
13675 Mt. Echo Rd., Ione 95640, (209) 274-4106 or 274-2882.
By appointment only

BALDINELLI SHENANDOAH VALLEY VINEYARDS, Rt. 2, Box 7A, Shenandoah Rd., Plymouth 95669, (209) 245-3398.
By appointment and weekends, 11-5. Winery is located 4.5 miles north of Plymouth on E 16.

BEAU VAL WINES,
10671 Valley Dr. off Bell Rd., Star Rt. 1, Box 8D, Plymouth 95669, (209) 245-3281.
Shenandoah Rd. onto Bell Rd. 200 yds. left on Valley Dr. .5 mi. on right. By appointment only

BOEGER WINERY, INC.,
1709 Carson Rd., Placerville 95667, (916) 622-8094.
Open Wed.-Sun., 10-5. No appt. necessary to taste wines all year in the historic 1872 wine cellar. National Register of Historic Places. Visitors are welcome to enjoy the shaded picnic area & tour the modern 10,000 case premium winery

CHISPA CELLARS,
425 Main St., Murphys 95247.
By appointment only

D'AGOSTINI WINERY,
Rt. 2, Box 19, Shenandoah Rd., Plymouth 95669, (209) 245-6612.

ELDORADO VINEYARDS,
3551 Carson Rd., Camino 95709, (PO Box 617), (916) 644-3773.

FBF WINERY — FITZPATRICK,
Fairplay Rd., Somerset 95684, (209) 245-3248 or (916) 626-1988.
Tasting Room open 12-5 weekends, otherwise by appointment.

GOLD MINE WINERY,
Parrott's Ferry Rd., Columbia State Park, Columbia 95310, (209) 532-3089.

GRANITE SPRINGS WINERY,
Fairplay Rd., Somerset 95684, (209) 245-6395.
Open weekends, 11-5

GREENSTONE WINERY,
PO Box 1164, Ione 95640, Hwy. 88 at Jackson Valley Rd., Ione, CA 95640, (209) 274-2238.
Our family owned and operated winery and vineyard is located at the gateway to California's historic Gold Rush country. We are open for tasting, informal owner-conducted tours and sales. Enjoy our oak-shaded picnic area. RV's welcome. Hours Sat.-Sun., 11-4, July & August 10-5, Wed.-Sun.

(Continued on next page.)

Sierra Foothills

(Continued.)

ALLEN S. HALEY
P. O. Box 843, Nevada City, 95959, (916) 265-3314.

HERBERT VINEYARDS,
Somerset, CA 95684. (916) 626-0548.
By appointment only.

KARLY WINES,
PO Box 721, Plymouth 95669, (209) 245-3922.

KENWORTHY VINEYARDS,
Rt. 2, Box 2, Plymouth 95669, (209) 245-3198.
By appointment or Sunday, 12-5.

MADRONA VINEYARDS,
PO Box 454, Gatlin Rd., Camino 95709, (916) 644-5948.
5 mi north of Carson Rd., through High Hill Ranch

MONTEVINA,
Rt. 2, Box 30-A, Plymouth 95669, (209) 245-6942.
Amador County's leading producer of Zinfandel, Sauvignon Blanc and other premium estate bottled varietals. Winery open for tasting and sales. 11-4 daily. Large groups by appointment only.

NEVADA CITY WINERY,
321 Spring St., Nevada City, CA 95959, (916) 265-WINE.
I-80 from Sacramento to Auburn, Hwy 49 north to Grass Valley-Nevada City Exit at Broad St., left on Broad 2.5 blocks to Bridge St., left 1 block to Spring St. and winery. The first bonded winery in this historic town since Prohibition. Tasting room with view of winemaking operations, open daily noon to sunset (about 5 in winter, 7 summer). Winemaker Tony Norskog producing deep-colored long-lived reds from local Pinot Noir, Cabernet Zinfandel and Charbono, which is sold under its original French name, Douce Noir. Also fresh, fruity whites such as Riesling and a full bodied, dry Chardonnay, available this summer.

PARADISE VINTNERS,
1656 Nunneley Rd., Paradise 95969, (916) 877-7267.
13 miles east of Chico.

SANTINO WINERY,
Rt. 2, 21A Steiner Rd., Plymouth 95669, (209) 245-3555.

SHENANDOAH VINEYARDS,
12300 Steiner Rd., Plymouth 95669, (209) 245-3698.
4.5 miles from Plymouth on Shenandoah Rd., turn left on Steiner Rd. 1 mile. Premium wines. Open June 1 - Oct. 1, 11-5; Oct. 1 - June 1, only Sat. & Sun., 11-5, weekdays please call.

SIERRA VISTA,
4560 Cabernet Way, Placerville 95667, (916) 622-7221.
Open weekends, 12-5. Otherwise, by appointment.

STEVENOT WINERY,
San Domingo Rd., (off Sheep Ranch Rd.), PO Box 548, Murphys 95247, (209) 728-3436.
Tasting room open daily, 10-4. Tours available.

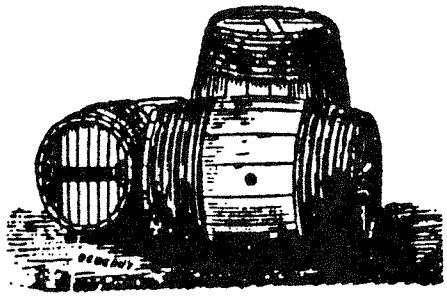
STONERIDGE,
13862 Ridge Rd., East, Sutter Creek 95685, (209) 223-1761.
Open Sat., 1-4 or by appointment. Zinfandel and Ruby Cabernet wines. Picnic area available.

STONEY CREEK VINEYARDS,
8221 Stoney Creek Rd., Somerset 95684, (209) 245-3467.

STORY WINERY & VINEYARDS,
Bell Rd. (formerly Willetts Rd.), Plymouth 95669, (209) 245-6208 or (415) 441-2990.
By appointment only

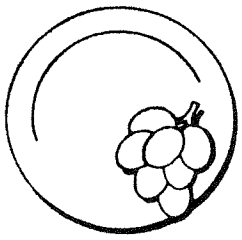
TKC VINEYARDS,
Rt. 2, Valley Dr., Plymouth 95669. (Mail: 1307 Essex Circle, Ridgecrest 93555), (619) 446-3166.
By appointment only

YANKEE HILL WINERY,
11755 Coarsegold Lane, Columbia 95310, (209) 532-9015.



Winemakers' Recommended

Places to Eat



The Balcony
164 Main
Jackson 95642
(209) 223-2851

Country Kitchen
8031 Mt. Aukum Road
Mt. Aukum 95656
(209) 245-4184

Frair Tuck's Rest.
111 N. Pine
Nevada City 95959
(916) 265-4551

Jack's Deer Creek Inn
101 Broad St.
Nevada City 95959
(916) 265-3405

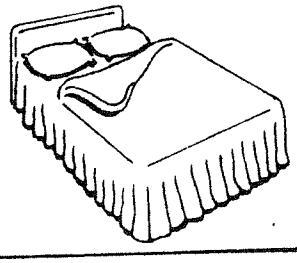
Il Rifugio
Main St.
Murphys 95247
(209) 728-3964

Selaya's
320 Broad
Nevada City 95959
(916) 265-5697

Smith Flat House
2021 Smith Flat Road
Smith Flat 95727
(916) 626-9003

Winemakers' Recommended

Places to Stay



The Broadway Hotel
Jackson 95642
(209) 223-3503

Dunbar House
Main St.
Murphys 95247
(209) 728-2897

Fleming Jones Homestead
3170 Newtown Road
Placerville 95667
(916) 626-5840

The Heirloom
Box 322
Ione 95640
(209) 274-4468

National Hotel
211 Broad St.
Nevada City 95959
(916) 265-4551

Peterson Inn
2942 Coloma
Placerville 95667
(916) 622-1882

Piety Hill Inn
523 Sacramento St.
Nevada City 95959
(916) 265-2245

The Red Castle
104 Prospect St.
Nevada City 95959
(916) 265-5135

The Vineyard House
Cold Springs at Hwy. 49
Coloma 95613
(916) 622-2217

Wine News

California's newest, yet one of the oldest, premium wine producing regions, has roots that extend deep into California history. Many who came seeking their fortune in gold turned to a more settled way of life, planting vineyards and orchards, as the rush for gold subsided. By 1890 grape growing and winemaking had become a major industry, with many hundreds of acres of vineyards and dozens of small wineries scattered throughout the Mother Lode. Closing of the mines, followed by population decline, phylloxera vine disease and prohibition all contributed to the eventual abandonment of all but a few vineyards. Shenandoah Valley still possesses the oldest producing vineyard and the D'Agostini Winery, fourth oldest in California.

During the 1960's, rediscovery of Amador County's rich and intense Zinfandels, and experimental planting in El Dorado County assisted by the University of California, proved the entire area ideally suited to the production of premium varietal wine grapes, and attention was again focused on the Sierra Foothills.

Most of the wineries are family-owned and operated, and are located in buildings ranging from restored old barns and ancient stone cellars to modern facilities. Since personal attention and care are given to every step of the winemaking process, you may be shown around the winery and offered tasting samples by one of the winery owners or even the winemaker. It is therefore recommended that you check the tasting hours listed here; some of the wineries are open only by appointment and if visitors call ahead, they will receive a warm welcome.

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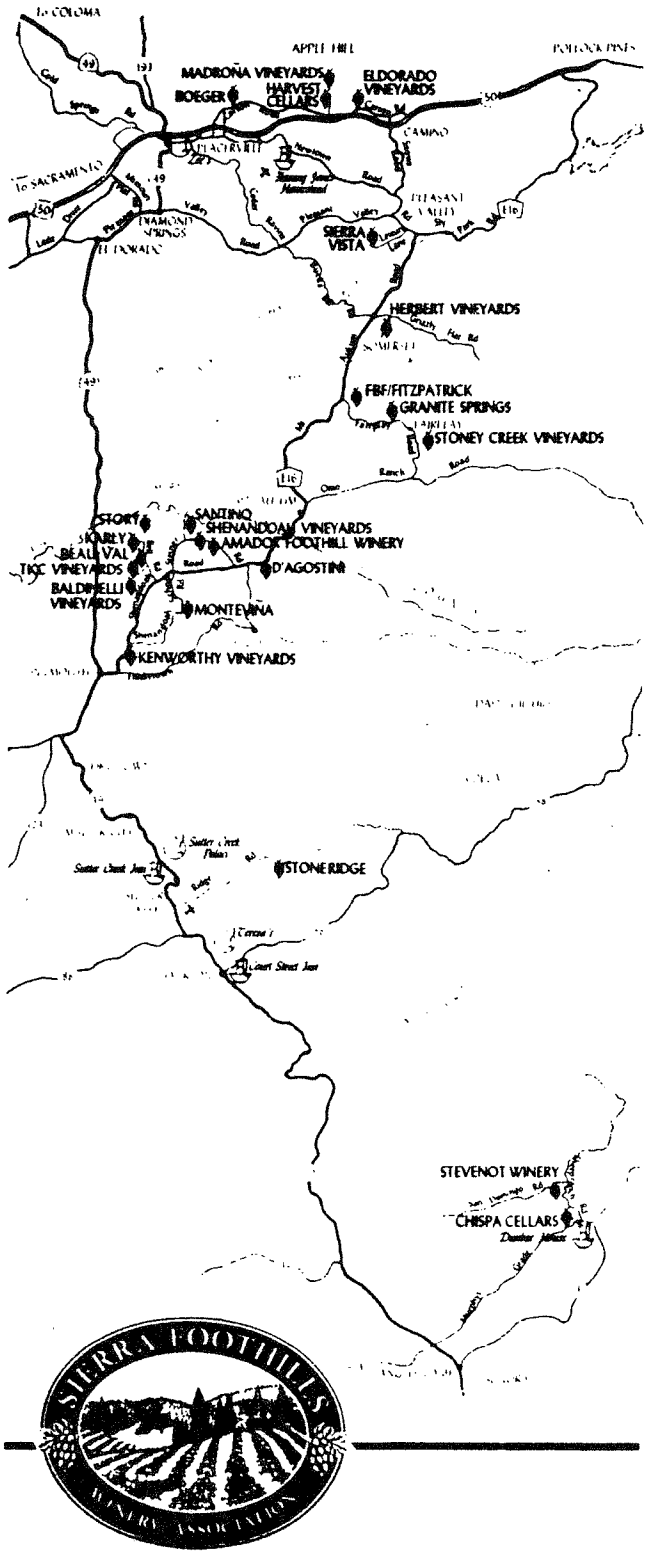
Whenever you choose to visit, the seasons are accommodating. Winter days are often crisp and sunny, while Spring brings into bloom multitudes of lupine, poppies and mountain lilac. In Summer the lush vineyards and orchards are in full leaf and heavy with fruit, and Fall shows off the oak and pine woodland's finest colors, while the days remain warm well into November. Many wineries provide attractive picnic sites where the traveler may enjoy a relaxing lunch.

A leisurely drive through the area affords the visitor an opportunity to visit the wineries while enjoying the gentle rolling hills, steep river canyons, and scenic views of the majestic Sierra Nevada mountains. Everywhere the contrast between the neatly planted vineyards and the pines and natural woodlands is striking and beautiful.

You are invited to visit anytime, to see the winemaking process and to sample some of California's most impressive wines firsthand. The wineries, large and small, old and new, together extend a warm welcome to everyone who visits the Sierra Foothills Wine Country.



from Sacramento Convention Guide, Official Convention Guide, Sept./Oct., 1983.

Objectives

Administrative rules and regulations of our Marketing Order specifically outline the objectives of Winegrowers of California. They are:

1. To promote the sale of winegrape products through promotional means for the purpose of maintaining and expanding present markets, and creating new and larger state, national and foreign markets.

2. To educate the public with respect to the uses and values of winegrape products.

3. To conduct or acquire research, including the study, analysis, dissemination and accumulation of information obtained from the research in respect to winegrape products.

4. To publish and distribute information regarding Board activities to processors, winegrape growers, and other interested persons.

5. To present facts to public and private agencies on matters that affect the marketing of winegrape products.

Interaction with Other Industry Organizations

Winegrowers of California works closely with many trade associations and other organizations within the wine industry and California agriculture in general. Budget allocations have been made to several groups for implementation of specific program elements within such general areas as market development, research and development, and trade barrier work.

WINEGROWERS OF CALIFORNIA
1900 Powell Street, Suite 245
Emeryville, CA 94608
(415) 547-7642

Robert D. Reynolds
Executive Director

WINEGROWERS of CALIFORNIA

What We Are

Winegrowers of California is a statewide organization of more than 6,500 winegrape growers and vintners united in mid-1984 under a State Marketing Order to address such joint industry concerns as market development and research, domestic and international trade barriers, and production and processing research.

It is the wine industry's first integrated joint venture designed to collect and program promotional funds from all California growers and vintners to move more California wine into the marketplace and utilize more California winegrapes.

Structure

Winegrowers is comprised of an Advisory Board and six standing committees, as follows:

Advisory Board

The Board consists of 36 members, divided equally between growers and vintners/processors, and appointed by the CDFA director for two-year terms. Each Board member is authorized one alternate. The Board is responsible for administering the objectives of the Marketing Order.

Executive Committee

Mission: To coordinate overall activities of the Marketing Order, formulate strategic plans and act on personnel matters.

Trade Barriers Committee

Mission: To investigate all state, federal and foreign laws that impact on the marketing of California's winegrape products and present such information to state and federal agencies.

Health and Social Issues Committee

Mission: To research, collect information, and publish results related to medical, health and social issues that influence the environment in which the wine industry markets its products.

Market Development Committee

Mission: To actively sponsor market research and education projects that will assist individual growers and vintners in marketing their wine products made from grapes from all districts of California.

Research & Development Committee

Mission: To research the production and processing of winegrapes, including development of new products and their uses, and research ways to improve viticulture in general. It also is responsible for grower/vintner education and communication and for researching the production of winegrapes and winegrape products, and forecasting and reviewing crop data.

Budget & Finance Committee

Mission: To formulate and supervise fiscal planning and budgeting of the organization's diverse programs. It prepares an annual budget, recommends the assessment rate and audits results of projects and activities.

Major Winegrape Growing Regions of California

Each of the seven major winegrape growing regions of the state, in which most of the wineries are located, is distinctively different. The types of grapes and resulting wines that are produced reflect each area's unique climate and soil conditions. The famed Napa Valley, the state's first officially recognized viticultural region, spans only 120 square miles across Northern California. In contrast, the Central Valley region, sprawls for about 30,000 square miles–from Sacramento to Bakersfield–through the state's lush San Joaquin Valley.

What's a Marketing Order?

Marketing orders are designed to enhance markets for agricultural products and are supported entirely by those who benefit from these activities.

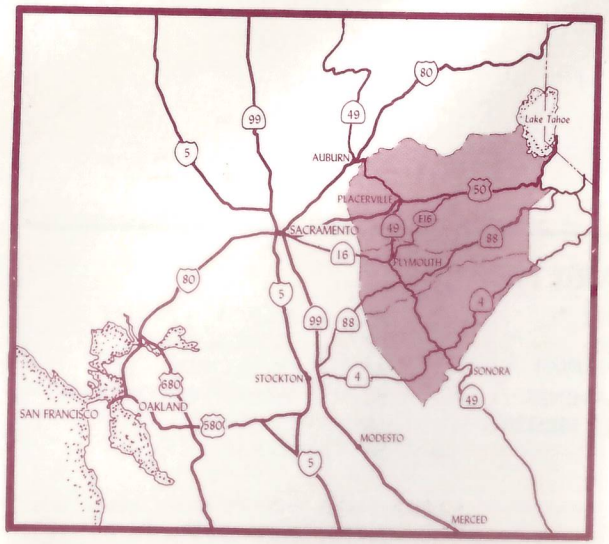
There are 47 Federal marketing orders in 37 states, covering 33 commodities having a farm value of $5.6 billion in 1984. Although these marketing orders represent a wide variety of commodities, they represent more than half of the U.S.-produced fruits and specialty crops marketed annually in this country.

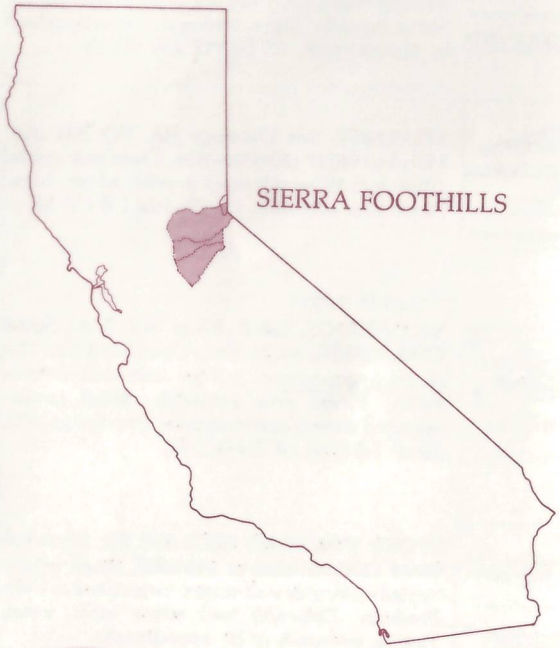
In California, which produces more than 25 percent of the nation's food, there are about 33 agricultural marketing programs–representing 29 different commodities. The California Wine and Winegrape Improvement Program (or Winegrowers of California) is one of these.

Financing and Budget

Winegrowers of California and its programs are financed by an assessment levied by the State on all winegrape growers and wine producers.

The assessment is based on the value of winegrapes sold by growers to vintners.





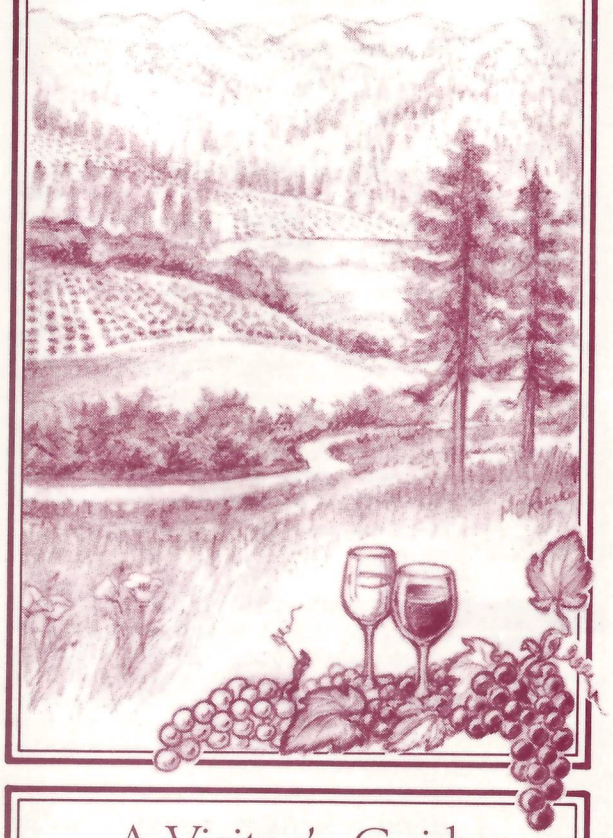
SIERRA FOOTHILLS WINERY ASSOCIATION

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
CONTACT THE INDIVIDUAL WINERIES, OR WRITE:

SIERRA FOOTHILLS WINERY ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 425
Somerset, California 95684

SIERRA FOOTHILLS WINERY ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 425
Somerset, California 95684

Winetasting
in the
SIERRA FOOTHILLS



A Visitor's Guide
to the Wine Country
of the Mother Lode

SIERRA FOOTHILLS WINE COUNTRY

California's newest, yet one of the oldest, premium wine producing regions, has roots that extend deep into California history. Many who came seeking their fortune in gold turned to a more settled way of life, planting vineyards and orchards, as the rush for gold subsided. By 1890 grape growing and winemaking had become a major industry, with many hundreds of acres of vineyards and dozens of small wineries scattered throughout the Mother Lode. Closing of the mines, followed by population decline, phylloxera vine disease and prohibition all contributed to the eventual abandonment of all but a few vineyards. Shenandoah Valley still possesses the oldest producing vineyard and the D'Agostini Winery, fourth oldest in California.

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Whenever you choose to visit, the seasons are accommodating. Winter days are often crisp and sunny, while Spring brings into bloom multitudes of lupine, poppies and mountain lilac. In Summer the lush vineyards and orchards are in full leaf and heavy with fruit, and Fall shows off the oak and pine woodland's finest colors, while the days remain warm well into November. Many wineries provide attractive picnic sites where the traveler may enjoy a relaxing lunch.

In addition to the many winetasting opportunities, the Mother Lode offers towns famous for their historic hotels, country inns, fine dining establishments and antique and art shops. One can recapture the flavor of the Gold Rush days by visiting the original gold discovery site in Coloma, and tour the old mine sites and many museums displaying relics of an era famous in western history. Deserted mines and crumbling iron-shuttered buildings scattered throughout the foothills also provide interesting glimpses of the past.

A leisurely drive through the area affords the visitor an opportunity to visit the wineries while enjoying the gentle rolling hills, steep river canyons, and scenic views of the majestic Sierra Nevada mountains. Everywhere the contrast between the neatly planted vineyards and the pines and natural woodlands is striking and beautiful.

You are invited to visit anytime, to see the winemaking process and to sample some of California's most impressive wines firsthand. The wineries, large and small, old and new, together extend a warm welcome to everyone who visits the Sierra Foothills Wine Country.

One day may not be enough to sample the wines and visit the many historic points of interest. For travelers wishing to extend their stay, we have selected several fine restaurants and country inns.

RESTAURANTS

These restaurants were chosen because they reflect the style and quality of the area, combining historic interest, outstanding meals, and feature many of our local wines.

CAFE ZOE'S ESPRESSO BAR & RESTAURANT 301 Main St, Placerville 95667 (916)622-9681. Lunch 11:30-2:30 Mon-Sat. Closed Tues. Dinner 5-9pm Fri, Sat & Sun. Sunday Brunch 10-2pm. Homemade soups, desserts and daily specials. Salad bar or soup with all entrees. Selling gourmet coffee beans and local wines.

HARROWER'S SUTTER CREEK CAFE Corner of Amelia & Hwy 49, PO Box 984, Sutter Creek 95685 (209)267-5114. Serving Tues thru Sat 11-2:30 and 5-8:30. Sunday breakfast buffet 10-2:30. Featuring homemade breads and pies. Menu changes daily. Local wines served.

TERESA'S 1235 Jackson Gate Rd, Jackson 95642 (209)223-1786. Authentic Italian food, full bar. Lunches Fri, Sat, Mon & Tues 11-2 and dinners Fri thru Tues. Closed Wed & Thurs. Extensive local wine list. Special parties. Call for reservations.

RESTAURANT & INN

SUTTER CREEK PALACE 76 Main St, Box 338, Sutter Creek, 95685 (209)267-9852. Lunch and dinner served in restaurant of this historic hotel. Five authentically furnished upstairs rooms —Circa 1890.

THE VINEYARD HOUSE Since 1878. Cold Springs Rd at Hwy 49, Coloma 95613 (916)622-2217. Fine dining in country elegance. Dinners served every night. Upstairs rooms furnished with period antiques. Continental breakfast served to overnight visitors. Saloon and gift shop. Banquet and conference facilities.

BED & BREAKFAST INNS

The following bed & breakfast country inns, offering old-fashioned charm and rural hospitality, usually serve breakfast, which is included in the lodging. It is wise to call ahead for reservations.

COURT STREET INN 215 Court St, Jackson 95642 (209)223-0416. Offering a charming Victorian atmosphere with lace curtains, antique beds, handmade quilts, fresh flowers complimentary wine, and breakfast.

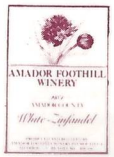
DUNBAR HOUSE, 1880 271 Jones St, Murphys 95247 (209)728-2897. Nestled in the foothills and steps from Main St. and shops, this historic Victorian home abounds with tranquility, warmth and tender loving care.

FLEMING JONES HOMESTEAD 3170 Newtown Rd. Placerville 95667 (916)626-5840. Rural hospitality, country antiques, pioneer quilts, teddy bears, hot muffins, baked apples, rich farm eggs; burros, meadows, old roses, wildflowers, and balcony rooms await guests at the 1883 farmhouse on 11 acres.

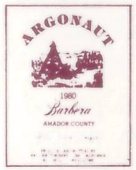
THE HEIRLOOM 214 Shakeley Ln, Ione 95640 (209)274-4468. Down a country lane to an expansive garden setting. A petite colonial mansion, circa 1863. Verandas, fireplaces, heirloom antiques. French country breakfast.

SUTTER CREEK INN P.O. Box 385, 75 Main St, Sutter Creek 95685 (209)267-5606. Lovely country inn. Nineteen rooms, all with private baths; many with fireplaces and swinging beds. Library. Reasonable prices include hot breakfast. Mobil Travel Guide four-star award.

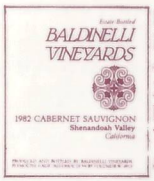
Since many of the wineries on the tour are small, often with limited personnel, winery hours may vary. It is best to check the list below before making plans.



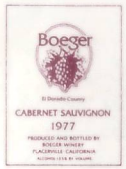
AMADOR FOOTHILL WINERY 12500 Steiner Rd, Plymouth 95669 (209)245-6307. Open weekends and holidays noon to five or by appointment. Tour energy efficient winery. Picnic facilities available. ZN WZ SB



ARGONAUT WINERY 13675 Mt Echo Dr, Ione 95640 (209)274-4106 or 274-2882. Small winery producing 2000 to 3000 cases annually of Zinfandel, Barbera, Syrah and Sauvignon Blanc. Visitors welcome; please call for hours and directions.

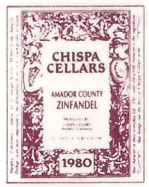


BALDINELLI VINEYARDS 10801 Dickson Rd, Plymouth 95669 (209)245-3398. 14,000 case capacity of estate bottled wines from 70 acres of Zinfandel, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Sauvignon Blanc vineyards, some vines over 62 years old. Tasting and tours Sat-Sun 11am to 4pm and by appointment.



BOEGER WINERY 1709 Carson Rd, Placerville 95667 (916)622-8094. Open Wed thru Sun, 10am to 5pm. No appointment necessary to taste wines all year in the historic 1872 stone wine cellar. Visitors are welcome to lunch in the picnic grounds, shaded by ancient fig trees. ZN CS SB CB WZ ML CD JR

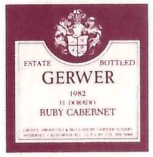
CHAPIN VINEYARDS 12455 Steiner Rd, Plymouth 95669 (209)245-3430. Winery sales room open Sat-Sun 10-4 or by appointment. Small family-owned winery established 1984; vineyards established 1976. ZN WZ SB BG



CHISPA CELLARS PO Box 255, Murphys 95247 (209)728-2106. Corner of French Gulch Rd and Murphys Grade at end of Main St. Housed in an old feed store. Established in 1976, produces primarily Zinfandel from foothill-grown grapes. Open Sat-Sun 2-5, generally.

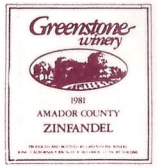
D'AGOSTINI WINERY 14430 Shenandoah Rd, Plymouth 95669 (209)245-6612. Tours, tasting daily 10 to 5pm except major holidays. State Historical Landmark. Winery and vineyard established 1856. Some original Zinfandel vines still in production. Handmade oaks casks and hand-hewned beams are still part of winery. ZN BG WZ SB MC

Limited production of vineyard designated Zinfandels, Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc. Fitzpatrick wines celebrate the magic of the vineyard. Tasting room open weekends 11-5pm or by appointment. Scenic picnic areas. Annual open house-first weekend of June.



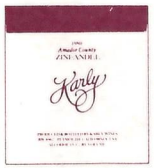
GERWER WINERY Located off Fairplay Rd in southern El Dorado County at 8221 Stoney Creek Rd, Somerset 95684 (209)245-3467 Tasting room open weekends 11-5. Picnic area under the oak trees. Vineyards planted to Ruby Cabernet, Petite Sirah, Sauvignon Blanc & Semillon. Wines also made from other selected local vineyards. WZ SB CD RC CS PS

GRANITE SPRINGS WINERY off Fairplay Rd at 6060 Granite Springs Rd, Somerset 95684 (209)245-6395. Tasting 11-5pm weekends and by appointment. Hillside vineyards of Sauvignon Blanc, Zinfandel, Cabernet Sauvignon, Chenin Blanc and Petite Sirah. Picnic under shady oaks or by a pond.

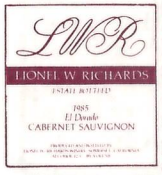


GREENSTONE WINERY Hwy 88 and Jackson Valley Rd, PO Box 1164, Ione 95640 (209)274-2238. Visitors are welcome to the gateway winery of the Sierra Foothills. Open year round for tasting, informal tours and sales. Oak-shaded picnic areas. Large groups can be accommodated. RV's welcome. Sat & Sun 10-4; July & Aug 10-4 Wed thru Sun. Closed Thanksgiving weekend and all major holidays.

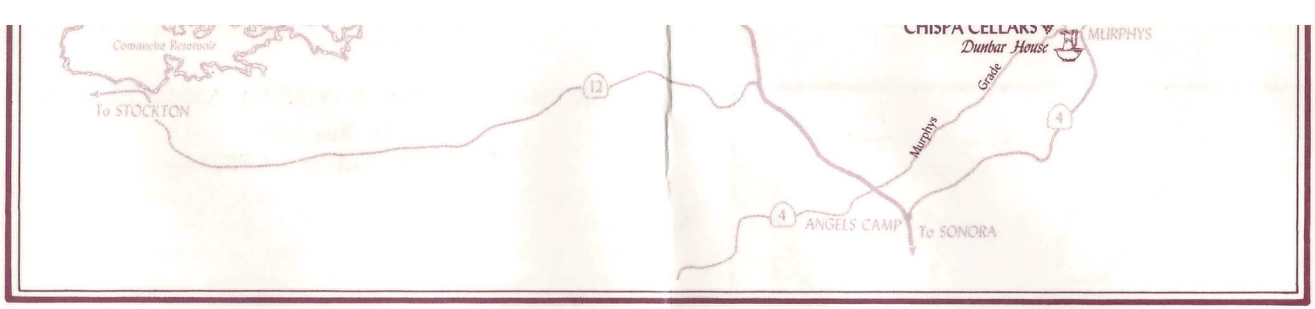
HARVEST CELLARS Premium Dry Apple Wine. PO Box 548, Murphys 95247 (209) 728-3436. Tasting daily at Stevenot Winery, Murphys, and High Hill Ranch on Carson Rd, Placerville, near Madroña, Sept thru Dec.



KARLY WINES off Bell Rd, Box 721, Plymouth 95669 (209)245-3922. Isolated winery and estate vineyards cleared from oak woodland. Zinfandel and Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay from Santa Maria Valley. Small bottlings of experimental varieties available only at winery. Open for tastings Mon thru Fri 12-4, and weekends 11-4.



LIONEL W RICHARDS WINERY PO Box 371, Mt Aukum 95656 (916)443-1905. Located on Perry Creek Rd, 2.2 miles from Gray's Corner in Somerset. A newly established winery owned and operated by Lionel and Anne Richards. First release in Spring of 1986. Limited production of premium quality Chenin Blanc, Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon.

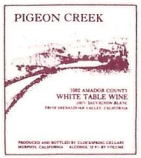


KEY TO WINE VARIETIES

ZN	— ZINFANDEL	RC	— RUBY CABERNET	MC	— MUSCAT CANELLI
CS	— CABERNET SAUVIGNON	CD	— CHARDONNAY	FB	— FUME BLANC
SB	— SAUVIGNON BLANC	PS	— PETITE SIRAH	BG	— BURGUNDY
CB	— CHENIN BLANC	GW	— GERWERTZTRAMINER	FC	— FRENCH COLOMBARD
WZ	— WHITE ZINFANDEL	JR	— JOHANNISBURG RIESLING	SM	— SEMILLON
ML	— MERLOT	BB	— BARBERA	SY	— SYRAH

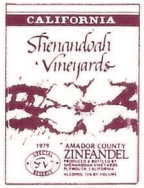
MADROÑA VINEYARDS Gatlin Rd, PO Box 454, Camino 95709 (916)644-5948. Open Sat 10-5 and Sun 1-5 or by appointment. Estate bottled, El Dorado wines produced from our own 3,000-ft-elevation vineyards of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Zinfandel, Chardonnay and Johannisberg Riesling.

MONTEVIÑA 20680 Shenandoah School Rd, Plymouth 95669 (209)245-6942. Amador County's leading producer of premium Estate Bottled varietals. Visitors welcome daily 11am-4pm. Large groups by appointment. ZN SB CD CS WZ BB SM

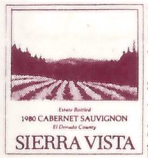


PIGEON CREEK Clockspring Vineyards PO Box 355, Plymouth 95669 (209)245-3297. Located in Amador County at 1600-foot elevation. Premium wines produced from our vineyards of Zinfandel and Sauvignon Blanc. Call or write for appointment and directions to see our 350 acres of vineyards. Sorry, no tasting facilities.

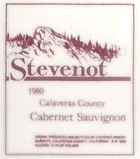
SANTINO WINES 12225 Steiner Rd, Plymouth 95669 (209)245-6979. Informal winery tours and tasting Mon thru Fri 10-4 and Sat-Sun 12-4. ZN WZ CS SB



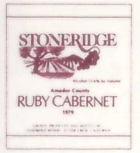
SHENANDOAH VINEYARDS 12300 Steiner Rd, Plymouth 95669 (209)245-3698. Tasting room open daily 11-5. 10 varieties of award-winning wines to please all palates. Established in 1977, small family estate, dedicated to quality.



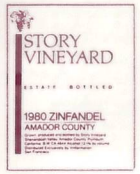
SIERRA VISTA WINERY 4560 Cabernet Way, Placerville 95667 (916)622-7221. From Pleasant Valley Rd take Leisure Ln at Pleasant Valley store. Visitors are welcome to taste our award-winning wines and enjoy the majestic view of the Sierra Nevada. Open weekends 11am-5pm and by appointment. CS FB WZ ZN SM SY



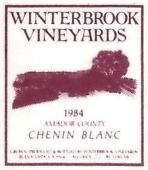
STEVENOT San Domingo Rd, PO Box 548, Murphys 95247 (209)728-3436. Open year-round 10am-5pm Winery housed in restored hay barn. Picnic area available. CS ZN WZ CB CD SB



STONERIDGE 13862 Ridge Rd East, Sutter Creek 95685 (209)223-1761. Open Sat & Sun 12-4 or by appointment; call for extended summer hours. Picnic area available. Small family-operated winery and vineyards, founded in 1975. Estate bottlings of ZN WZ RC



STORY VINEYARD 10525 Bell Rd, Plymouth 95669 (209)245-6208 or 245-6827. Small family-owned vineyards and winery established in 1973. Produces Zinfandel and white table wines. Tasting weekends or by appointment.



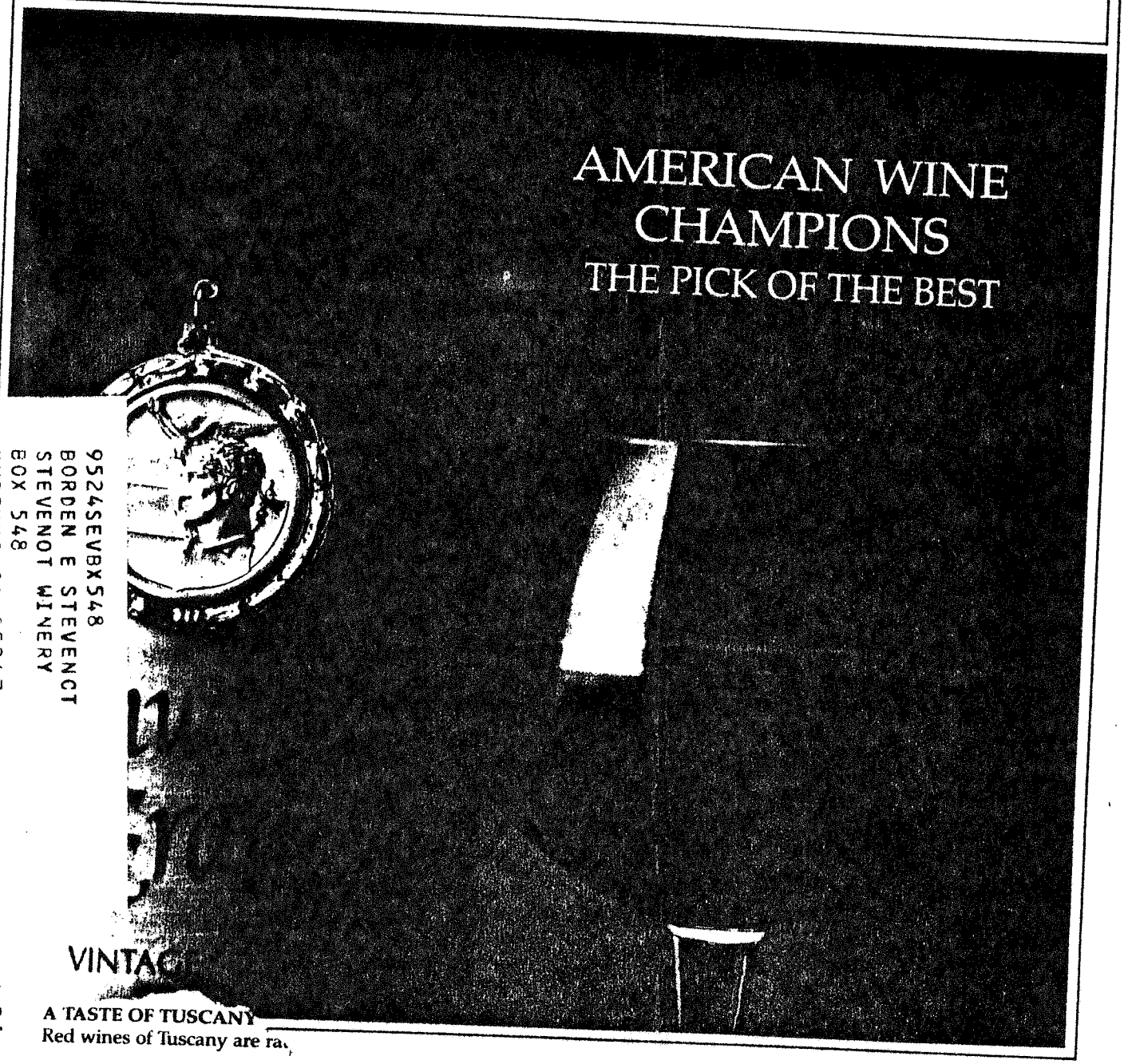
WINTERBROOK VINEYARDS 4851 Lancha Plana Rd, Buena Vista/Ione 95640 (209)274-4627. Located in historical Jackson Valley 1.7 miles SE of Buena Vista. Tasting 11-5pm weekends and by appointment. Winery is a restored 1860 era barn. Picnic area available. CB CS SB WZ ZN

MARCH, 1984 $2.00

ANNUAL

CONSUMER REPORTS ON WINE, BEER & SPIRITS

WINE & SPIRITS Buying Guide



TOP REGIONAL WINES • TASTE OF TUSCANY
TED KINGDOM BEERS • IRISH AND CANADI
BUENA VISTA WINERY & VINEY

WINE

& SPIRITS BUYING GUIDE

Vol. 2, No. 7 March, 1984

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Editorial Policy: All tastings are conducted blind. Judges are selected from the wine industry and other related areas and are used on a rotating basis. After the tasting results are tallied, wineries are offered label advertisement space. The reproduced labels appear as part of the tasting reports. There is no obligation, and the final tasting results are in no way affected by this service.

EDITOR'S NOTE

A gold-medal winning wine from a large prestigious wine competition is one worthy of consideration by all wine drinkers. Certain classes of wine—like chardonnay and cabernet—produce scores of gold medal winners. Competitions are also multiplying, at the local level, as well as the state level.

Chardonnay, to use just one popular varietal wine, from New York's Finger Lakes district is as unique as chardonnay from Santa Barbara, Mendocino, or Washington state. What happens, though, when they are put together in a blind tasting and a panel of experts is asked to come up with the top five wines in each class? The result is the American Wine Championships.

The first American Wine Championships was conducted in 1982 by *Wine & Spirits Buying Guide*, with the results a matter of widespread interest by consumer and trade alike. For the 1983 championships, the judges evaluated wines in 11 varietal and two generic classes. Gold medal winning entries from California, New York state, Washington state, Texas, Idaho, Oregon, and Michigan were evaluated over a two-day period of intensive tastings, The results, which appear in this issue, are the pick of the best wines in the 13 classes.

For many wine drinkers, the mention of Italian wine generates a feeling of mixed emotions. Generalizations aside, for many American wine buffs, there doesn't seem to be a middle ground when it comes to Italian wine—either they love them, or they hate them.

Francophiles know and appreciate only Bordeaux and Burgundy, while Californiaphiles have their taste buds locked on Napa and Sonoma. For the adventurous wine drinker, who realized early in the adventure that good wines are made in many wine regions, the premium wines of Italy were yet another taste of the good life.

Gone for them were the straw-covered chianti flasks and the oxidized soave, replaced by such refined wines as chianti classico riservas, mature barolos and barbarescos, and clean fruity whites from northern Italy. The Italian wine tide was turning in the United States as more of Italy's best, particularly red, wines were brought in by smart (and courageous) importers. Italian wine fans reveled in this new flood of premium vino.

Then, say some, the tide shifted again. This time, the quantity from italy continued unabated, while quality dropped to a neutral, high-tech level that seemed to have robbed the unique flavors and character from the wines. What happened? Did Italian winemakers sacrifice quality for quantity, or are American wine palates jaded? John Mariani, an astute student of Italian wine and a prolific wine and food writer has some answers. In his commentary, Mariani looks at the present status and quality of premium Italian wines and suggests some solutions for a brighter future. WSBG's eastern wine panel also found some concern and hope in a tasting of Tuscan red wines.

HOW WE TASTE

All tastings are conducted by WSBG in either Albany, Calif, or New York City. Wines are supplied either by wineries, importers, distributors, or are purchased at retail by WSBG.

Our criteria are that the wines must be available to the consumer at the time the tastings appear in print. All prices listed are suggested California or New York City retail.

All wines tasted by WSBG panels are judged in unmarked clear glasses and placed within their respective categories so that, for example, chardonnays are tasted only with other chardonnays. Judges are given no information about the wines to be tasted other than the type or varietal, and residual sugar levels where appropriate. A complete list of all wines tasted can be found elsewhere in this issue.

The WSBG rating system is based on the awarding of one to five stars:

☆☆☆☆☆—Outstanding
☆☆☆☆—Excellent
☆☆☆—Very Good
☆☆—Good
☆—Average

Following each tasting, the judges rate the wines then discuss each on its own merits and within its respective class.

oaky; soft yet dry character; moderate depth of flavor; a very nice wine. In the fruity style; not an aggressively big wine, but very pleasant. **$10**

Zaca Mesa 1980 Santa Ynez Valley "American Estate" Chardonnay

☆☆☆☆

Full gold; barrel fermented yeasty nose; good balance of oak and fruit, crisp acidity; full Burgundian oaky-toasty character. **$16**

Concannon Vineyards 1982 Santa Maria Valley Chardonnay ☆☆☆☆

Light straw; lively apricot aroma of subtle complexity; medium body; flavors are full and round with some wood character; well-balanced; tart finish of moderate length. Good aging potential. **$8**

Austin Cellars 1982 Santa Barbara Co. "Bien Nacido Vineyards" White Riesling ☆☆☆☆

Light gold; dried apricots, clean and flowery on the nose; light body; off-dry, good riesling fruit flavors, crisp acidity; finishes clean and full. **$6.90**

Estrella River Winery 1982 Johannisberg Riesling Paso Robles

☆☆☆☆☆

Lovely honey/apricot aromas; complex flavors with good acid/sugar balance, long finish. Beautiful example of the spätlese style. Residual sugar 2.1%; alcohol 9.5%. **Good Value $6**

Ballard Canyon Winery 1982 Johannisberg Riesling Santa Ynez Valley ☆☆☆☆

Ripe riesling aromas, apricot, orange blossoms; on the sweet side with decent acidity, although too much sugar for some judges. Good dessert wine. r.s. 2.5%; 10.9 alc. **$7**

Bargetto Santa Cruz Winery 1982 Santa Barbara County Late Harvest Johannisberg Riesling ☆☆☆☆

Gold color; rich honeyed botrytis and tropical fruit aromas; medium-full body; well-balanced; the palate is a melange of bananas, oranges, apples, mangos and guava; long, slightly syrupy finish. Just a touch more acid would have raised this to five stars. Great dessert wine at a bargain basement price. Worth searching out; 10.75% r.s., 8.8% alc. **$9**

Felton-Empire Vineyards 1981 Tepusquet Vineyard Santa Barbara Selected Late Harvest White Riesling ☆☆☆☆☆

Bright yellow-gold; clean, rich, honeyed aroma; full-bodied; excellent balance; apricots and honey with subtle complexities, sweet and luscious, and despite its varietal heritage more like a sauternes than a TbA; clean rich, sweet finish; 20% r.s. 8% alc. A classic dessert wine. Fantastic value **$10/375ml**

Sierra Foothills

A collection of five counties make up the viticultural region known as the Sierra Foothills. Situated between Sacramento and the eastern boundary of the state, the counties are north to south Nevada, Placer, El Dorado, Amador and Calaveras.

Just over 2,300 acres of vineyards exist in the Sierra Foothills, with Amador County the major growing area. A total of 24 wineries produce table wines in the Sierra Foothills, most of them in Amador and El Dorado counties. El Dorado County has the second largest planting with 400 acres, while Nevada County has fewer than 35 acres of wine grapes.

The Sierra Foothills has been a wine region since the middle of the 19th century, but it wasn't until 1972 when the first winery opened. Most of the vineyards are planted at elevations of 1,400 to 3,000 feet, with the highest in El Dorado County.

Zinfandel is the best known wine from the Sierra Foothills, particularly those from Amador County. Sutter Home Winery of Napa, a zinfandel specialist, buys all of its grapes from one Amador grower. Sierra Foothills winemakers are also making stylistic chardonnays, sauvignon blancs and pinot noirs.

Boeger Winery 1982 Sierra Blanc El Dorado County ☆☆☆☆

This wine has a lot of fruit in the aromas and some complexity in the flavors. The judges thought it was a beautifully balanced wine that would be excellent with food, dry and with plenty of character. Alcohol 12%, **$4.25**

Grand Cru Vineyards 1982 Clarksburg Calif. Dry Chenin Blanc

☆☆☆☆

True, clean varietal character; slightly sweet, but well balanced; slightly spritzy. Some surprisingly complex flavors for a chenin blanc. **$6.50**

Madrona 1981 El Dorado County Chardonnay

☆☆☆☆

Straw toasty, buttery French oak overtones to solid varietal fruit; medium bodied, and silky texture, yet very good acid to lift the lush toasty fruit flavors; long finish. A generous, complex wine with a long future ahead of it. GOOD VALUE. **$8**

Madrona Vineyards 1980 Estate Bottled El Dorado County Zinfandel ☆☆☆☆

Last year, our note on this wine read, "Purple, rich ripe raspberries throughout. Tannic, full, dry style." It has developed considerable over the last year. Deep ruby with a purple case 13.8% alcohol; open buttery, raspberry aroma with a subtle suggestion of mint and toast; mild tannins; rich earth-oak-berry flavors; good complexity; astringent finish. Give it another three to five years in your cellar. **$6**

Other California Appellations

When certain wines, usually jug or generic table wines, are blended from grapes grown in more than one county, the winery elects to use the appellation "California" or other multiple county names like "North Coast."

These wines are listed here, some in cork-finished 750 ml bottles, others in larger, 1.5 liter jugs or magnums. Often, these wines represent excellent value such as the case of The Monterey Vineyard Classic California red and white wines. Varietals also show up with a California appellation, selling for $6 or less, like the Franciscan '82 Fumé Blanc and the Jekel NV Cabernet Sauvignon.

North Coast Cellars Pinot Noir Appellation North Coast ☆☆☆☆

A deeply colored wine with complex, earthy, mushroomy aromas and very nice structure and balance between acid and tannins.

CONTINUED

Ron and Pam Erickson of Columbia stand ready to lead a visitors' tour at the rustic entrance of their Yankee Hill Winery.

Story and Photo
By MIKE DUNN
Sacramento Bee correspondent

Fermentation tanks and aging casks are becoming as familiar on the hills and in the hollows throughout the Mother Lode's Southern Mines region as the headframes that jab the sky over abandoned gold diggings. A rush to the Sierra foothills is underway, but the nuggets sought today are plump and purple and droop in juicy clusters from gnarled vines that line the slopes in orderly rows.

Six of these new prospectors are Ron and Pam Erickson and their four children. Erickson sold the family's Redwood City restaurant and bakery and bought the Yankee Hill Winery at Columbia, Tuolumne county, in mid-1977.

Founded in 1970, the winery consists of crushing facilities, concrete fermentation tanks coated with food grade epoxy, storage vats converted

Goal: Achieved In Angelo Papagni Wines

From Page F-1

he will check the vines again, cutting away more small, just-forming bunches of grapes, to be sure all the vines' strength will go only to a limited amount of fruit remaining. By utilizing only his own vineyards, insisting on none but hand-harvested grapes — while employing modern harvesting techniques and picking directly into the gondolas — Angelo is able to have the grapes crushed and fermenting in the oxygen-free atmosphere in a matter of minutes. Each stainless steel fermentation tank is designed to assure near-perfect temperature control during fermentation, thus holding the maximum retention of fresh fruit flavors.

Angelo also employs the most modern of millipore filter devices to help insure sterility.

IF WOOD AGING is desirable, Papagni wines see the kind of cooperage best suited to the variety. If that happens to be expensive French Limousin oak, then that wood is used.

Angelo Papagni's wines range from amazingly fine sparkling types to delicate white table wines, full-bodied reds, tasty roses, and yet-to-

zionale in Milan, Italy, a wine competition international in scope.

The three wines that won the gold for Papagni Vineyards were Madera Rose, a rich, full-bodied and fruity rose with a pleasant touch of sweetness; Barbera 1973, a red wine of some considerable finesse, and Moscato d' Angelo, contender for the title of most luscious dessert wine produced in California. Particular pride was taken in the honors being bestowed on the later two wines, because both are produced from grape varieties that originated in Italy.

Chenin Blanc is another variety that has done extremely well for the Papagni label, both in competition and the marketplace. Every vintage thus far has held its own, in side-by-side comparisons, to the famous labels of the North and Central Coast regions. It is perhaps Papagni's most consistently successful variety.

Most controversial of Papagni's wines is a huge red called Alicante Bouschet, named for the hybrid grape which produces it. Long grown and employed by many major wineries, its job has been providing body and color in the blending process for

method, he produces an exceptional product. He credits his success to using smaller tanks than most and leaves his wine on its yeasts for a longer time than other bulk producers.

It was in some of the early champagne botlings that I found the most cause for criticism of the Papagni line, finding what I felt was a touch of bitterness to the finish of even the relatively sweet "extra dry." But that was three years ago, and a change in the cuvee seems to have solved that small problem.

Another sparkling Papagni wine, Spumante d' Angelo, is produced from the same grapes that make up the cuvee for the Moscato. Spumante is another medal winner and is much in the style of the Italian Asti Spumantes. It is superior, in my opinion, to most of those sweet imports, and is more reasonably priced.

I do not mean to imply that I am charmed by every Papagni wine; that simply is not possible, personal taste being what it is. What I am trying to convey is that the wines of Angelo Papagni are fine wines, as a whole, that many of them will stand

Southern Mother Lode Now Has A 'Wine Rush'

from stainless steel dairy tanks, aging casks and bottling works, all housed in a concrete-block structure next to the Erickson residence. The vineyards, noted Erickson, will come later. For now, the family buys its grapes from growers in Lodi, Geyserville, Turlock and parts of Amador County.

Yankee Hill Winery, however, distinguishes itself as "one of the few Norwegian wineries in the world" and as a producer of a diverse variety of products, 22 altogether, including the only elderberry wine vinegar in the world.

Yankee's most popular wines are Fire Light, Spumante, Rhine, Chablis, Grenache and its champagne, said Erickson. It also produces Zinfandel, Burgundy, Rose, pink champagne, cold duck, grape juice, seven fruit wines and two vinegars.

The winery, open to visitors from sunup to sundown seven days a week, is situated atop Coarsegold Road off Jackson-Yankee Hill Road about a mile and a half east of Columbia State Historic Park. In addition to informal tours of the facilities, the Ericksons provide wine and grape juice tasting.

Other Southern Mines wineries and their policies concerning tours and tasting:

Chispa Cellar — Established in 1976, Chispa is snuggled in the tiny rock-walled basement of the 1856 Fisk Building in Murphys, Calaveras County. Proprietors Jim Riggs and Bob Bliss produce Zinfandel, Chenin Blanc and Ruby Cabernet wines, although they currently are sold out of all except Zinfandel. Tours, tastings available by appointment only; call (209) 728-2106 or (209) 728-3492.

Stevenot Cellars — The Mother Lode's newest winery, Stevenot, is just now opening at Barden Stevenot's ranch three miles north of Murphys on San Domingo Road. Approximatley 4,000 gallons are fermenting, with the first batch expected to be on the market next spring. Stevenot will produce Chenin Blanc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Zinfandel, White Zinfandel and Napa Gamay. Although tastings aren't yet ings available by appointment only; telephone (209) 223-1761.

Amador Winery — Established in 1967, Amador is situated in the rock-walled cellar of an 1869 building in Amador City, Amador County. Proprietors Lee Merrill and Harry Ahrendt produce souvenir-label miniature wine botles which can be found at many Mother Lode tourist attractions. The winery's eight wines are Sauterne, Chablis, Mountain Rhine, Vin Rose, Burgundy, Madam Pink Chablis (in honor of the Mother Lode's former bawdy houses), Sutter's Gold and Mountain Jubilee, a blended wine which features six spices and which can be served hot or cold. The winery is open for tours and tasting from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. seven days a week.

FOUR WINERIES are located in Amador county's Shenandoah Valley.

Montevina — Established in 1973, Montevina is one of the few European- style wineries in the state, with all its grapes grown and wines made on the premises. The winery is on

Cosumnes River Vineyards — Established in 1972, Cosumnes River is situated in a yellow brick building Shenandoah School Road, three miles northeast of Plymouth. Winemaker Cary Gott primarily is producing Zinfandel, Cabernet Sauvignon and White Zinfandel. Tours, tastings by appointment only; telephone (209) 245-3412.

along Bell Road north off the Plymouth-Shenandoah Road northeast of Plymouth. Proprietor Dr. Eugene Story of Sacramento produces Zinfandel and Pink Mission wines. Tours, tastings by appointment only; call (209) 245-6208.

Shenandoah Vinyards — Established in 1977, Shenandoah is operated by the Leon So... on family at the old stone Steiner ...anch on Steiner Road north off the ...lymouth-Shenandoah Road northe...st of Plymouth. The Sobons, who t...is year are doubling last year's in...tial production of 3,400 gallons, make Zinfandel, Caber...net, Chenin Blanc White Zinfande... and Pinot Blanc. ...ours, tastings by appointment only; ...phone (209) 245-3698.

D'Agostini Winy — Established in 1856 by Adam ...linger and ... recently operated ... the four D'Agostini brothers, this ...inery at the eastern end of the Shen...ndoah Valley is a state historical lan...lmark and is believed to be the fo...rth oldest winery in the state. They ...roduce Zinfandel, Burgundy Reser...e, Claret, Dry Muscat and Saute...ne. Tasting and self-guided tours th...ough the historic rock cellars are ...vailable from a.m. to 4:30 p.m. s...ven days a week except for major ...holidays. Three other Shenandoah Valley wineries either are under c...nstruction or are on the drawing bo...rd, but they are not yet open to visi...rs.

FFA Cotton Judges' Contest Day Is Near

Future Farmers of America chapters from throughout the state's cotton growing counties will compete at the 21st annual cotton judging contest staged by the agricultural sciences division of Fresno State University Nov. 18.

The event, which is also cosponsored by Producers Cotton Oil Co. of Fresno, will determine the state's top FFA cotton judges in lint, seed, bolls and plants. Clovis ...igh School FFA won the event last ...ar.

Activities will b...gin with registration at 8:30 a.m. ...the agriculture administration buil...ling. Competition will start at 9 a.m.

FSU promises th... awards ceremonies will start at ...:45 p.m. in the university cafeteri... Event coordinators are Drs. O. J. ...Burger and Gary Ritenour, both FS... agronomy professors.

Tasting & Touring in America's Wine Country

Volume III Issue #1 August-September 1983

Edited and published by Bob Bortfeld and Susan Ledak

SAN DIEGO COUNTY

Two hundred years after the founding of Mission San Diego de Alcalá, and the planting of the first grapevines in the Mission gardens, San Diego remains one of the most unlikely winegrape growing areas of California. Yet the vineyards, however small and scattered, have persisted. The winemakers mostly at home—in garages and barns—have maintained the tradition, making gutty red wines. But today a mild resurgence in bonded wineries has begun. Old time wineries, Ferrara and Bernardo, remain in the Escondido area north of the city of San Diego, Point Loma Winery, the newest and smallest winery is located in the heart of the city, while at least one winemaker has serious plans afoot to establish a winery and vineyard in the Cuyamaca Mountains, east of San Diego in the town of Julian. The area's largest wine producer is the San Pasqual Vineyards in the San Pasqual Valley agricultural preserve, a few miles south of Escondido.

The Escondido area of San Diego County, like other areas of Southern California, was a popular winegrowing region up through Prohibition. That tradition is continued today only by Ferrara and Bernardo Wineries. While Ferrara Winery, which is located in the town of Escondido, has the trappings of old technology, the family-owned operation has also been upgrading to modern equipment systematically over the past few years. In contrast, Bernardo Winery, in the country club community of Rancho Bernardo, continues much as it has since it was founded in 1889. Winemaker Ross Rizzo makes wine in an old barn, using an aging basket press, fermenting in concrete vats and aging in redwood tanks.

But, as with the resurrection of Temecula, San Diego wine country is being revived by more modern wineries like San Pasqual Vineyards.

WINE COUNTRY EVENTS

The Napa Valley Wine Library Association presents its **Wine Appreciation Seminar** three times on **August 5-7, 12-14 and 19-21.** The seminar includes sessions on sensory evaluation, winemaking, as well as a field trip and comparative tastings. $120 per person. Mail application to Wine Course, P.O. Box 328, St. Helena, CA 94574. Include dates chosen, name and home phone number.

August 6-7 is the **Third Annual Sonoma Wine Auction** to be held at Buena Vista Winery. Proceeds benefit the Sonoma Wine Library and a scholarship fund. Contact Nancy Lynn Gray (707) 823-7651.

August 7 is the **Festival of Monterey County Wine and Food** at the Laguna Seca Recreational Area. Cost is $8.00 at the gate ($7.00 in advance). Contact Pamela Williams (408) 424-7611.

August 9-14 are the dates of the **Society of Wine Educators' Conference** at the University of Washington campus in Seattle. Contact Box C19009, Seattle, WA 98109.

August 19-21, the University of California—San Diego sponsors a **Weekend Wine Conference at Lake Arrowhead.** Cost is $250. Contact UCSD Extension at (619) 452-3400.

August 21 is the date for this year's **Napa Valley Wine Library Association Tasting** to be held at Napa's Silverado Country Club. Membership in the Association is $15 annually. The Association can be contacted at the Napa Valley Wine Library, Box 328, St. Helena, CA 94574.

August 21, Johnson's Alexander Valley Wines will hold an open house with Warren Lubich on the Theatre Pipe Organ from 12-4pm. Phone (707) 433-2319.

The Highlands Inn of Carmel, CA will feature weekly **Wine Showcases** starting in **September.** Featured wines will be from Monterey County Wineries. Contact Daniel Barduzzi at (408) 624-3801.

September 11 is the **Los Angeles Wine Festival.** Contact Martin Langer, American Wine Academy, P.O. Box 3271, Glendale, CA 91201 (213) 981-4885.

University of California Extension Short Courses continue with **Successful Home Winemaking** (August 6), **Step by Step Winemaking** (August 20-27), **Learning About Wines** (Thursday evenings 7-10 pm, October 20-December 1), **Introduction to the Sensory Evaluation of Wine** (December 3-4). These are all held at the Davis Campus. **A Napa Valley Wine Weekend** will be held October 28-30. For further information on these courses, contact James Lapsley, University Extension, University of California, Davis, CA 95616 (916) 752-6021.

NOTE ON CHANGE IN SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Due to increasing costs, our subscription rate has been raised to $22/year, $42/two years. Back issues are available on a limited basis at $4 each.

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SIERRA FOOTHILLS

The Sierra Foothills are clearly divided into two growing regions. The lower, warmer slopes near Plymouth, Fiddletown, Amador City, Sutter Creek and Jackson are renown for intense, briary Zinfandels. More recently, simple White Zinfandels and aggressive Sauvignon Blancs have been produced, this area's entries into the white wine market. In the vicinity of Placerville, the cooler, higher elevations are producing buttery Chardonnays, intensely fruited Cabernets, and lovely Rieslings.

The Foothills have been producing winegrapes for more than a century, when immigrants settled the land in the wake of the Gold Rush. Many vineyards date back to the turn of the Century. The D'Agostini Winery is the oldest winery in the area, being established in 1856 by Adam Uhlinger and purchased by the D'Agostini family in 1911. Today, nearly two dozen wineries dot the lower slopes with production led by Monteviña Wines of Plymouth. Montevinã makes 40,000 cases of wine annually from grapes grown on 450 acres of vineyards at the 1700 foot elevation. While most of its output is in big, full-bodied Zinfandels, recent entries have included some delicate whites and Cabernet Sauvignon.

The Shenandoah Valley in Amador County received a lot of attention the last two years during the controversy over the rights to use the appellation of origin "Shenandoah Valley". The Shenandoah Valley of Virginia laid claim to the title as did the California Valley of the same name. The BATF, after hearings and reams of documentation had been collected, ruled in favor of the Virginia claim. Therefore, wine bottled in the California Valley must be labelled "Shenandoah Valley, California", while that which comes from the Virginia region need only be labelled "Shenandoah Valley."

Whatever the name, the Shenandoah Valley of California is the center of Amador county wine production with the biggest and best known Foothill wineries located there. Along with Monteviña and D'Agostini is Shenandoah Vineyards. Leon and Shirley Sobon's winery is not only well-known for blockbuster Zinfandels, but equally for its dessert wines—Port, Black Muscat and Mission del Sol. Santino Winery has made a lovely Sauvignon Blanc, a full line of different styles of Zins, as well as a very nice Cabernet from El Dorado County. Baldinelli Vineyards has two stylish entries in its latest Amador Zin and Shenandoah Valley Cab. One of the newest entries in the area's winegrowing camp is ClockSpring Vineyards whose fruit is used by several wineries and is bottled under their own label, Pigeon Creek.

In the higher elevations of El Dorado County, several wineries flourish using fruit from their own vineyards. Madroña, Boeger, and El Dorado wineries are all located in the Apple Hill area outside of Placerville. (See *Wine Trails' Volume I, Issue* #3). Madroña Vineyards continues to put out lovely, round, well-balanced wines, as does Boeger Winery in its larger, broader list of wine offerings. But newer wineries have entered the market and have made their mark in the past two years. Fitzpatrick is the label of FBF Winery of Somerset, a small town on the Consumnes River south of Placerville. From a small, inauspicious start in 1981, Bill Bertram, Brian Fitzpatrick and Michael Fitzpatrick have upgraded their quality and style rapidly, producing fine quality wines this past year from purchased grapes. The next two years their vineyards will produce an estate Chardonnay and Cabernet. Sierra Vista and Granite Springs both produce fine quality wines from El Dorado grapes. Sierra Vista Winery, founded in 1977 by John and Barbara MacCready, has come on strong with a full line of wines in the past two vintages. At Granite Springs Winery, located just east of Somerset, Les and Lynne Russell have made award winning wines from Sauvignon Blanc and Zinfandel and have introduced a Cabernet this year as well.

Most of the wines produced by the Foothill Wineries are from Foothill grown grapes. This dependency on their own grapes has given the wines of Gold Country a generally consistent and unique character. The El Dorado wines possess good fruit and fine acid balance. The Amador wines, big and forward as they are, have been tamed a bit, giving them a degree of finesse that they have needed to gain wider acceptance. Amador wineries are also getting onto the white wine bandwagon and have extended their line with Sauvignon Blanc and White Zinfandel.

Amador County vineyards have produced fruit for many wineries in other areas of California. Two of the best known are Sutter Home of Napa Valley, who has made its name on Amador Zins and was the first to make White Zin on a large scale, and Ridge Vineyards of

Cupertino in the Santa Cruz Mountains, whose Fiddletown and Shenandoah Zins are among their long list of vineyard designated and regionally labelled wines.

Sierra Foothill wines also represent very good values. Most wines are fairly priced in the $5 to $8 range, with a few very nice wines at $3.75 to $4.75. Herewith, some of our comments on current releases.

Zinfandel is without a doubt the king of Sierra Foothill grapes. Understandably, it leads our list in quantity and variety of styles.

1980 Amador Foothill Winery Amador Zinfandel *($6.50)* and the more intense **Fiddletown Zinfandel** *($8.00)*. Both are nicely made, oaky wines with good berry flavors.

1980 Argonaut Winery Amador Zinfandel *($5.50)*. Almost claret in style, this medium-bodied wine has nice fruit, good balance and a lovely berry finish.

1980 Baldinelli Amador Zinfandel Lot #1 *($6.00)*. The wine is complex with good tannin support. Fresh berries abound. The grapes were from 60 year old vines, giving the wine good depth and rich flavor.

1980 Beau Val Amador Zinfandel *($5.75)*. Lush fruit with berries, cherries and currants everywhere! Bursting with flavors and finishing with finesse, this is a memorable wine.

1981 Herbert Vineyards El Dorado Zinfandel *($6.00)*. A lovely wine with big, fruity flavors of berries and candied apples.

1981 Karly Wines Amador Zinfandel *($7.50)*. Recently bottled, this wine is awkward now, but has the makings of a fine wine in a year or so. Good balance, good fruit and modest complexity.

1980 Kenworthy Amador Zinfandel *($7.00)* from Potter Cowan Vineyards. Well-balanced, lush fruit, tannic. Needs time.

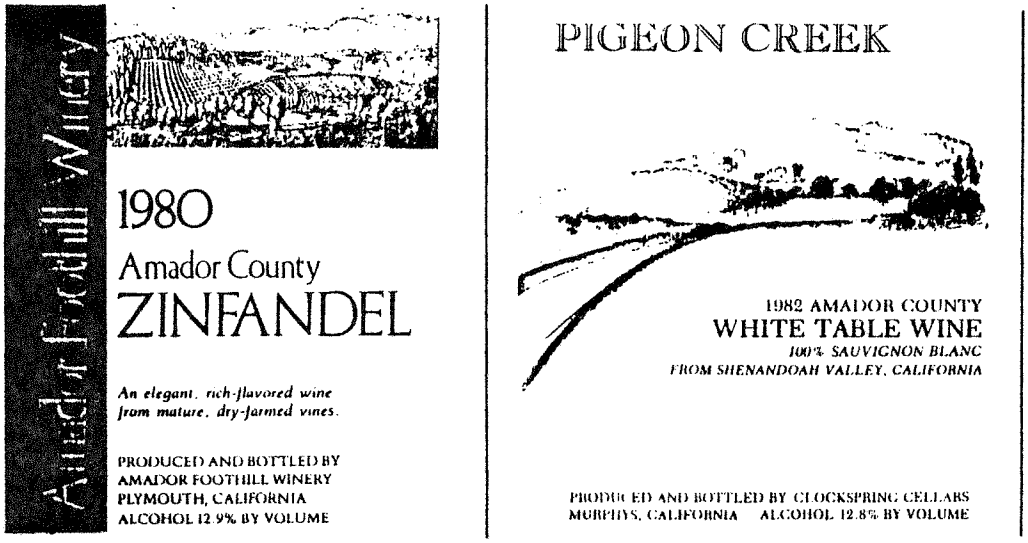
1980 Santino Shenandoah Valley Zinfandel *($6.50)*. A complex, claret-styled, full-bodied wine. Excellent fruit and a long lush finish. Excellently balanced.

1980 Santino Fiddletown Amador Special Selection Zinfandel *($7.50)*. This is a big, huge wine with finesse. 14% alcohol. Well-made and well-behaved, this big wine carries the style typified by Amador Zins over the past decade.

1980 Stoneridge Amador Zinfandel *($4.75)*. This is a nice simple wine. Good fruit flavors, well-balanced with acid. A pleasant sipper or barbeque wine.

Cabernet Sauvignon from El Dorado has shown well in the past two years, while Amador Cabs are trying to find themselves. Styles are just beginning to develop as winemakers learn to deal with the uniqueness of the Foothill fruit.

1980 Baldinelli Shenandoah Valley Cabernet Sauvignon *($7.00)*. This is an austere, angular wine that should come together nicely with another year or two in the bottle. Toasty, oaky flavors overlaid on earthy, coffee-flavored fruit.



1980 Granite Springs El Dorado Cabernet Sauvignon *($8.00)*. Earthy and aggressive, this wine has good Cab flavors. A nice wine.

1980 Santino El Dorado Cabernet Sauvignon *($8.00)* from Mirande's Stonebarn Vineyards. An herbaceous wine, round and mellow on the palate, it demonstrates the high acid typical of El Dorado Cabernets. Rich berry nose, light claret style.

1980 Stevenot Calaveras County Cabernet Sauvignon *($7.50)*. Austere and well-balanced, this Cab is earthy and exhibits a hint of cedar and tobacco in the nose. Aggressive, it has a bit of bellpeppers on the palate along with green olives and good fruit. Nicely finished.

With Zinfandel being the king of Foothill red wines, one would think that **White Zinfandels** would be among the best of the whites. Not so! Many white Zins we have tasted from this area are flavorless, cloying, or just plain lacking in character. Foothill winemakers have to learn to preserve the lush fruit flavors of this grape both in the vineyard and in the winery. We did recently find two that have done just that.

1982 Fitzpatrick Amador Zinfandel Blanc *($5.00)*. A well-made, well-balanced blanc de noir with excellent fresh Zinfandel fruit flavors—strawberries and raspberries. Only a touch of sweetness appears on the palate and a fresh, crisp finish makes this a lovely wine for summer sipping and simple meals.

1982 Santino Amador White Zinfandel "Semi-Dry" *($5.50)*. Fresh strawberry flavors and a touch of sugar are balanced with crisp acidity. A nice wine.

Sauvignon Blanc has become the leading white wine from the Foothills. Several wineries have made lovely aggressive wines, including Boeger Winery and Sierra Vista Winery which we commented on in an earlier issue.

1982 Fitzpatrick Shenandoah Valley Sauvignon Blanc *($7.00)* from ClockSpring Vineyard. This is a very nice wine, filled with lovely varietal flavors throughout. The grape's grassy character comes through without being overly aggressive. Fresh, crisp and yet full-bodied.

1982 Granite Springs California Sauvignon Blanc *($6.50)* is 60% from El Dorado grapes and 40% Amador grapes. Nicely made with a complex, stoney character and good appley fruit. The flowery nose and finish are contributed by a small amount of Semillon that has been added.

1982 Karly Amador Fume Blanc *($7.50)*. Good fruit flavors are married nicely with oak in this wine which, while aggressive, is tamed by the oak and a hint of residual sugar. A bit hot in the finish, but an otherwise stylish wine.

1982 Pigeon Creek Amador County White Table Wine *($4.95)*. This wine is 100% Sauvignon Blanc from ClockSpring Cellars' H.F.H. Ranch in the Shenandoah Valley. This first offering is flowery, appley and crisp. Finished almost dry with a pleasant grassiness. A nice wine and a good buy.

1982 Shenandoah Vineyards Amador Sauvignon Blanc *($7.50)*. Full-bodied with lots of varietal character—flinty, grassy, flowery. Crisp and well-balanced on the palate with a long finish.

Other white wines made from Foothill grapes include these:

1981 Madroña Vineyards El Dorado Chardonnay *($8.50)*. This is the second beautiful Chardonnay from this new winery. More stylish and less forward than the 1980, this wine is full of buttery flavors, toasty components and a long, spicey finish. A beautiful wine at an attractive price!

1981 Madroña Vineyards El Dorado White Riesling *($5.00)*. Lovely with flavors of fresh apricots and peaches. Good complexity and a touch of sweetness.

1981 Stevenot El Dorado Chenin Blanc *($4.75)*. While lacking the lush fresh fruit of the Delta Region Chenin Blanc, this relatively dry Chenin is full-bodied and oaky with good balance.

1982 Story Vineyards Premiere White Wine *($3.75)*. This is a lovely sipping wine made from a blend of Mission and New Zinfandel grapes. Medium sweet at 1.5% residual sugar.

For more information on Sierra Foothill wineries, a visitor's guide to the wine country of the Mother Lode can be obtained from the Sierra Foothill Wineries, P.O. Box 438, Somerset, CA 95684.

Wine News

California's newest, yet one of the oldest, premium wine producing regions, has roots that extend deep into California history. Many who came seeking their fortune in gold turned to a more settled way of life, planting vineyards and orchards, as the rush for gold subsided. By 1890 grape growing and winemaking had become a major industry, with many hundreds of acres of vineyards and dozens of small wineries scattered throughout the Mother Lode. Closing of the mines, followed by population decline, phylloxera vine disease and prohibition all contributed to the eventual abandonment of all but a few vineyards. Shenandoah Valley still possesses the oldest producing vineyard and the D'Agostini Winery, fourth oldest in California.

During the 1960's, rediscovery of Amador County's rich and intense Zinfandels, and experimental planting in El Dorado County assisted by the University of California, proved the entire area ideally suited to the production of premium varietal wine grapes, and attention was again focused on the Sierra Foothills.

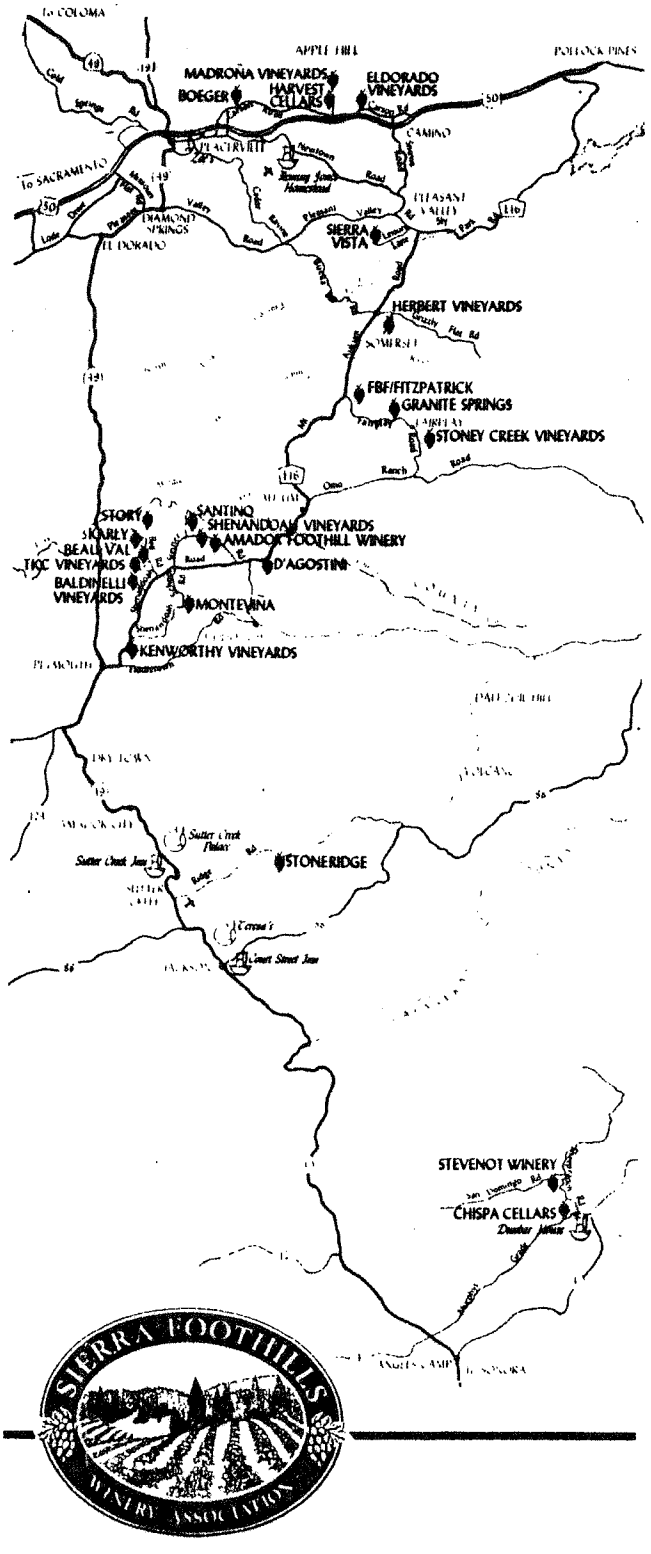
Most of the wineries are family-owned and operated, and are located in buildings ranging from restored old barns and ancient stone cellars to modern facilities. Since personal attention and care are given to every step of the winemaking process, you may be shown around the winery and offered tasting samples by one of the winery owners or even the winemaker. It is therefore recommended that you check the tasting hours listed here; some of the wineries are open only by appointment and if visitors call ahead, they will receive a warm welcome.

The wines of the Sierra Foothills are receiving increasing critical acclaim throughout the country. Ranging from the rich, spicy Zinfandels and full-bodied Chardonnays to the delicate fruity Rieslings, the foothill wines possess berry-like aromas, intense fruit character and full flavors.

Whenever you choose to visit, the seasons are accommodating. Winter days are often crisp and sunny, while Spring brings into bloom multitudes of lupine, poppies and mountain lilac. In Summer the lush vineyards and orchards are in full leaf and heavy with fruit, and Fall shows off the oak and pine woodland's finest colors, while the days remain warm well into November. Many wineries provide attractive picnic sites where the traveler may enjoy a relaxing lunch.

A leisurely drive through the area affords the visitor an opportunity to visit the wineries while enjoying the gentle rolling hills, steep river canyons, and scenic views of the majestic Sierra Nevada mountains. Everywhere the contrast between the neatly planted vineyards and the pines and natural woodlands is striking and beautiful.

You are invited to visit anytime, to see the winemaking process and to sample some of California's most impressive wines firsthand. The wineries, large and small, old and new, together extend a warm welcome to everyone who visits the Sierra Foothills Wine Country.



The Sacramento Bee Wednesday, May 19, 1982

Anyone with a half-acre of land seems to be spending weekends digging in the dirt

Grapes: New Lure For Foothill Prospectors

By Mike Dunne
Bee Staff Writer

"BOYS, I BELIEVE I've found a gold mine."

James Marshall reputedly said that Jan. 24, 1848, as he pondered a few glistening specks of gold snagged in the tailrace of John Sutter's new sawmill along the South Fork of the American River in the Sierra foothills.

Thus was spawned the California Gold Rush.

Marshall, were he alive today and strolling through a foothill vineyard, well might use those same words as he fondled and inspected a cluster of wine grapes.

They are the new nuggets of a viniferous Mother Lode stretching north from the banks of San Domingo Creek near Murphys in Calaveras County to the piney hollows outside Nevada City in Nevada County.

A decade ago, just two wineries flourished quietly in the Gold Country. Today, 26 dot the hillocks and line the ravines. Some are small and simple, housed in rustic, ramshackle, century-old barns. Some are complex and sophisticated, occupying modern, energy-efficient steel structures plugged into cool hillsides as snugly as corks in bottles.

What's more, manzanita is being ripped from ridges and poison oak is being gouged from gullies as parcel after parcel is cleared for yet another vineyard. Anyone with even a half-acre of idle but viticulturally promising land seems to be spending his weekends digging in the dirt.

No one knows for sure just how many foothill acres are planted to wine grapes, but informed sources put it close to 2,500, small by Napa, Sonoma and Central Valley standards, but enough for wine grapes to start shouldering aside the region's other major agricultural commodities — apples, Christmas trees and cattle. The "cow counties," in short, are offering something to drink with their beef.

The rising popularity of the foothill wine industry is more resurgence than beginning. Most of the 26 wineries were built during the past 10 years, but one — D'Agostini — is the fourth oldest winery in the state. Founded in 1856, it's a sturdy survivor of plagues ranging from leafhoppers to Prohibition.

What's more, a few Muscat, Mission and Zinfandel vineyards in the foothills are more than 100 years old, when some 10,000 Gold Country acres were in vines. During the Gold Rush, French, Italian, German, Spanish and other prospectors with a cultural heritage of grape tending and winemaking started planting vines as they exhausted the region's deposits of gold.

At its peak in the 1890s, the wine-grape industry in El Dorado County included some 8,000 acres of vines. In 1870, some 50,000 gallons of wine and 1,200 gallons of brandy were produced in Nevada County.

Over the decades, however, the foothill wine industry has had more downs than ups. Economic depressions, population loss, market-deflating gluts of grapes, invasions of insects, outbreaks of phylloxera and the scourge of Prohibition conspired to make it a tough trip.

But once again, "Oh, Susanna!" is whistling from the lips of foothill prospectors.

THE HEART OF the foothill wine country is Amador County's Shenandoah Valley, a series of shallow depressions and gentle slopes 40 miles east of Sacramento. At latest count, more than 50 wineries, most of them outside the foothills, have been plucking grapes from the valley. (Other areas with increasingly substantial plantings are Apple Hill and Somerset in El Dorado County, Murphys in Calaveras County and Ridge Road east of Sutter Creek.)

With respect to soils and microclimates, the foothill belt is nothing if not diverse. Plantings range in elevation from 1,000 feet to 3,000 feet. Soils range from coarsegold to decomposed granite to iron-laced loam to limestone-rich clay. Climate, exposure, rainfall and breezes change with nearly every dip and curve of back country road. During the growing season, days generally are hot and nights warm, although some areas cool considerably during the night because of back breezes off the Sierra or zephyrs streaming up from the Delta. (The combination of hot days and cool nights generally is credited with producing exceptionally well-balanced wines with high sugars and lively acids.)

Over the past decade, the Shenandoah Valley, with 10 wineries, has become nationally recognized as the breeding ground of a Zinfandel grape that produces wines unparalleled in intensity, robustness, richness and spiciness. At their best, they are fruity enough to draw fruit flies even before the cork is pulled, yet they are stamped with the valley's unmistakable signature, a dry and dusty earthiness.

Some Shenandoah Zinfandels are so thick they could pass for raspberry yogurt, with alcohol replacing sugar. They routinely are described as heroic, rugged and powerful, the nectar of the Conans in the crowd. Rare is the competitive judging in which a Shenandoah Zinfandel doesn't finish high. Montevina, for example, produced a 1979 Zinfandel that won a gold or silver medal

Grapes

Continued From Page B4

in each of five competitions in which it was entered last year.

In the past few years, however, several Shenandoah Zinfandels have been criticized as too harsh, strong and forceful, loaded with so much tannin and alcohol as to be undrinkable before the end of the century — the 21st.

But the modern foothill wine industry is young, flexible and innovative, characterized largely by a bold spirit of experimentation, a winey echo of the same spirit that prompted the argonauts of '49 to leave Virginia valleys and the backwoods of Ohio to try their luck at prospecting in the California gold fields.

Whether prompted by that spirit, the recent criticism, the vagaries of the vintage or the fluctuations of fashion ("finesse" and "elegance" are in; "big" and "brawny" are out), Shenandoah winemakers, by and large, are toning down their Zinfandels. Alcohol is being brought in under 14 percent, and descriptives being used to define the style, even when the alcohol is higher, tend toward "rounder, lighter and smoother."

MORE SIGNIFICANTLY, varietals other than Zinfandel are being planted and are starting to garner the kind of recognition formerly reserved for the Barbarian Conqueror. Zinfandel still is the area's most widely planted grape — accounting for approximately 75 percent of the 1,600 vineyard acres in Amador County alone — but all kinds of new neighbors are bunching up around it.

Despite the long if sporadic history of grape growing in the foothills, even professional viticulturists know little about which varietals — other than Zinfandel — will adapt well to the region.

Nevertheless, the area's daring new wine growers aren't hesitating to experiment with an amazingly wide range of grape varieties. At least two growers have planted several Portuguese grape varieties for the anticipated production of California Port. One grower has just planted five acres of Muscato Blanco for what is expected to be the first sparkling wine to come out of the foothills, a wine in the style of an Italian Asti Spumante.

Chardonnay, Riesling and even Gewurztraminer are being planted at higher foothill elevations. A small parcel of Pinot Noir in Nevada County shows promise. The principals of Nevada City Cellars are ecstatic about a Charbono to be released this fall, to be marketed under the grape's French name, Douce Noir, meaning "gentle black."

Greg Boeger of Boeger Winery on Apple Hill has grown a Flora that struck gold in home-winemaking competitions last year. He also recently planted parcels of Muscat Canelli and Symphony, a new hybrid developed by viticulturists at the University of California, Davis; it's a combination of Grenache and Muscat of Alexandria for the anticipated production of a dry or off- dry Muscat.

EACH WINEMAKER seems to have a different opinion about which grape shows the most promise. Among those often mentioned are Barbera, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, White Riesling, Chardonnay, Ruby Cabernet, Chenin Blanc and Petite Sirah.

The consensus, however, favors Sauvignon Blanc. Early efforts have produced a wine strongly representative of the variety but free of the grassy and herbaceous accent that attends many California Sauvignon Blancs. As a measure of the area's confidence in the varietal, Montevina is gearing up to crush 300 tons of Sauvignon Blanc annually by 1984, when it expects to be processing 400 tons of its prime varietal, Zinfandel.

As often as not, a grower, when asked why he planted a particular varietal, is apt to say that he simply likes that kind of wine, regardless of whether it has an established record in the foothills. Charles Spinetta, for example, recently planted 22 acres of Shenandoah Valley range land to Chenin Blanc, a variety with no history in Amador.

"I like Chenin Blanc and I can't stand Sauvignon Blanc," said Spinetta. (On a ridge opposite Spinetta's slopes, however, fellow grower Frank Alviso, who *does* like Sauvignon Blanc, has put in 140 acres of the varietal over the past two years. His taste accounts in part for the planting, but so does the acclaim that foothill Sauvignon Blanc has won and so does his desire for a balanced mix of grapes during this era of experimentation.)

By and large, growers and winemakers drawn to the foothills reflect the usual blend of professionals who are getting involved in the wine industry these days — an attorney here, an orthopedic surgeon there. The largest single group seems to consist of former aerospace engineers who have found that their scientific and technological backgrounds dovetail nicely with the exact and methodological demands of winemaking.

They are attracted to the foothills, as opposed to better-known wine regions, primarily because arable land still is available at affordable prices: $3,500 per acre at Somerset, $7,000 in the Shenandoah Valley; by comparison, undeveloped vineyard property in the Napa Valley sells for around $20,000 an acre.

The wineries are small and the plantings tiny — 5 acres on this ridge, 10 in that meadow. No large wineries have established a substantial vineyard in the foothills, although R.&J. Cook of Clarksburg is buying a 350-acre parcel in the Penn Valley of Nevada County for a vineyard of Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Cabernet Sauvignon.

Compared with developing a foothill vineyard, gold prospecting was a snap. Although most of the vineyards are dry farmed, irrigation water can be difficult to secure for setting the vines during their first few years. The voracious appetites of deer and gophers are especially troublesome. Frost isn't unknown (or snow; Dick Bush's Madrona Vineyards, at 3,000 feet on Apple Hill, believed to be the highest vineyard in the state, was under 15 inches or more of snow several times this past winter). Several soils are so fragile that winter rains scarred some vineyards with the kinds of ruts that haven't been seen in the Gold Country since hydraulic mining was banned.

As an attraction for touring wine lovers, the foothill belt has yet to establish itself. As the marketing of wines gets increasingly competitive, however, more wineries are reaching out to attract enophile and tourist alike. For example, Stevenot Vineyards has expanded its tasting room into a rustic, primitive log cabin that formerly housed a pottery studio, and is opening a second tasting room at Columbia State Historic Park. Montevina has added shaded redwood picnic tables. The Wineyard in Rescue, El Dorado County, and The Pasty Place in Sutter Creek, Amador County, feature wine bars that pour foothill wines exclusively.

Volume 38, No.3

$3.00

32-PAGE PULL-OUT SECTION
1983 CALIFORNIA
WINE MAPS & DIRECTORY

WINE WEST

WINE WEST

Incorporating Redwood Rancher Wine Grower

VOLUME 38 No. 3

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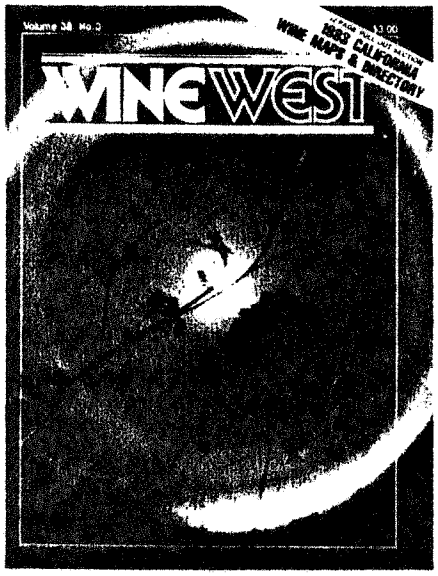

COVER: *A spectacular round rainbow rings a grape tendril in Fred Lyon's cover shot, our first venture into color! Taken using a circular diffraction grating, a filter which is marked with microscopic concentric rulings which break up the sunlight. "I get that effect by putting the sunlight right in the center of the picture. I kept testing until I made it work. I figured, since I had bought the darned thing, I should learn how to use it to get the effects I wanted."*

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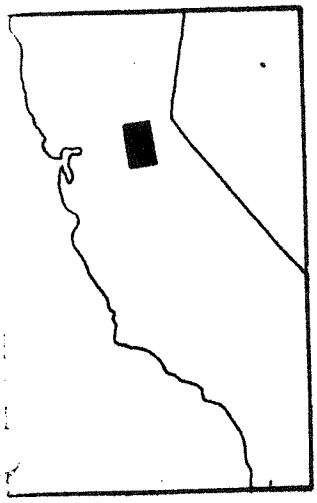
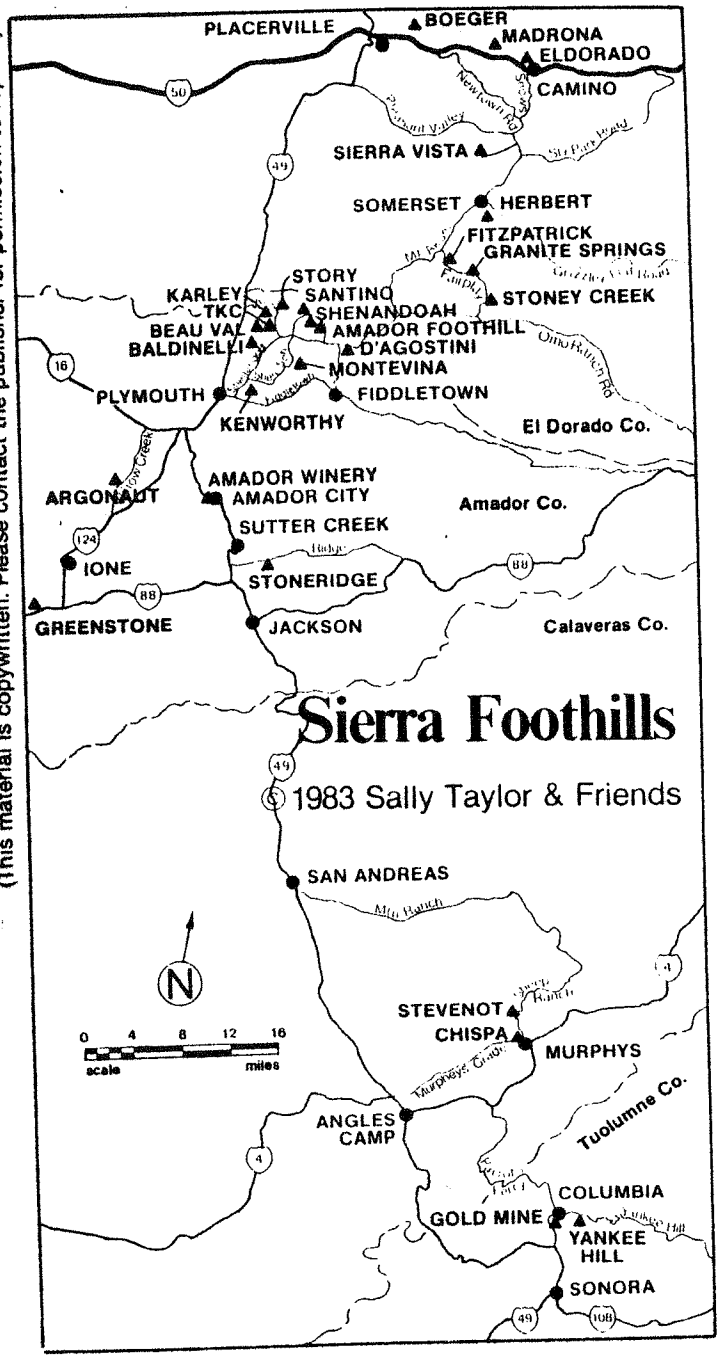
Sierra Foothills





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AMADOR FOOTHILL WINERY,
12500 Steiner Rd., Plymouth 95669, (209) 245-6307.
Generally open weekends, please call ahead to be sure.

AMADOR WINERY,
PO Box 65, Amador City 95601, (209) 245-3756.
Mountain Jubilee spiced wine, created as a skiers' wine to serve piping hot is an excellent table wine chilled and is exceptional with barbequed foods. Tasting room open 7 days a week, 10-6.

ARGONAUT WINERY,
13675 Mt. Echo Rd., Ione 95640, (209) 274-4106 or 274-2882.
By appointment only.

BALDINELLI SHENANDOAH VALLEY VINEYARDS, Rt. 2, Box 7A, Shenandoah Rd., Plymouth 95669, (209) 245-3398.
By appointment and weekends, 11-5. Winery is located 4.5 miles north of Plymouth on E16.

BEAU VAL WINES,
10671 Valley Dr. off Bell Rd., Star Rt. 2, Box 8D, Plymouth 95669, (209) 245-3281.
Shenandoah Rd. onto Bell Rd., 200 yds., left on Valley Dr., .5 mi. on right. By appointment only.

BOEGER WINERY, INC.,
1709 Carson Rd., Placerville 95667, (916) 622-8094.
Open Wed.-Sun., 10-5, No appt. necessary to taste wines all year in the historic 1872 wine cellar. National Register of Historic Places. Visitors are welcome to enjoy the shaded picnic area & tour the modern 10,000 case premium winery.

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425 Main St., Murphys 95247.
By appointment only.

D'AGOSTINI WINERY,
Rt. 2, Box 19, Shenandoah Rd., Plymouth 95669, (209) 245-6612.

ELDORADO VINEYARDS,
3551 Carson Rd., Camino 95709, (PO Box 617), (916) 644-3773.

FBF WINERY — FITZPATRICK,
Fairplay Rd., Somerset 95684, (209) 245-3248 or (916) 626-1988.
Tasting Room open 12-5 weekends, otherwise by appointment.

GOLD MINE WINERY,
Parrott's Ferry Rd., Columbia State Park, Columbia 95310, (209) 532-3089.

GRANITE SPRINGS WINERY,
Fairplay Rd., Somerset 95684, (209) 245-6395.
Open weekends, 11-5.

GREENSTONE WINERY,
PO Box 1164, Ione 95640, Hwy. 88 at Jackson Valley Rd., Ione, CA 95640, (209) 274-2238.
Our family owned and operated winery and vineyard is located at the gateway to California's historic Gold Rush country. We are open for tasting, informal owner-conducted tours and sales. Enjoy our oak-shaded picnic area. RV's welcome. Hours: Sat.-Sun., 11-4; July & August 10-5, Wed.-Sun.

(Continued on next page.)

Sierra Foothills

(Continued.)

ALLEN S. HALEY
P. O. Box 843, Nevada City, 95959, (916) 265-3314.

HERBERT VINEYARDS,
Somerset, CA 95684. (916) 626-0548.
By appointment only.

KARLY WINES,
PO Box 721, Plymouth 95669, (209) 245-3922.

KENWORTHY VINEYARDS,
Rt. 2, Box 2, Plymouth 95669, (209) 245-3198.
By appointment or Sunday, 12-5.

MADRONA VINEYARDS,
PO Box 454, Gatlin Rd., Camino 95709, (916) 644-5948.
5 mi north of Carson Rd., through High Hill Ranch.

MONTEVINA,
Rt. 2, Box 30-A, Plymouth 95669, (209) 245-6942.
Amador County's leading producer of Zinfandel, Sauvignon Blanc and other premium estate bottled varietals. Winery open for tasting and sales, 11-4 daily. Large groups by appointment only.

NEVADA CITY WINERY,
321 Spring St., Nevada City, CA 95959, (916) 265-WINE.
I-80 from Sacramento to Auburn, Hwy. 49 north to Grass Valley-Nevada City. Exit at Broad St., left on Broad 2.5 blocks to Bridge St., left 1 block to Spring St. and winery. The first bonded winery in this historic town since Prohibition. Tasting room with view of winemaking operations, open daily noon to sunset (about 5 in winter, 7 summer). Winemaker Tony Norskog producing deep-colored long-lived reds from local Pinot Noir, Cabernet Zinfandel and Charbono, which is sold under its original French name, Douce Noir. Also fresh, fruity whites such as Riesling and a full bodied, dry Chardonnay, available this summer.

PARADISE VINTNERS,
1656 Nunneley Rd., Paradise 95969, (916) 877-7287.
13 miles east of Chico.

SANTINO WINERY,
Rt. 2, 21A Steiner Rd., Plymouth 95669, (209) 245-3555.

SHENANDOAH VINEYARDS,
12300 Steiner Rd., Plymouth 95669, (209) 245-3696.
4.5 miles from Plymouth on Shenandoah Rd., turn left on Steiner Rd. 1 mile. Premium wines. Open June 1 - Oct. 1, 11-5; Oct. 1 - June 1, only Sat. & Sun., 11-5, weekdays please call.

SIERRA VISTA,
4560 Cabernet Way, Placerville 95667, (916) 622-7221.
Open weekends, 12-5. Otherwise, by appointment.

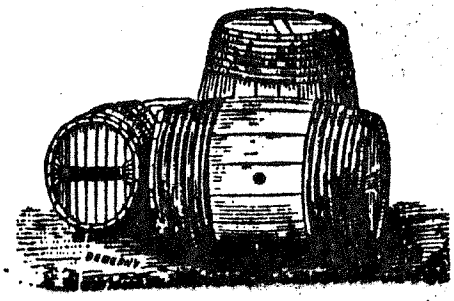
STEVENOT WINERY,
San Domingo Rd., (off Sheep Ranch Rd.), PO Box 548, Murphys 95247, (209) 728-3436.
Tasting room open daily, 10-4. Tours available.

STONERIDGE,
13862 Ridge Rd., East, Sutter Creek 95685, (209) 223-1761.
Open Sat., 1-4 or by appointment. Zinfandel and Ruby Cabernet wines. Picnic area available.

STONEY CREEK VINEYARDS,
8221 Stoney Creek Rd., Somerset 95684, (209) 245-3487.

STORY WINERY & VINEYARDS,
Bell Rd. (formerly Willetts Rd.), Plymouth 95669, (209) 245-6208 or (415) 441-2990.
By appointment only.

TKC VINEYARDS,
Rt. 2, Valley Dr., Plymouth 95669. (Mail: 1307 Essex Circle, Ridgecrest 93555), (619) 446-3166.
By appointment only.

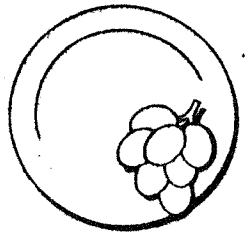


YANKEE HILL WINERY,
11755 Coarsegold Lane, Columbia 95310, (209) 532-3015.

The Vineyard House
Cold Springs at Hwy. 49
Coloma 95613
(916) 622-2217

Winemakers' Recommended

Places to Eat



The Balcony
164 Main
Jackson 95642
(209) 223-2851

Country Kitchen
8031 Mt. Aukum Road
Mt. Aukum 95656
(209) 245-4184

Frair Tuck's Rest.
111 N. Pine
Nevada City 95959
(916) 265-4551

Jack's Deer Creek Inn
101 Broad St.
Nevada City 95959
(916) 265-3405

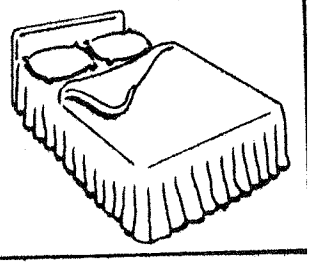
Il Rifugio
Main St.
Murphys 95247
(209) 728-3964

Selaya's
320 Broad
Nevada City 95959
(916) 265-5697

Smith Flat House
2021 Smith Flat Road
Smith Flat 95727
(916) 626-9003

Winemakers' Recommended

Places to Stay



The Broadway Hotel
Jackson 95642
(209) 223-3503

Dunbar House
Main St.
Murphys 95247
(209) 728-2897

Fleming Jones Homestead
3170 Newtown Road
Placerville 95667
(916) 626-5840

The Heirloom
Box 322
Ione 95640
(209) 274-4468

National Hotel
211 Broad St.
Nevada City 95959
(916) 265-4551

Peterson Inn
2942 Coloma
Placerville 95667
(916) 622-1882

Piety Hill Inn
523 Sacramento St.
Nevada City 95959
(916) 265-2245

The Red Castle
104 Prospect St.
Nevada City 95959
(916) 265-5135

WINE WEST

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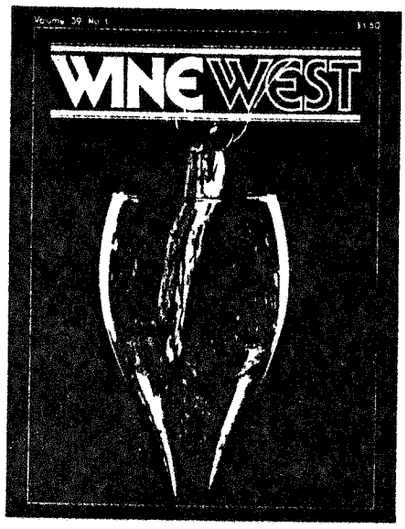

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WINE-RUSH in the Sierra Foothills

Story & Photos **by Mike Dunne**

To the California tourist, the Sierra foothills east of Sacramento and Stockton constitute the historic Mother Lode where James Marshall discovered gold in 1848. His happenstance find triggered the Gold Rush, the first of many migratory waves to what has since become known as the Golden State, a description as apt in terms solar, economic, romantic and even enological as mineral.

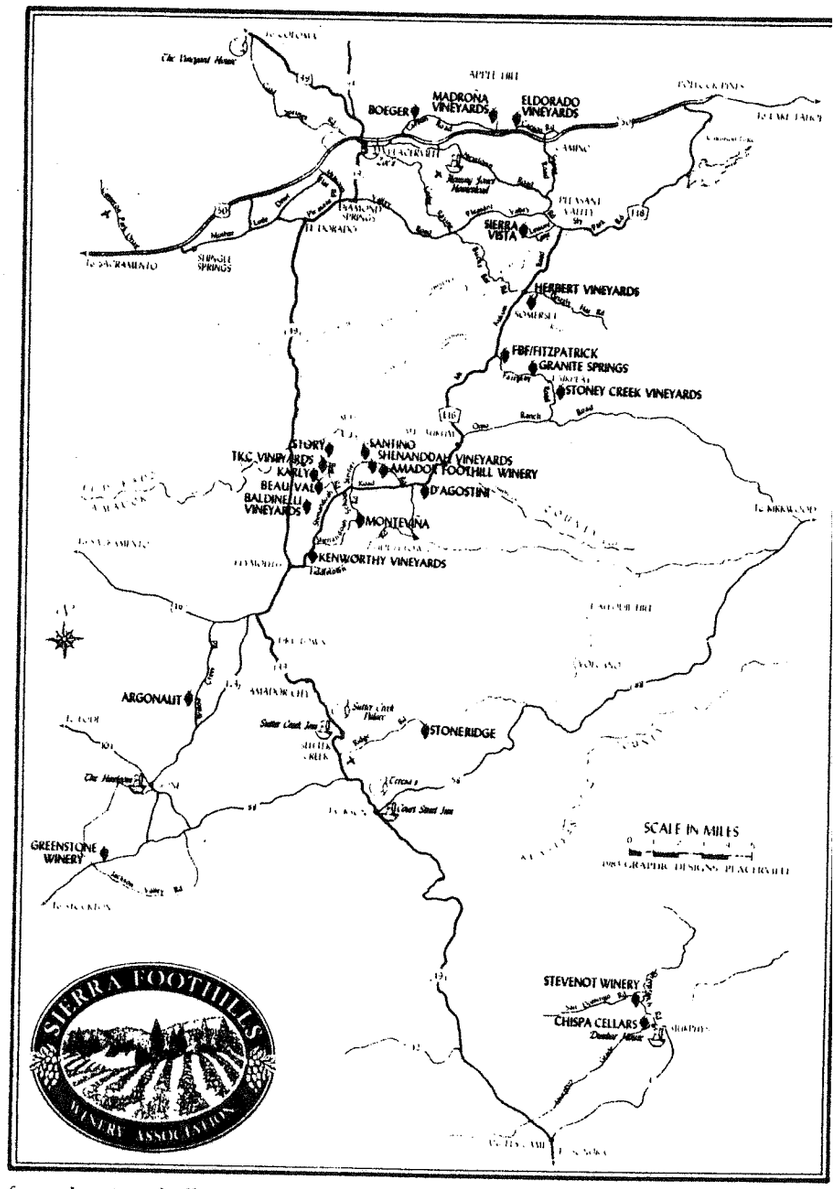
While much of the rest of California has been transformed repeatedly and dramatically by population shifts and industrial innovation, the foothill belt continues to live largely by its historic heritage: most of the gold mines have been closed since World War II, sure, but antique shops, country inns, ancient hotels, restored landmarks and ethnic restaurants thrive amidst the poison oak and digger pine.

Nowadays, the area commonly, if erroneously, called the Mother Lode meanders some 300 miles from Vinton in Plumas County at the north to Oakhurst in Madera County on the south. It parallels Highway 49, the Golden Chain Highway, a series of dusty and rusty, historic and evocative links to the region's colorful past: Nevada City, Placerville, El Dorado, Drytown, Sutter Creek, Mokelumne Hill, Angels Camp, Jackass Hill, Mt. Bullion.

Technically, the Mother Lode originally was but an imaginary rich vein in the Southern Mines, the lower half of the Golden Chain. The upper half, fittingly, was known as the Northern Mines.

As far as wine lovers are concerned, the two strips might better be renamed the Northern Wines and the Southern Wines. The nuggets being exploited in the Gold Country these days, in other words, are growing on vines. The argonauts of 1849 should have been so lucky.

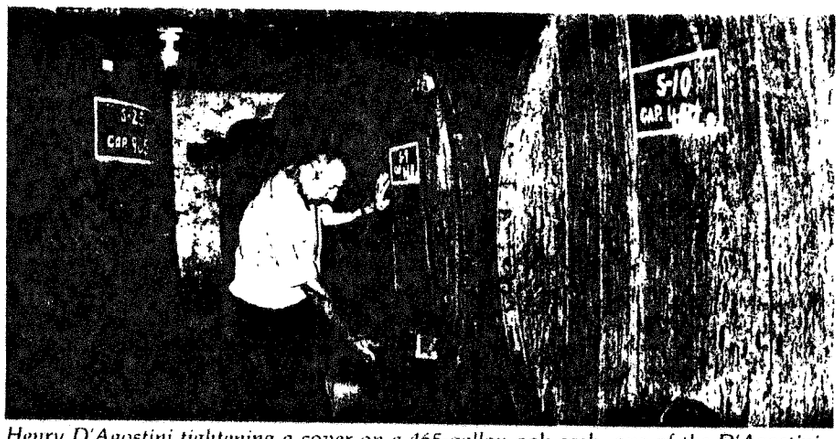
Actually, wine grapes have been tended along the Sierra's western slope since the Gold Rush, but only during the past decade has the region gained a foothold as a distinct viticultural region. Ten years ago, just two wineries flourished quietly in the Gold Country. At latest count, 27 wineries dot the hillocks and line the ravines in a strikingly attractive 100-mile stretch south from the piney hollows outside Nevada City in Nevada County to the banks of San Domingo Creek near Murphys in Calaveras County.



As fast as wineries have been abuilding, manzanita is being ripped from ridges and scrub oak is being gouged from gullies as parcel after parcel is cleared for yet another vineyard. The total acreage planted to wine grapes along the foothills is open to debate, but informed sources put it close to 3,000. That's small by Napa and Sonoma standards, but large enough for wine grapes to start shouldering aside the region's other major agricultural commodities—apples, pears, cattle and Christmas trees. Since 1978, the University of California Cooperative Extension and the farm advisers of Calaveras, Amador, El Dorado, Placer and Nevada counties have organized an annual Sierra Nevada Foothill Wine Grape Day. Each has attracted some 300 neophyte growers who want advice as they set aside three acres here, 10 acres there for vines. Three of the counties—Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado—have initiated commercial wine judging at their county fairs.

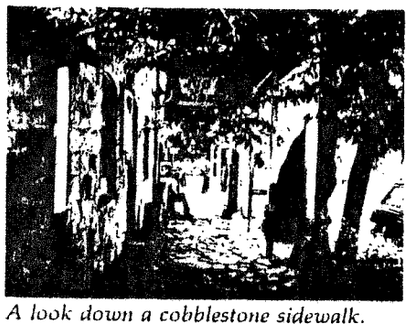
The geographical, historic, political

Leon Sabon trims vines he is transplanting at his Shenandoah Vineyards vineyard.

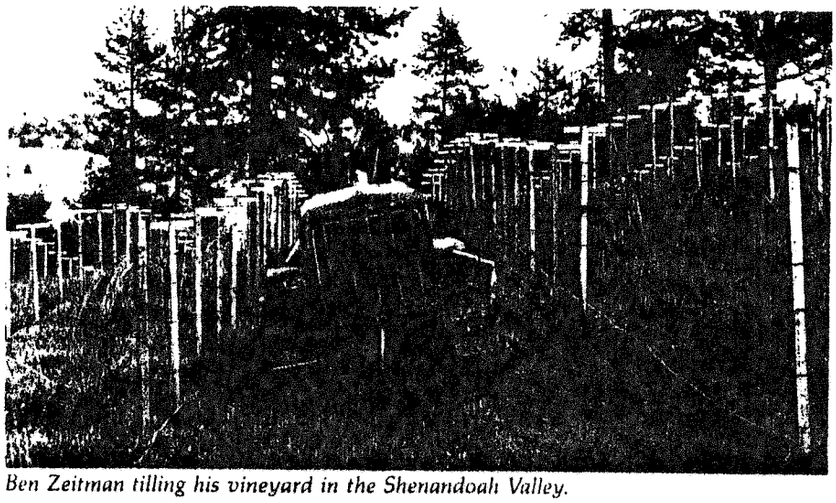


Henry D'Agostini tightening a cover on a 465-gallon oak cask, one of the D'Agostini Winery's original casks made from native white oak in 1856.

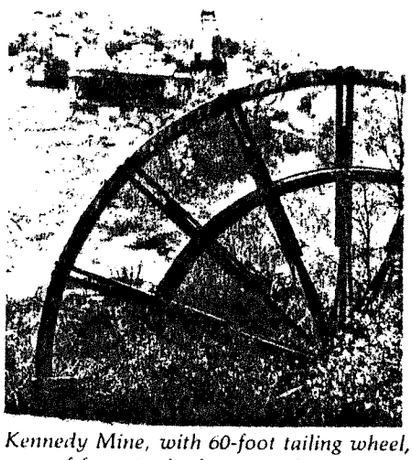
Sutter Creek Inn, Amador County.



A look down a cobblestone sidewalk.



Ben Zeitman tilling his vineyard in the Shenandoah Valley.



Kennedy Mine, with 60-foot tailing wheel, one of four, in the foreground.

and esthetic heart of the foothill wine country is Amador County's Shenandoah Valley, which isn't a valley at all, but rather a series of shallow depressions and gentle slopes on a bench above the Cosumnes River 40 miles east of Sacramento. Prospectors from Virginia's Shenandoah Valley settled the area during the Gold Rush, and because of its apparent resemblance to their homeland named it Shenandoah. The replication led to the longest and most acrimonious debate during the federal government's recent efforts to define viticultural appellations. Winemakers and grape growers in both California and Virginia attempted to seek exclusive use of the Shenandoah Valley appellation for their respective region. After two years of controversial deliberation, federal agents in late 1982 decreed that Shenandoah Valley could be used by both areas, but not without qualification. Labels on bottles of wine made from grapes grown in California's Shenandoah Valley need also carry the notation "California," such as "Shenandoah Valley of California." Labels on bottles of wine made from grapes grown in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia need not carry any state designation, and simply can read, "Shenandoah Valley." Federal authorities based the ruling principally on historic reputation. That is, Virginia's Shenandoah Valley long has been celebrated in song, play, story, poetry, history text and travel brochure, thus when wine consumers see Shenandoah Valley on a bottle label without further qualification they instinctively think Virginia, concluded federal officials.

Of the 27 wineries in the Sierra foothills, nearly half are in the Shenandoah Valley. What's more, another 40 wineries far from the foothills—indeed, as far as Los Angeles—have been

plucking grapes from the valley over the past decade. The state's fourth oldest winery, D'Agostini, founded in 1856, is in the Shenandoah Valley. Two of the state's older vineyards, established around the same time, also are in the valley, along with the largest premium winery in the foothills, Monteviña.

Zinfandel is the most distinct and celebrated grape grown in the Shenandoah Valley. It is credited with producing a style of the breed unparalleled in intensity, robustness, richness and spiciness, characterized by an unmistakable dry and dusty earthiness on a foundation of berry fruitiness. So big have been these Shenandoah Zinfandels—thick, tannic, alcoholic—that in recent years some of them have been criticized for being practically unpalatable, particularly with respect to matching with food. That criticism, however, coupled with the dip in the popularity of red wines generally, the surfeit of Zinfandel plantings and releases throughout the state and the diverse albeit confusing stylistic interpretations to which Zinfandel lends itself, among other factors, have prompted foothill winemakers to tame the beast. By adopting such viticultural practices as cluster thinning, earlier harvesting and innovative trellising, the Shenandoah Valley's Zinfandel specialists are releasing more Zinfandels characterized by artful elegance, readily drinkable finesse and a restrained intensity that nonetheless preserves the area's dusty/fruity signature. What's more, several winemakers both in and out of the valley are cashing in on the public's continuing infatuation with white wines by dramatically escalating their production of the mellowest of all Zinfandels—White Zinfandel. To be sure, the brawny old Shenandoah Zinfandels of the not too distant past have their fans, and to appease them, as well as retain a historic link to the style that first brought attention to the region's enological gold mine, several winemakers continue to produce at least some big and bold Zinfandel.

Although some valley growers are grafting their Zinfandel to other varietals, most are sticking with the foothill king, confident that in the long run it will remain the area's most esteemed grape. Foothill growers and winemakers also were instrumental in helping form California's new Zinfandel Guild, which hopes to cultivate consumer support, understanding and enjoyment of wines made from the state's most extensively planted red wine grape.

The Shenandoah Valley, as much of the rest of the foothill vine region, is a dry microclimate characterized by a growing season that is intensely hot during the day, then cooled sharply at night by backbreezes off the Sierra to the east. Several ravines and hollows in the foothills also benefit during the day by cooling zephyrs off the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta to the west.

Foothill plantings generally range in elevation from 1,000 to 3,000 feet. Except for the past two extraordinarily wet winters, rainfall generally is moderate, and dry farming tends to be the rule once new vines are firmly established. Decomposed granite constitutes most of the region's soil, although vineyards also are thriving on iron-laced loam and limestone-rich clay.

While Zinfandel remains the grape of choice among growers and winemakers in the Shenandoah Valley, large blocks of Sauvignon Blanc have been introduced over the past few years following successful experimental plantings. Several early releases of the varietal, particularly by Monteviña, Shenandoah Vineyards, Fitzpatrick and Pigeon Creek (the latter is simply labeled White Table Wine), have been well received by critics and consumers and appear to confirm the varietal's promising prospects in the foothills. Smaller plots of Chenin Blanc, Cabernet Sauvignon and Barbera also have been added. Cabernet appears to be doing well, and Barbera can boast one stunning success story: the 1980 Monteviña Special Selection Barbera has won eight medals in 1983 wine competitions, including gold at the Orange County Fair, the Riverside Farmer's Fair and the Sierra Foothills competition, and a silver at the Los Angeles County Fair.

Other than the Shenandoah Valley,

Historic Cellar at Boeger Winery

the most promising foothill wine-grape area looks to be the higher elevations (2,500 to 3,000 feet) of El Dorado County, where Cabernet Sauvignon is producing wines of exquisite delicacy and finesse. Chardonnay, Gewurztraminer and Johannisberg Riesling also have turned in encouraging results at higher elevations, but several more vintages need to be sampled before confirming their potential. Boeger Winery just outside Placerville is producing consistently fine Merlots, Chardonnays and Johannisberg Rieslings, while Madrona Vineyards between Placerville and Camino is showing that 3,000-feet elevation isn't too high for respectable Chardonnays, Zinfandels and Cabernet Sauvignons.

Elsewhere in the foothills, Argonaut Winery southwest of Plymouth has been producing a consistently popular Barbera; Greenstone Winery southwest of Ione produced a 1982 French Colombard rarely herbaceous, oaky and intriguingly complex for the variety; and Stevenot Winery at Murphys at the southern reach of the foothill wine country has had popular success with Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc, Zinfandel and, most recently, its 1980 Calaveras County Cabernet Sauvignon.

Nothing so much gives the foothills their enological flavor as diversity and experimentation. Inherent diversity is reflected in the range of the region's soils as well as the breadth of its microclimates, from hot and arid hilltop to chilly and soggy meadow. Anyone who ever has jogged in the foothills can't help but be impressed by the quick and unpredictable shifts in temperature, humidity, soil composition and direction of breezes. The experimentation that is going on among foothill winemakers is to a large extent an outgrowth of this diversity. Thus, a test plot of Pinot Noir is planted in a cool Nevada County hollow, an experimental vineyard of Chenin Blanc covers most of one side of a large and sunny hill, and a tenuous spread of several Portuguese varieties stands out starkly among the pine and oak of a distant ridge.

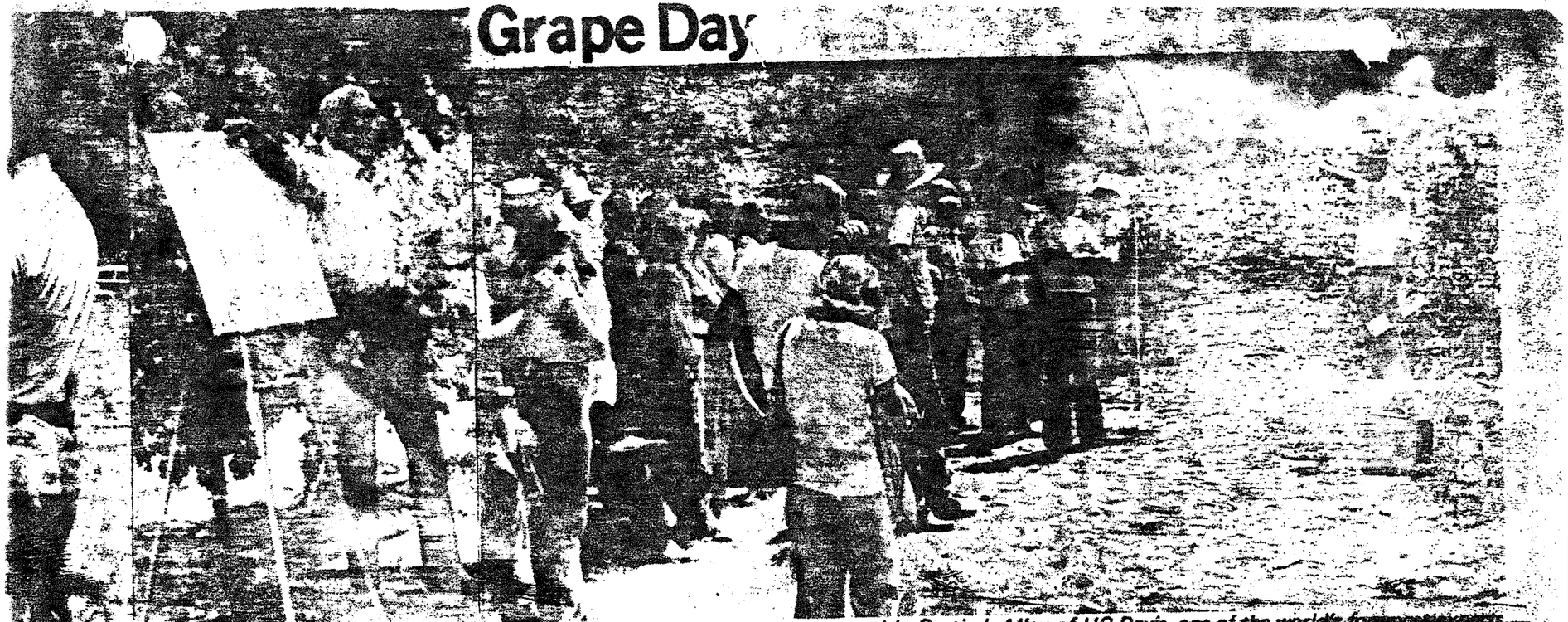
By and large, the innovative growers and winemakers drawn to the foothills reflect the usual blend of professionals who are getting involved in the wine industry these days—an attorney here, an orthopedic surgeon there. The largest single group seems to consist of former aerospace engineers who have found that their scientific and technological backgrounds dovetail nicely with the exact and methodological demands of winemaking—winemakers such as Leon Sobon of Shenandoah Vineyards, John Kenworthy of Kenworthy Vineyards and Ben Zeitman of Amador Foothill Winery. They are attracted to the foothills, as opposed to better-known wine regions, primarily because arable land still is available at affordable prices: $3,500 per acre in El Dorado County and $7,000 in the Shenandoah Valley compared with $20,000 in the Napa Valley.

They have found that prospecting for gold may have been an easier and more profitable pursuit: irrigation water for setting young vines can be difficult to secure; the voracious appetites of deer, gophers and rabbits can be especially troublesome; frost, snow and, by contrast, drought aren't unknown; several soils are so fragile that they can be scarred with deep ruts in a winter of heavy rains. Nevertheless, the foothill wine industry thrived once before, and perhaps it will again. During the Gold Rush, French, Italian, German, Spanish and other prospectors with a cultural heritage of grape tending and winemaking started planting vines as they exhausted the region's deposits of gold. At one time, some 8,000 acres were planted to vines in El Dorado County alone. By 1890, notes Leon Adams in his book "Wines of America," more than 100 wineries were operating in such Gold Country settlements as Nevada City, Placerville, Shingle Springs, Volcano, Columbia, Sonora and Jamestown. Today, a few Muscat, Mission and Zinfandel vines more than a century old continue to survive in the foothills. But over the years, the foothill wine industry has had more ups and downs than the stagecoach from Sacramento to Mokelumne Hill. Economic depressions, population shifts, market-deflating gluts of grapes, invasions of insects, outbreaks of phylloxera and the scourge of Prohibition have conspired over the past century to make the trip more down than up. Now, however, the nation's growing wine appreciation appears to be reversing that spiraling descent in the foothills. Curiously, few foothill wineries are capitalizing on the Gold Country's romantic and historic heritage, particularly with respect to its potential colorful appellations: Murderer's Gulch, Desperado Creek and Stringbean Alley, to name a few. Exceptions are Boeger Winery, which releases proprietary blends under the Hangtown label, an old name for Placerville, and Granite Springs Winery, which releases proprietary blends under the Dry Diggins label, also an early name for Placerville.

As an attraction for touring wine lovers, the foothill wine belt is still more detour sidetrip than intentional destination. As the marketing of wines gets increasingly competitive, however, more foothill wineries are reaching out to attract enophile and tourist alike by extending tasting hours, adding picnic facilities and so forth. Thanks to the area's other tourist attractions, the region already is a rich lode of bed-and-breakfast inns, restored Gold Rush hotels, antique shops, nifty restaurants and recreational pastimes ranging from whitewater rafting to gold panning.

Most of the area's wineries are members of the Sierra Foothill Wineries Association, which in exchange for a stamped, self-addressed envelope will forward a brochure that includes a detailed map of the foothill wine country, brief vignettes of the wineries, a list of wines produced by each, and a rundown of the days and hours they are open to the public. Write the association at P.O. Box 438, Somerset, CA 95684.

Grape Day



THE STEVENOT VINEYARDS near Murphys was the site of the third annual Sierra Foothill wine grape day Saturday, and more than 300 of the area's actual and potential wine grape growers gathered to pick the brains of the experts brought in by the County farm advisor, Dan Irving (University of California cooperative extension service) and the Foothill Winegrape Growers Association. At far left, Irving (in straw hat) talks with Curtis J. Alley of UC Davis, one of the world's foremost experts on viticulture and enology, and Edward Carmichael of Auburn, grower. Above (middle picture), Dick Bethell, ElDorado County farm advisor, gives a talk on irrigation. Above right, Clyde Elmore, UC Davis weed scientist, tells a large and interested crowd how to get rid of the pesky prickly lettuce, star thistle, morning glory and bermuda grass.

Calaveras Californian

Angels Camp, California — *"Home of the Jumping Frog"*

Calaveras County — *Established 1923*

THURSDAY, JULY 17, 1980 — ONE OF The Calaveras Publishing Company WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS — VOLUME 59 NUMBER 29

...and the ...

...this weekend

Stockton man

Sierra Foothill Wine Grapeday

The third annual Sierra Foothill Wine Grapeday will take place Saturday, July 12, at the Stevenot Vineyards, Murphys.

Following 8:30 a.m. registration and 9 a.m. orientation, there will be a series of field demonstrations and presentations. The sessions will be repeated at 10:15, 11, and 11:45, and will concern zinfandel (preplant decisions: establishment and management of foothill vineyards); cabernet sauvignon (why, when and how much to irrigate foothill vineyards(; chenin blanc (recommendations and importance of perennial and annual weed control in foothill vineyards); and chardonnay (starting and managing a foothill winery).

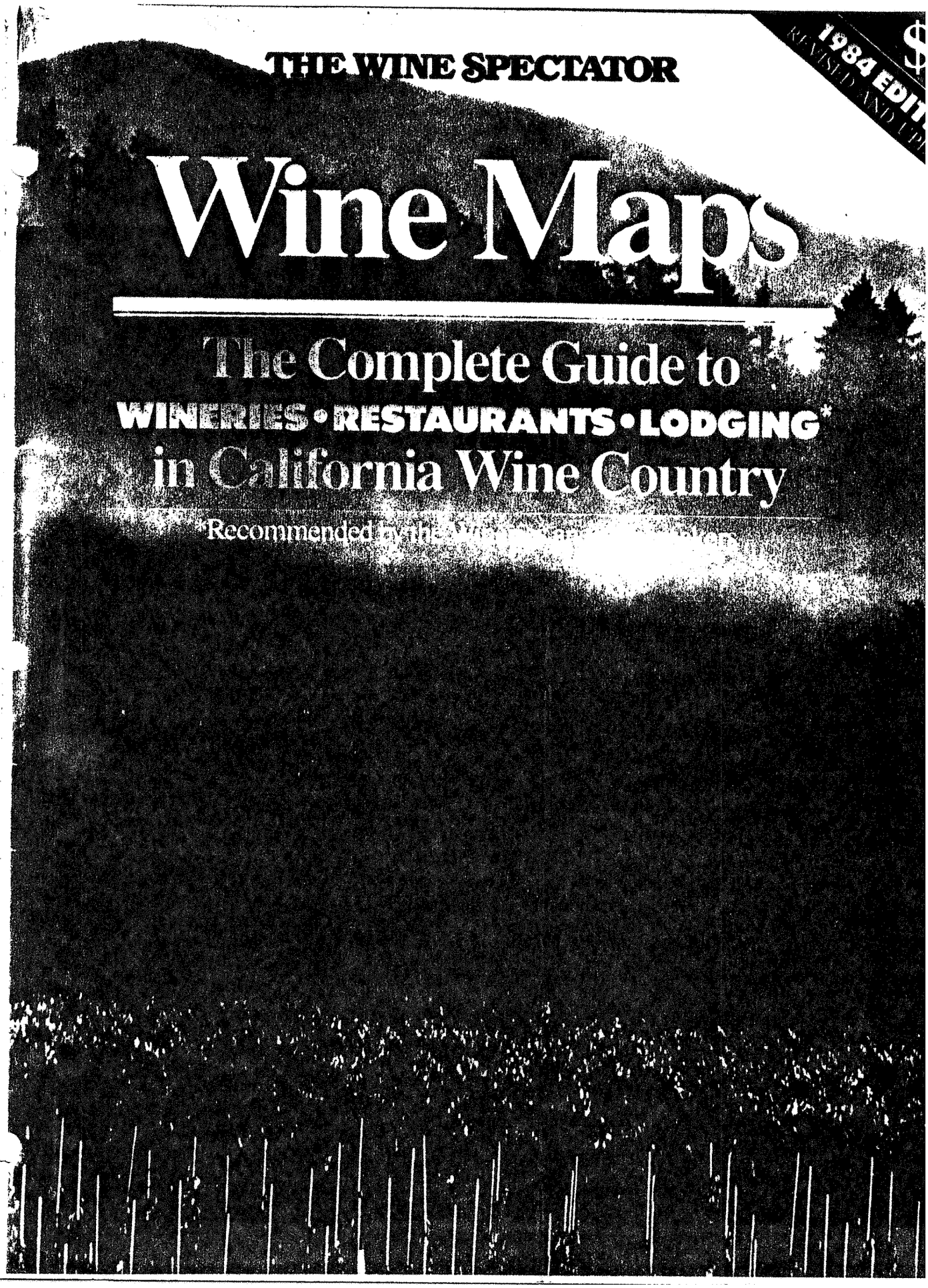
At 12:30 p.m. Bob Plaister, farm advisor for Amador County, will describe the available wine grape publications; and a wine, ham, and cheese tasting will precede the steak barbecue at 1 p.m.

Keynote speaker will be Curtis J. Alley, specialist in viticulture and enology at UC. Davis.

Additional information may be obtained from Sandy Porath at the Calaveras County farm advisor's office.

Dan Irving, farm advisor, is the program chairman for the day, and Barden Stevenot will be the host.

9 out of 10 Forest Fires are caused by people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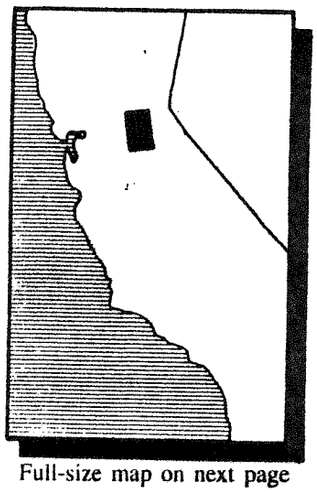
in California Wine Country
*Recommended by the Wine



Full-size map on next page

Sierra Foothills

WINERIES

AMADOR FOOTHILL WINERY
12500 Steiner Rd., Plymouth 95669
(209) 245-6307
By appointment only.

AMADOR WINERY
Hwy. 49 & O'Neil Alley, PO Box 65, Amador City 95601
(209) 267-5320
Second tasting room: 1055 N. Main St., Jackson. Mountain Jubilee spiced wine, created as a skiers' wine to serve piping hot is an excellent table wine chilled and is exceptional with barbequed foods. Tasting rooms open daily 10-6.

ARGONAUT WINERY
13675 Mt. Echo Rd., Ione 95640
(209) 274-2882 or 274-4106
By appointment only.

BALDINELLI SHENANDOAH VALLEY VINEYARDS
Shenandoah Rd., Rt. 2, Box 7A, Plymouth 95669
(209) 245-3398
By appointment and weekends, 11-5. Winery is located 4.5 mi. north of Plymouth on E16.

BEAU VAL WINES
10671 Valley Dr. off Bell Rd., Star Rt 2, Box 8D, Plymouth 95669
(209) 245-3281
Shenandoah Rd. onto Bell Rd., 200 yds., left on Valley Dr., .5 mi. on right. By appointment only.

BOEGER WINERY, INC.
709 Carson Rd., Placerville 95667
(916) 622-8094
Open Wed.-Sun., 10-5. No appt. necessary to taste wines all year in the historic 1872 wine cellar. National Register of Historic Places. Visitors are welcome to enjoy the shaded picnic area & tour the modern 10,000 case premium winery.

CHISPA CELLARS
French Gulch Rd. & Murphys Grade Rd., Murphys 95247
By appointment only, or by chance.

D'AGOSTINI WINERY
14430 Shenandoah Rd., Plymouth 95669
(209) 245-6612

ELDORADO VINEYARDS
3551 Carson Rd., PO Box 617, Camino 95709
(916) 644-3773

FBF WINERY—FITZPATRICK
Fairplay Rd., Somerset 95684
(209) 245-3248 or (916) 626-1988
Limited production of vineyard designated varietals: Zinfandel, Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay & Sauvignon Blanc. Special tasting room selections and discounts. Tasting room open 11-5 weekends, otherwise by appointment.

GOLD MINE WINERY
Parrot's Ferry Rd.., Columbia State Park Columbia 95310
(209) 532-3089

GRANITE SPRINGS WINERY
Fairplay Rd., Somerset 95684
(209) 245-6395
Open weekends, 11-5.

GREENSTONE WINERY
Hwy. 88 at Jackson Valley Rd., PO Box 1164, Ione 95640
(209) 274-2238
Our family owned and operated winery and vineyard is located at the gateway to California's historic Gold Rush country. We are open for tasting, informal, owner-conducted tours and sales. Enjoy our oak-shaded picnic area. RV's welcome. Hours: Sat.-Sun., 11-4; July & August 10-5, Wed.-Sun.

HERBERT VINEYARDS
Somerset 95684
(916) 626-0548
By appointment only.

KARLY WINES
PO Box 721, Plymouth 95669
(209) 245-3922
By appointment only.

KENWORTHY VINEYARDS
Rt. 2, Box 2, Plymouth 95669
(209) 245-3198
By appointment only.

MADRONA VINEYARDS
Gatlin Rd., PO Box 454, Camino 95709
(916) 644-5948
.5 mi. north of Carson Rd. through High Hill Ranch.

MONTEVINA
Rt. 2, Box 30-A, Plymouth 95669
(209) 245-6942
Amador County's leading producer of Zinfandel, Sauvignon Blanc and other premium estate bottled varietals. Winery open for tasting and sales, 11-4, daily. Large groups by appointment only.

NEVADA CITY WINERY
321 Spring St., Nevada City 95959
(916) 265-WINE
I-80 from Sacramento to Auburn. Hwy. 49 north to Grass Valley-Nevada City. Exit at Broad St., left on Broad 2.5 blocks to Bridge St., left 1 block to Spring St. and winery. The first bonded winery in this historic town since Prohibition. Tasting room with view of winemaking operations, open daily noon to sunset (about 5 in winter, 7 summer). Winemaker Tony Norskog producing deep-colored long-lived reds from local Pinot Noir, Cabernet, Zinfandel and Charbono, which is sold under its original French name, Douce Noir. Also fresh, fruity whites such as Riesling and a full bodied, dry Chardonnay, available this summer.

OAK VALLEY WINERY
PO Box 399, Oakdale 96361
(209) 847-2226

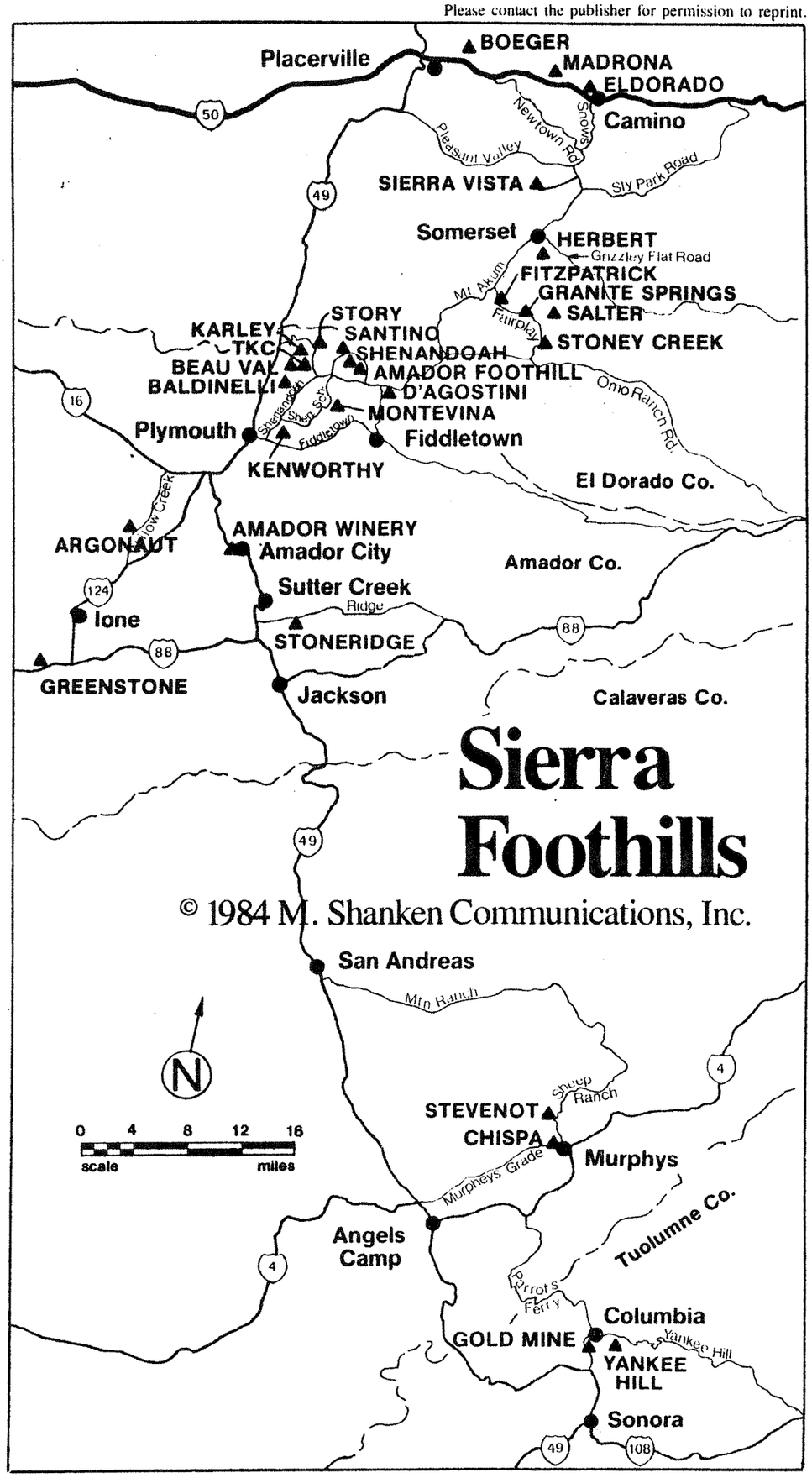
PARADISE VINTNERS
1656 Nunneley Rd., Paradise 95969
(916) 877-7267
13 mi. east of Chico. By appointment only.

RENAISSANCE VINEYARD
PO Box 1000, Renaissance 95962
(916) 692-2222

DAVID & MERYL SALTER WINERY
7700 Silent Pass, Somerset 95684
(209) 245-3726
By appointment only.)

SANTINO WINERY
Steiner Rd., Rt. 2, Box 21A, Plymouth 95669
(209) 245-3555

SHENANDOAH VINEYARDS
12300 Steiner Rd., Plymouth 95669
(209) 245-3698
4.5 mi. from Plymouth on Shenandoah Rd., turn left on Steiner Rd.. 1 mi. Premium wines. Open June 1-Oct. 1, 11-5; Oct. 1-June 1, only Sat. & Sun., 11-5; weekdays, please call.



SIERRA VISTA
4560 Cabernet Way, Placerville 95667
(916) 622-7221
In Pleasant Valley turn onto Leisure Lane next to Pleasant Valley Store. Winery at dead end of road. Open weekends 12-5. Otherwise by appointment.

STEVENOT WINERY
San Domingo Rd. (off Sheep Ranch Rd.), PO Box 548, Murphys 95247
(209) 728-3436
Tasting room open daily, 10-5. Tours available.

STONERIDGE
13862 Ridge Rd. East, Sutter Creek 95685
(209) 223-1761
Open Sat. 12-4 & most Sun. 12-4 or by appointment. Zinfandel and Ruby Cabernet wines. Picnic area available. 2.2 mi. east from the junction of Hwy. 49 and Ridge Rd.

STONEY CREEK VINEYARDS
8221 Stoney Creek Rd., Somerset 95684
(209) 245-3467
Open weekends 11-4. Picnic area available under the oak trees.

STORY WINERY & VINEYARDS
Bell Rd. (formerly Willetts Rd.), Plymouth 95669
(209) 245-6208 or (415) 441-2990
By appointment only.

TKC VINEYARDS
1307 Essex Circle, Ridgecrest 935
(619) 446-3166
Winery: Rt. 2, Valley Dr., Plymouth 95669. By appointment on

YANKEE HILL WINERY
11755 Coarsegold Lane, Columbia 95310
(209) 532-3015
By appointment only.

RESTAURANTS

AVERY HOTEL
Moran Road
Avery 95224
(209) 795-9935

THE BALCONY
164 Main
Jackson 95642
(209) 223-2855

CITY HOTEL
Main St.
Columbia 95310
(209) 532-1479

FRIAR TUCK'S REST.
111 N. Pine
Nevada City 95959
(916) 265-9093

HISTORIC SMITH FLAT HOUSE
2021 Smith Flat Rd.
Smith Flat 95727
(916) 626-9003

IL RIFUGIO
386 Main St.
Murphys 95247
(209) 728-3964

JACK'S FOR DINNER
101 Sacramento
Nevada City 95959
(916) 265-3405

LUCKY STRIKE REST.
Highway 49
Mokelumne Hill 95245
(209) 286-1454

MANYA'S PLACE
8031 Mt. Aukum Rd.
Mt. Aukum 95656
(209) 245-4184

NATIONAL HOTEL
211 Broad St.
Nevada City 95959
(916) 265-4551

SELAYA'S
320 Broad
Nevada City 95959
(916) 265-5697

SUTTER PALACE
76 Main
Sutter Creek 95685
(209) 267-9852

TERESA'S PLACE
1235 Jackson Gate Rd.
Jackson Gate 95669
(209) 223-1786

THE VINEYARD HOUSE
Cold Springs at Highway 49
Coloma 95613
(916) 622-2217

WEIRD HAROLD'S REST.
5631 Pony Express Trail
Pollock Pines 95726
(916) 644-5272

LODGING

BOTTO COUNTRY INN B & B
11 Sutter Hill Rd.
Sutter Creek 95685
(209) 267-5519

THE BROADWAY HOTEL
225 Broadway
Jackson 95642
(209) 223-3503

CITY HOTEL
Main St
Columbia 95310
(209) 532-1479

COUNTRY SQUIRE MOTEL
1105 N. Main St.
Jackson 95669
(209) 223-1657

DUNBAR HOUSE
271 Jones St.
Murphys 95247
(209) 728-2897

FLEMING JONES HOMESTEAD B & B
3170 Newtown Rd.
Placeville 95667
(916) 626-5840

FOXES
77 Main
Sutter Creek 95685
(209) 267-5882

HANFORD HOUSE
3 Hanford
Sutter Creek 95685
(209) 267-0747

THE HEIRLOOM
Box 322
Ione 95640
(209) 274-4468

MURPHY'S INN B & B
318 Neal St.
Grass Valley 95945
(916) 273-6873

MURPHYS HOTEL & REST.
Main St.
Murphys 95247
(209) 728-3444

NATIONAL HOTEL
211 Broad St.
Nevada City 95959
(916) 265-4551

PETERSON INN
2942 Coloma
Placerville 95667
(916) 622-1882

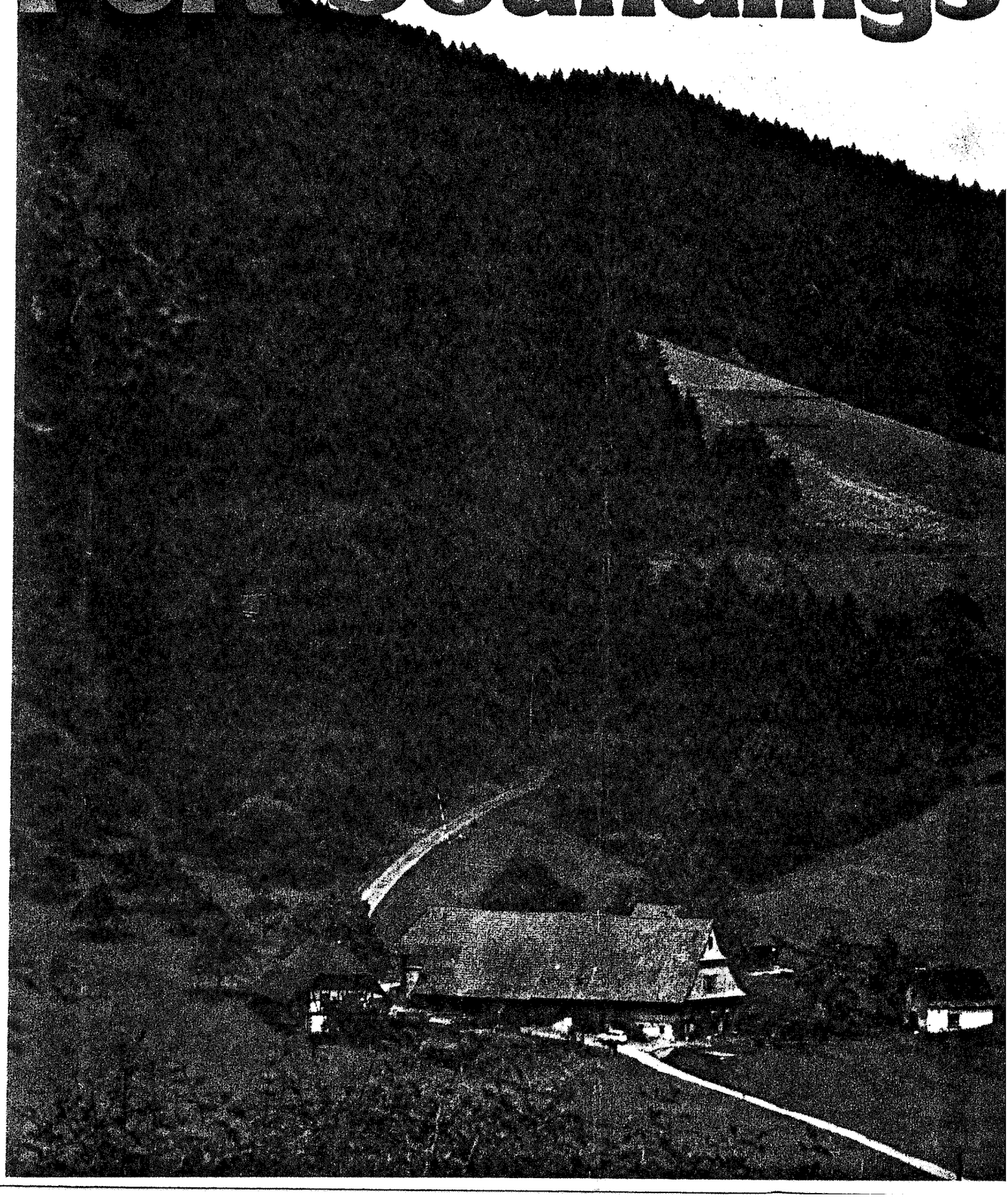
PIETY HILL INN
523 Sacramento St.
Nevada City 95959
(916) 265-2245

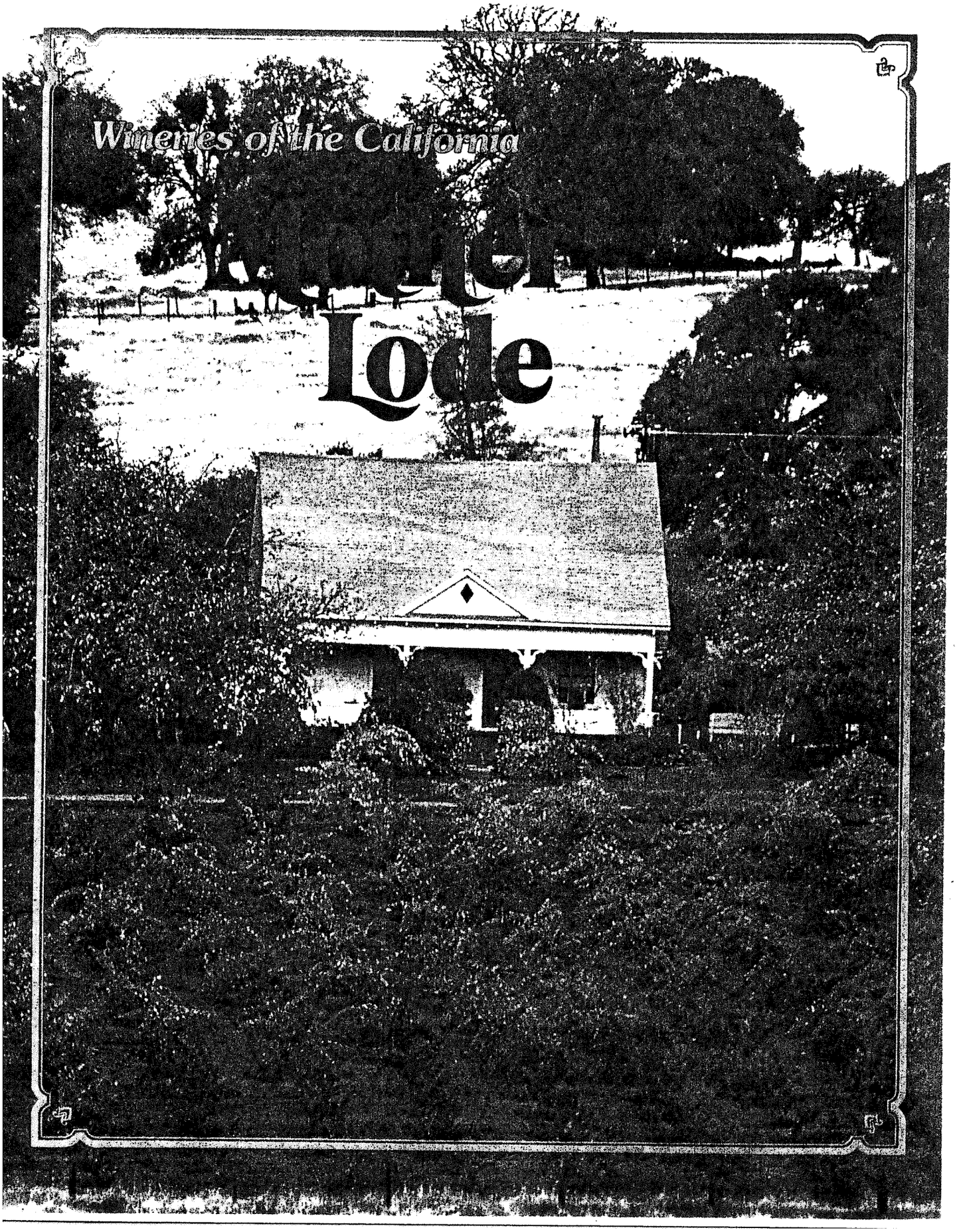
THE RED CASTLE
109 Prospect St.
Nevada City 95959
(916) 265-5135

THE VINEYARD HOUSE
Cold Springs Rd. at Highway 49
Coloma 95113
(916) 622-2217

STOCKTON'S Port Soundings

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1985




Wineries of the California
Lode

Article and Photography by Richard Doty

Gold put the California Mother Lode on the map more than 100 years ago. Wine may keep it there for another 100 years.

The foothill area 40 miles east of Stockton — where gold was discovered and mined for years in the 1850s — is rapidly becoming popular as a viticultural region.

It isn't surprising that new areas have emerged for wine production, given the rapid growth of this industry in recent years. However, winemaking in the Mother Lode really isn't new; it goes back to the gold rush era in the Sierra foothills.

The zinfandel and barbera varietals were popular with the miners, and vineyards were frequently planted next to mining operations. James Marshall, who discovered gold at Sutter's Mill at Coloma, had more than 75 varieties of grapes in that region.

Winemaking was such a major industry that at one point Calaveras County ranked fourth in the state for wine production. Wine historian Leon Adams writes that in 1860 El Dorado County had more vineyards than either Sonoma or Napa Counties. By the 1890s, according to Adams, there were more than 100 wineries in the foothills, and vineyard acreage totaled in the thousands.

The D'Agostini Winery out of Plymouth in Amador County was founded in 1856 and is listed as the fourth oldest in the state. Its record of more than 100 years of continuous winemaking was recognized in 1961 with designation as a state historical landmark.

Phylloxera vine disease and prohibition led to the demise of the wine activity in this century until wine sales began to expand rapidly in the 1970s. The number of California wineries increased from 273 in 1973 to 641 in 1983. Part of this gain was recorded in the Mother Lode.

The Sierra Foothills Winery Association produces a brochure for tourists with directions to 26 wineries in Calaveras, Amador and El Dorado Counties. Wineries dot the region from Murphys on the south in Calaveras County to Boeger in the Placerville area of El Dorado County.

The heart of the wine production at this time, however, is centered in the Shenandoah Valley east of Plymouth. D'Agostini is the oldest of the 10 wineries in the picturesque valley of rolling hills interspersed with stands of oaks.

The area was settled by pioneers from the historic Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, hence a familiar name for the region that has caused problems for the winery owners. Both Shenandoah locations produce wine, so the federal government had to decide who had marketing rights to the Shenandoah Valley appellation. The ruling specifies that Mother Lode vintners of the region use the words "Shenandoah Valley of California" for labels on estate produced wine.

The grape varietals in the Mother Lode vary with the wineries, but in the Shenandoah region the predominant one is zinfandel. Some of these vines are more than 100 years old and still in production

in the valley, which is about 2,000 feet in elevation. "The soil and climate seem just right for this wine," said Henry D'Agostini, one of the four brothers who recently sold the family winery to Armagan Ozdiker.

Jeff Meyers, the assistant winemaker at Montevina, one of the valley's largest wineries, said the soil of largely red, decomposed granite is definitely a factor. "The land is very rocky, and because the best vines are dry farmed (without irrigation), they are stressed. We think this provides a better concentration of flavors." Because of the climate and soil conditions, Meyers said the yeild per acre is about half of what it would be in the Napa Valley.

Meyers, whose winery produces five different types of zinfandel, explained that the weather of hot days and cool nights in the summer also influences the zinfandel character. "We have hotter days than Napa, with a relentless California sun," he said.

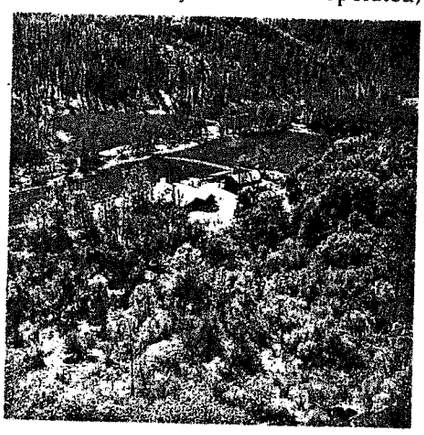
Evidence of the zinfandel domination in the Shenandoah region is that more than 80 percent of the grape acreage in Amador County is for this varietal.

The winery at Montevina is one of the most modern in the foothills. It contrasts sharply with many of the Mother Lode facilities that are smaller, family operations in restored barns and farmhouses.

At Stevenot Winery neary Murphys, for example, the wine tasting room is the "Alaska House." The rustic log cabin was built in 1908, and one of the occupants was a convicted murderer on parole from prison. The entire area of the winery (including a rock outcropping overlooking the site that is pictured in the Stevenot label) was once believed to be a Miwok Indian village.

At Boeger Winery in El Dorado County, the wine tasting room is the basement of an old winery established in the 1860s. In those days the grapes were crushed on the top floor, and the juice ran down through a chute to the lower floor, where the wine was made. When Greg and Susan Boeger started their winery on the site in 1972, they converted the basement into the tasting room.

Although most of the Mother Lode wineries are family owned and operated,



this lack of conglomerate control certainly hasn't adversely affected the quality of the wine.

The 1980 merlot from Boeger was judged by Wine State magazine as "American Champion" — the finest merlot in the U.S. This varietal, which has been commonly used as a blend in cabernet sauvignon, has taken on its own following in recent years. It has become marketable as a cabernet type of wine that matures sooner.

"We wanted to try a Bordeaux style of wine and found that merlot is nice for our climate and elevation," said winemaker Greg Boeger, who is president of the El Dorado Winery Association. "We strive for wines that are soft, balanced and drinkable, but still with finesse," he said in describing the merlot. It has been

selected for the prestigious barrel tasting at the Four Seasons restaurant in New York City.

A 1980 zinfandel from Boeger was presented to Queen Elizabeth by President Ronald Reagan when the queen was in California in 1983. A special commemorative label was designed for the occasion, and Boeger's wine also has been selected as part of the "cellar" of California wines at the White House.

The Mother Lode vintners presented a special tasting of their wines last summer in San Francisco that led wine writer Larry Walker to observe, "The reputation of the foothill area is growing rapidly.

And it certainly should. It's an exciting area for the grape, and one that seems to encourage a refreshing individualism in wine production."

A list of the medal winning wines from Montevina is extensive. During the last three years, more than 70 medals have been collected by this winery at such prestigious events as the Los Angeles, Orange and San Francisco County Fairs. Leading medal winners have been the barbera, zinfandel and a premium red table wine.

The best Montevina wine? "I wouldn't want to say," said winery vice president Sharon Walsh, "because that seems to depend upon who you ask. But I happen to favor the barbera (a hard to find red wine that goes well with barbecued food). However, winning wines and what's popular with consumers are two different things. Our fume blanc and white zinfandel are very popular with women, while the men seem to prefer zinfandel and cabernet sauvignon." She said the white zinfandel is the biggest seller, with some 10,000 cases per year out of the 30,000 case total for the winery.

The recent popularity of white zinfandel has led Boeger and D'Agostini to add this varietal to their production this year.

Meyer's comments as assistant winemaker at Montevina confirm the remarks of Walsh about various favorites of the winery personnel. Meyer likes the special selection zinfandel, and the awards can substantiate this claim. His favorite received seven medal designations for the 1979 vintage, including a gold at Orange County and gold and best of show at Calaveras County.

In addition to the zinfandel produced in the Mother Lode, several out-of-the-area wineries have achieved considerable success with this grape. The Sutter Home Winery of Napa built its reputation on award winning zinfandel from the Deaver Vineyard in the Shenandoah Valley. The nearby Ferraro Ranch has supplied zinfandel grapes for Monterey Peninsula Winery. San Martin, Ridge, Ravenswood, Carneros Creek, and Mayacamas also have used grapes from this region for zinfandel.

Wines from Stevenot, which produces some 50,000 cases per year, also have been noticed by wine critics and judges. The zinfandel blanc is the official wine for Minnesota and is served at all official state events. One of the Stevenot zinfandels is on the wine list at the famous Ahwahnee Hotel in Yosemite. In 1982 every wine at Stevenot received an award of excellence in at least one judging. Stevenot — like Boeger — has been represented at the Four Seasons tastings in New York City.

Barden Stevenot started this winery on its way to success when he purchased an old cattle ranch on the site in 1968. The first commercial release was 10 years later. Stevenot, a fifth generation Calaveras County resident, makes zinfandel, zinfandel blanc (his most popular release), cabernet sauvignon, chardonnay, chenin blanc and sauvignon blanc.

Steve Millier, the Stevenot winemaker, has no favorite. He said, "I view the wines as my children and love them all. In 20 years, maybe I will have a favorite, but not now." His wife Liz, the winery marketing director, offered a similar thought regarding the placement of fresh flowers in the rustic tasting room. "Wine is to give pleasure, and we want the tasting to be an aesthetically pleasing experience," she said.

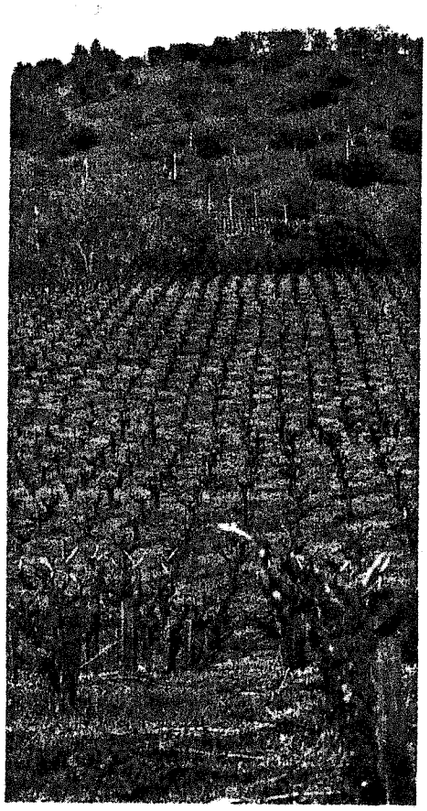
At Montevina, the wines available include zinfandel, cabernet sauvignon, red and white table wines, barbera, sauvignon blanc, fume blanc, semillon, chardonnay, white zinfandel and a sweet wine named Mission del Sol. The winery was started in 1972 by Walter Field, a retired banker from the Gilroy area.

In addition to the merlot, Boeger markets zinfandel, cabernet sauvignon, sierra blanc, chardonnay, chenin blanc, sauvignon blanc and white zinfandel. The winery's table wines are termed Hangtown Red and Hangtown Gold because nearby Placerville was called Hangtown during its early years in the gold rush period.

Boeger is smaller than some of the other foothill wineries, with 10,000 cases produced annually. The relatively low quantity hasn't adversely affected the quality, as these wines have received 83 medals, including 14 gold, at judgings during the last five years.

D'Agostini has seen changes in the label and winery grounds since the May of 1984 purchase by Ozdiker. He is a wine broker from Sacramento previously affiliated with the Sebastiani Winery in the Sonoma Valley. "It was time for a new image," said winemaker Charles Tsegeletos about the change in labels at D'Agostini. He said the screw top bottles also have been replaced by corks.

According to Tsegeletos, the winery produces 50,000 cases a year, with burgundy and zinfandel the most popular. D'Agostini also produces a muscat canelli, white zinfandel, red and white table wines and Amador blanc. The previous owners didn't enter wine competitions, but that is now changing. Tsegeletos said



medals were received this year for the burgundy and zinfandel.

Many of the Mother Lode wineries have picnic facilities on the premises, with tasting available on weekends. Montevina, Stevenot and D'Agostini are open daily, while Boeger has a Wednesday through Sunday schedule. All of the vintners in the foothill region offer reasonably priced wines.

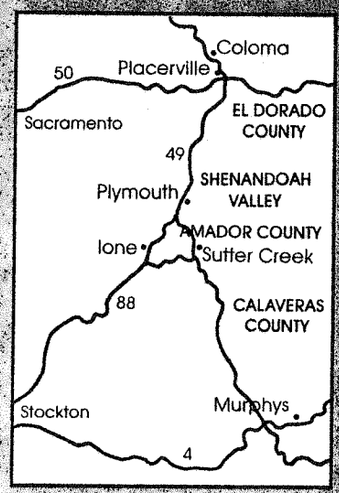
A total of 26 wineries are listed in the guide published by the Sierra Foothills Winery Association.

In Calaveras County, Stevenot and Chispa Cellars are near Murphys.

Several wineries are located in Amador County. Greenstone Winery and Argonaut are near Ione, while Stoneridge is near Sutter Creek.

The Shenandoah Valley region has Kenworthy Vineyards, Montevina, D'Agostini, Amador Foothill Winery, Pigeon Creek, Shenandoah Vineyards, Santino, Story, Karly, Beau Val, TKO Vineyards and Baldinelli Vineyards.

In El Dorado County, Boeger, Madrona Vineyards, Harvest Cellars and El Dorado Vineyards are near Placerville. Sierra Vista, Herbert Vineyards, FBF/Fitzpatrick, Granite Springs and Stoney Creek Vineyards are in the southern portion of the county.



THE AGRICULTURAL HISTORY

OF CALAVERAS COUNTY

THE AGRICULTURAL HISTORY
OF CALAVERAS COUNTY

BY

DR. JOSEPH GIOVINCO

Completed as a unit under a grant from
the National Endowment for the Humanities
to the Calaveras Heritage Council

Section I

The agricultural history of Calaveras County is virgin territory. Some brief accounts of county ranches do appear in two issues of Las Calaveras, the magazine of the Calaveras Historical Society, and bits of information can be gleaned from regional histories and histories of the Gold Rush and mining. But the subject has never been comprehensively treated.

This historical vacuum owes not to the absence of farming and ranching in Calaveras, for evidence demonstrates its existence from the 1850s onward. Rather it is due to the fascination of both the general public and local residents with the county's gold mining industry. Compared to the lore and romance surrounding the argonauts and the "days of old, the days of gold," farming is unexciting.

Factually, "/a/griculture in the early period was the stepchild of mining and ranching," observed the late Walton Bean in his analysis of California's economy for the period 1850-1870.[1] Those remarks apply with even greater force to Calaveras County, where agriculture suffered from the "curse of gold" well into the twentieth century. Indeed it was mining which gave the county its prime identity and strongly influenced the course of its long-term development.

Although local booster literature of the mid- and late-nineteenth century portrays Calaveras as a veritable garden, producing crops of incomparable quality and quantity, the reality was less impressive. Limited

land conducive to commercial farming; inadequate local markets; lack of railroad connections to larger population centers beyond the county until the early twentieth century; and the prevailing public image of Calaveras as a mining county all worked against successful development of local agriculture. By 1920, more local land was devoted to grazing than to crops, and this pattern has persisted.

Researching the overall agricultural trends for the period 1850-1920 has proved difficult because factual information is so limited. Many of the pioneer farming families of the county have long since moved out, and with them went an important part of that history. Those families which remain tend to be descendants of ranchers and are more familiar with that story than with local horticulture. Moreover, the written record is full of gaps. Newspapers are the chief source of information, but are incomplete in coverage and primarily reflect the outlook and interests of county boosters. Reports on local farming and ranching developments, for example, tend to be relentlessly upbeat in nature to lure settlers and outside capital to the area. Used judiciously they are nevertheless the most important source of information on the history of county agriculture.

Statistical sources help to supplement the newspaper record. Of special importance are the Federal censuses which provide data on farm acreage, production, land values, and other relevant information. Taken together, these sources reveal that the history of agriculture in Calaveras County mirrored early statewide patterns, but soon faltered and fell behind the other areas due to trends within the mining industry and their impact on the local economy and population.

Section II

Agriculture in Calaveras County emerged in reaction to both the miners' need for inexpensive locally grown foodstuffs and economic problems stemming from the demise of placer mining. It was also viewed as a potential cure-all for the social instability which plagued the county and which was attributed to the nomadic lifestyle of the miners.

Unlike pioneers associated with other frontiers, those who poured into California's foothills were lured by gold and the potential for quick wealth, rather than cheap, fertile farm land to settle. A devil-may-care attitude identified by hard drinking, gambling, and womanizing reflected that outlook, while periodic rumors of new and richer goldstrikes elsewhere perpetuated the nomadic quality of the miners' lives and fueled the overall population instability of the mining counties.

By the late 1850s the palmy days of placer mining had ended, leaving in their wake a social toll comprised of failed miners, or as John Hittell called them, "white Chinamen." "In every camp are the broken down in strength," lamented the San Andreas Independent in 1859, "the broken down in soul; the sadly disappointed; the prematurely old; the brawney-limbed, palsied by over-work, by exposure, and too often by criminal indulgence in debasing passions. We have paupers without the means of taking care of them; tottering old age and hopeless decrepitude, make almost daily demands upon our sympathies--These are some of our social disorders, begotten by the glorious past . . . ."[2]

Compounding this situation was the growing financial indebtedness

of Calaveras and her sister mining counties. A declining population narrowed the tax base and simultaneously increased the tax burden for those non-miners who remained (a state law of 1854 exempted mining claims from taxation), thereby inducing further emigration. Moreover, the decreasing population prompted a decline in real estate values which further depressed the situation. "What has the county of Calaveras got to show for the millions of treasure taken from her gold fields and the years of arduous, hazardous labor its production cost? An indebtedness of $250,000, a depleted, poverty stricken, disheartened population, a waste of exhausted placers," complained the Calaveras Chronicle.[3]

Disturbed by the social and economic problems left to the county by an apparently-failed mining industry, boosters began emphasizing the importance of widening the local economic base through development of new industries, especially agriculture. This was a logical selection, for agriculture was the leading occupation of mid-nineteenth century America and the soil from which had sprung the bulk of the nation's values: self-reliance, industry, nature, thrift, and stability.

Through farming and ranching, Calaveras County hoped to rectify its deficiencies and create a stable and productive population. "Our greatest want is population; a refined and cultivated population, of all classes, male and female, who will build up homes among us. We are tired of seeing that class, who appear to have no higher aspirations than to vote, chew tobacco, drink whisky and play cribbage."[4]

A major impediment to achieving the requisite population and

economic base was federal and state mineral land laws, which unintentionally perpetuated the unsettled character of the population by barring a major part of foothill land from private ownership.

The Federal land act of 1851 was the chief culprit. It classified public land into two categories, mineral and nonmineral, and restricted ownership to the latter. In the former, both miners and farmers were free to work claims or cultivate the soil, but neither could obtain ownership of the land. For miners the consequence was that there was "nothing to fix them in any one place, while many motives impel them to frequent removals," thereby encouraging their nomadic character. For farmers cultivating public mineral lands, lack of secure land title meant that farms were vulnerable to any miner who decided to prospect there, provided he posted a damage bond. A farmer from Washington Flat commented on the impact of that law:

> It is unfortunately the case that we can have no home in the mountains of California that we can legitimately call our own. --True, we may build, fence and make improvements on the public mineral lands, but we have no security that our labor of years will not be sluiced off and our property . . . made comparatively worthless by men who consider that they have a better right to the soil because they have found the color of gold in it . . . . /U/ntil we can have land that we can truly call our own, these mountains will always be peopled by the adventurer and sojourner."[5]

Some farmers thus began to abandon the foothills for valley communities and secure land titles, but others chose to remain and fight. In December 1866, farmers met in San Andreas and organized the Farmers' League of Calaveras County, and chose E. F. Walker as its president. Its objective was to petition Congress to open mineral lands to sale and

to allow acquisition of more than 160 acres, the maximum allowed by both the Preemption and Homestead Laws.[6]

Not until 1872 did the farmers achieve their objective, when Congress passed legislation opening mineral lands to settlement and ownership. Meanwhile, residents of Calaveras were polarized into distinct camps. Their respective arguments provide a glimpse of how each side viewed the county's present and foresaw its future.

Miners contended that mineral lands should not be opened to homesteaders because those lands were not exhausted of their fabulous wealth; to the contrary, they had barely been tapped. Moreover, farmers misrepresented the agricultural potential of the land; it was sterile and would yield only "bedrock ranches." "It is the sheerest nonsense to suppose that people would purchase mineral lands, situated in the almost inaccessible recesses of the Sierra Nevadas, composed of arid, stubborn, unproductive soil, remote from market . . . ."[7] The much-desired influx of settlers would materialize only after completion of the transcontinental railroad and the opening of the valley communities to national markets. Then valley land would become relatively expensive, and potential farmers would turn their eyes to the foothills. Since that situation would take years to develop, miners would have sufficient time to rework the mineral lands. Finally, miners played on widespread anti-monopolist sentiments. Through a variety of methods, including ill-concealed corruption, speculators had acquired large tracts of state land, effectively thwarting federal policy designed to encourage a broad class of small farmers. Miners urged continuation of existing mineral lands policy, including the 160-acre

limit, ostensibly to keep vast tracts out of the hands of land grabbers.

For their part, farmers and their business allies attributed to the miners a "dog in the manger" attitude, because they were unable to make a living off the mineral lands and unwilling to see others benefit from its use as farms. "Manure your claim well and wash it off," the farmer instructed the miner, "it is not likely to produce more gold on that account. Cover it with guano and plow deep, yet you will not find one speck more gold in it. The Thing cannot be made by man, neither can we devise means to make it grow."[8]

If the land was stripped or devoid of gold, it was not necessarily unproductive for agricultural purposes. Rather it was portrayed as highly fertile and capable of producing a wide range of fruits, vegetables, and cereals which would rival those of the valley farms of California.[9]

> /O/n these lands the vine, of every known variety, grows . . . ; the olive tree takes kindly to the soil and flourishes; . . . the mulberry, pomegranate and the fig, are profuse in their reward to the husbandman; . . . all fruits of the temperate zone, such as the apple, pear, cherry, plum and apricot, with all the lesser fruits and berries, produce with a prolificness that is copious even to redundancy . . . ."[10]

As added support for the soil fertility argument, boosters claimed that land speculators used the cover of the alleged mineral content of the soil to acquire developed farms of demonstrable worth, thereby anticipating an eventual change in the land law.

Lastly, farmers portrayed themselves as the last best hope of Calaveras. What was the legacy of the miner to the county? Financial indebtedness of several hundred thousand dollars; a tax-burdened citizenry

and a shrinking population. Worst of all, the county suffered from the miners' tendency to dwell on the golden days and to hug "the delusive phantom, hope," waiting for something to "turn up" rather than using evergy and dedication to extricate Calaveras from its position as "the rear-guard in the march of progressive improvement." [11]

Farming interests were ultimately to emerge victorious in the long-standing land law battle. The Land Law of 1872 not only opened mineral lands to settlement through preemption and homesteading, but also required proof that land was mineral in character if a miner wished to preserve his claim. [12] Beyond its immediate significance to Calaveras farmers, the 1872 law reflected the growing power of the state's agricultural communities and the declining power of its mining regions. Henceforth, as the hydraulic mining controversy was to demonstrate, farmers would have the ear of the legislature and congress.

With the land issue behind them, Calaveras' boosters foresaw a bright future for the county's agricultural sector. However, local horticulture never lived up to those expectations. Factors ranging from crop growing conditions to limited markets to inadequate transportation and irrigation facilities meant that that branch of farming would limp along throughout the nineteenth century and eventually give way to the economically more successful ranching interests.

Section III

The first attempts at horticulture in Calaveras County date to the 1850s when most of the county's residents were engaged in placer mining. This

agricultural activity amounted to limited efforts by some miners to cultivate small plots of land near their claims in order to grow produce for their own needs or for supplementary income. It is impossible to determine how many miners engaged in that practice, but evidence does suggest that it was on the upswing by the late 1850s when hard times hit the placer miners. Thus the Visiting Committee of the California Agricultural Society (established in 1854) noted that the Mokelumne Hill area was "one of the richest, in the combination of mining claims and home gardens, we have anywhere seen." [13] Local newspaper items recorded similar statements and urged residents to emulate that action. E. T. Lake of North Branch, it was reported, grew cantaloupe and had a patch of pumpkins, while the garden of a Vallecito resident included currants, gooseberries, strawberries and a variety of fruit trees. [14]

County newspapers were important propagandists in booster efforts to persuade miners to turn to agriculture on either a part-time or full-time basis. "It may be repugnant to the feelings of an old miner, who has been in the habit of digging his gold out of the earth, to resort to the slow process of raising his support by the cultivation of the soil. But it will be much better for him and the community that he do it, than to remain idle, or run after some imaginary fortune, in some distant gold field." [15]

Playing on the unsettled nature of the miner's life and the need to enhance the attractiveness of his mining claim to prospective buyers, farm boosters urged him to adorn his property with fruit trees and thereby add to its beauty and value. "A fruit and vegetable garden connected with a mine

will always improve it; and the labor of preparing it may generally be done at odd hours." [16] At other times, pitches were aimed at the prospector's desire for self-sufficiency. The San Andreas Independent, describing the small farms along Murray Creek, noted that they averaged but twelve acres, which were planted in gardens and small orchards and vineyards, but added that the adjoining hills provided grazing as well as firewood. For those farm owners the resources of the land had become their gold mine; not only did it maintain their existence, but each cultivated acre increased their farm's value. [17]

Boosters also asserted that miners would be in a better position to work claims if they temporarily devoted their energies to agricultural pursuits. Their efforts would contribute to the county's self-sufficiency in food, and money saved from lower food costs could be plowed back into mining investments: "/W/hen all that we eat is raised next door, and not freighted from the valleys, living will be cheaper and mines can be worked which are sealed now by the extravagant prices we must pay for our imported diet." [18]

The general public was also a target of boosters' solicitations. Assertions revolving around soil fertility and climate, markets and profit, and family and morality were the chief components in the campaign to transform Calaveras into a flourishing garden.

The availability of fertile farm land at reasonable prices was a constant refrain. The bottom lands were reputed to be highly productive and the climate of the foothills accommodating to a variety of horticultural

products. "The soil in these mountains, in almost every locality is extremely fertile, and wherever there has been a spot, with facilities for irrigation . . . it has been found to produce grain, vegetables, and fruit, nearly equal in quantity, and far superior in quality to that raised in the valleys on the same amount of land." Through hard work and in due time, "/t/hese hills and mountain sides could be made to groan under their weight of fruit, and these little valleys to smile with their vegetable productions."[19]

Believing their own rhetoric, Calaveras farmers began to experiment with a wide range of crops, all of which were considered well-suited to the county. Cereals, grapes, oranges, peaches, pears, figs, apples, and even olives were all attempted at one time or another during the 1860s and later. County newspapers did their part by reporting that in Calaveras grapes "flourish like a green bay tree"; the "mulberry and the olive is not an experiment in the county it is a success," and "the apple industry will yet be one of the most profitable to the horticulturist."[20] To further the county's agricultural reputation, in 1889 Calaveras established a Board of Trade to promote its products.

This enthusiasm was not confined to Calaveras, but was characteristic of the agricultural crazes which swept California at that time. In the 1860s, for instance, the state legislature provided bounties to farmers who would risk experimentation with a variety of crops, such as cotton, silk, and tea. In 1870, the bounty was rescinded, but in Calaveras attempts at tea culture were made by a small group of Japanese at Valley Springs in 1887, and the planting of mulberry trees was urged only a year prior to the end of the bounty.[21]

Spurring on such efforts was the belief that high prices and strong local demand would initially reward the producers, and later the coming of the railroad would tap distant markets and enhance their profits. Given the large mining population and the tendency of those miners to depend on others for the production of foods--"there is always a ready market"--the farmer could count on consumption of all he produced. The superior quality of those goods would, in turn, enable them to compete successfully with those of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys once the railroad linked Calaveras to the large population centers of the state.

Great hope was placed in the railroad to reverse the county's dismal financial situation. "When the shrill whistle of the locomotive is heard in our midst it will mark the epoch in our history when deterioration ceases and progress commences. Hurrah for the railroad!" Specifically, the San Joaquin-Sierra Nevada Railroad was expected to have a substantial impact on the area encompassed by Altaville, Angles Camp, Vallecito, Douglas Flat and Murphys. That section would "be transformed as if by magic, into magnificent and luxuriant vineyards and orchards," claimed railroad and agricultural promoters.[22] It followed that if the farmer prospered, he would have more money to spend and that would stimulate other local businesses. This cheerful outlook was caught by the Calaveras Chronicle in an article which touched upon local cereal production: "When grain fields cover our hillsides flour mills will be heard in our gulches, and their music will keep time with our quartz mills."[23] An additional element was necessary to complete the emerging picture of

an harmonious and prosperous Calaveras--moral uplift.

Like Americans elsewhere, county residents commonly associated wholesomeness, stability and permanence with farm life. Boosters believed that once the word spread that Calaveras possessed good soil and climate, and solid markets and good transportation links to outside centers, families would flow to the foothills. Soon farms would dot the countryside and local youth, by performing their farm-related chores, would simultaneously learn the value of an honest day's work and the skills necessary for their adult farming careers.[24]

Initially, claims of the fertility of Calaveras soil and the insatiable demand of the local market for a variety of farm produce may have encouraged the development of truck gardens, orchards, and vineyards in the late 1850s and early 1860s. Illustrative of successful ventures were the Beatty ranch near San Andreas, which had 10,000 strawberry plants in 1857, and Henry Schroebel's, which had over 300 bearing fruit trees in 1857.[25]

But by 1859, a glut of produce existed and news items noted that "Peaches here at home became so plenty this fall that they were almost a nuisance in our retail shops . . . ." Commonplace were the phrases "glutted market" and "prices ruinously low." "/T/hose who a year or two ago entered into horticulture and gardening with considerable spirit," noted the Independent in 1859, "inspired by the high prices for fruit and vegetables suddenly let their energies slacken, for they could not see where the next year's market for their surplus was to be found . . . ."[26]

What had prompted this sudden change was not simply over-production, but more importantly a decline in population due to the exhaustion of surface mines and the lure of the Washoe strike. Consequently, farmers were forced to become the principal consumers of their own goods, and agriculture again took on a subsistence character, as growers either pulled in their horns or sold out.[27]

For those who stuck it out the long-term problem was not the limited and fluctuating local market, but inadequate access to markets outside the county due to the lack of major railroad facilities. Two feeder lines linked Calaveras to the outside by the mid-1880s, but they did not reach far into the county and it wasn't until 1902 that Angels Camp--a major population center--was finally connected with "bands of iron" to areas outside of Calaveras. Access to wider markets was of course limited by the expense of shipping produce over the mountains by wagon, but even when that was attempted, the condition of the county roads made it difficult to move products from one point to another without damage. "The constant complaint from those persons who are obliged to travel, is that the roads are in a horrible condition," noted the Calaveras Prospect as late as 1892, "and this is nothing new, it is always the case . . . . The mountain roads of California are proverbially bad, knee-deep in dust in summer and axle-deep in mud in winter, and yet we believe that our roads cost more each year than those of almost any other part of the world."[28]

The problem of market accessibility also led to the closure of the University of California's Agricultural Experimentation Station at nearby

Jackson, Amador County. Established in 1888 to assist area farmers in determining the best crops to plant, the station closed in 1903. The Amador Ledger explained why:

> That the experiments were not followed by the planting of orchards along the lines of the experiments, is due to the fact of the distance from railroad facilities, and the consequent lack of an available market for the fruit. The withdrawal of the station is not a reflection upon the possibilities of these foothills in fruit culture. It simply shows that we must have rapid and cheap transportation to market before we can hope to accomplish much in this direction.[29]

If problems of inadequate markets and transportation plagued the agricultural development of Calaveras, so also did the disillusionment and skepticism of a number of long-time farmers. After years of hearing the same old refrain about the county's agricultural potential and remembering their failures or those of friends, these old settlers fell into the "rut of unbelief" about the county's agricultural potential.[30] Such an outlook precluded reasonable crop experimentation and risk-taking necessary to develop successful foothill farming. Hence the local agricultural status quo remained largely undisturbed.

Even during the late 1850s and early 1860s when some agricultural experimentation was attempted, county farm boosters had a difficult time convincing the public that the foothills were capable of commercial farming. Part of the problem was preconceived ideas about the requisites for successful agriculture, as the San Andreas Independent unhappily noted:

> Western men are too apt to be diverted from rural labor unless they have a deep soil, regular rains and plenty of room to raise corn, hemp and tobacco; Eastern men do not think a piece of land worth cultivating unless it will produce lots of wheat, clover and timothy. A farm is nothing to either of

> of them if it contains less than 160 acres of land which may be cultivated with the plow.[31]

Perhaps compounding the problem was the speculation frenzy which swept California in the late 1860s and early 1870s. The anticipated profits to be made from the completion of the transcontinental railroad encouraged land speculation and the volatile market of Nevada mining stocks drew others, so that the California public was soon infected "with a gambling mania that became one of the most unhappy characteristics of the times."[32] In that climate, farming had little attraction, for it did not promise quick wealth, but required long-term investment and effort. "Americans are after bigger things; they wish to make a fortune at a stroke; and, the consequence is, they are incapable . . . of setting down in any legitimate and steady pursuit," commented the San Andreas Register in 1868.[33]

A skeptical public and a discouraged and cynical local farming community were the end products of nearly three decades of effort to promote the agricultural potential of Calaveras County. While Calaveras was never to develop farming as a major industry, it would be inaccurate to leave the impression that the county land was useless for farming. There were many fertile locations tucked within the mountains, but these were generally confined to small acreage (at least by commercial standards) and were capable of meeting only a portion of the local market's produce needs. Who owned those lands and how they acquired them sheds light on another important facet of the county's agricultural history.

Section IV

There are a number of pitfalls to researching land titles. The most obvious is that the written historical record is either incomplete or inaccurate. The township books for Calaveras County illustrate one of these problems. While they list the name of the land patentee, they do not provide information on the method of acquisition. Was it by homestead? Preemption? Sale? Moreover, those records give no data on the number of previous attempts at settlement prior to the issuance of a patent.

The tract books of the Bureau of Land Management offer solutions to some of these problems, but they create new ones as well. Data concerning when land was settled, how it was acquired, and the fate of the patent application are contained in those books. But, unfortunately, the books reveal frequent instances of multiple applications for title to the same parcel of land. Which patent was ultimately successful can be determined only by carefully tracing each applicant. The time and expense involved in that effort, not only qualify it as a project unto itself, but place it beyong the goals of this unit. Finally, the books contain instances whereby more than one finalized patent for the same piece of land is erroneously listed.[34]

The printed census schedules for the late nineteenth century raise other problems. How many farmers did Calaveras County have in 1850 or 1880? The census does not directly answer that question; it simply lists the number of farms. One may assume that the latter is interchangeable with the former, but that is not necessarily true. A farm may have

been owned and worked by more than one individual or family, so that in reality there were more farmers than farms.

Despite these methodological problems, a judicious sampling of select primary and secondary materials affords a general impression of land acquisition patterns for the period 1870-1910.

Both the Preemption and Homestead Acts were popular nineteenth century American devices for acquiring title to land. Of these Calaveras County residents relied primarily on the Homestead Act, which provided a settler with title to 160 acres of federal land after he had lived on it for five years and had made improvements to it. The first recorded land title, however, was obtained through preemption by Charles L. Peck of Double Springs in 1850.[35]

Recent research on the land history of the southwest portion of Calaveras County provides some information on homesteading practices which, with a few qualifications, probably hold true for the entire county. Homesteading was the most common way for those farmers and ranchers to acquire their property. In the Melones area this was especially true during the financially troubled decades of the 1870s and 1890s, whereas in the relatively more prosperous 1880s, direct cash purchases, while never as high as 50 percent, increased in use. After the turn of the century, the number of homesteaders who took the final step of obtaining title to their land grew significantly. This probably reflected the optimism which accompanied the reopening of the Carson Hill mines and the completion of the Sierra railroad. By 1910, the heyday of land patenting in the Melones area

was over and an era of stable ownership had commenced.[36]

For the county in general, it is likely that patent applications and ownership stability developed even earlier, for the land in Calaveritas, Vallecito, and Mokelumne Hill was not only more fertile than Melones, but was also closer to the main centers of local population and therefore of greater value. Understandably, settlers probably acted more promptly to obtain ownership, but this remains speculation until further research is conducted.

Land distribution patterns for the Melones area indicate that the monopolistic and speculative land holding practices which characterized much of late nineteenth century California were not present there. An analysis of the farm sizes and ownership for Calaveras confirms that observation. In 1880, the first year for which the federal census gives specific data on the average size of a county farm, the average acreage figure was 274. By 1900 it had increased to 370 acres and 429 in 1910. A similar trend existed in Amador County, but in El Dorado the acreage remained relatively steady at about 275 for the entire period.[37] Why the difference between the two southern mining counties and El Dorado? The better farming and financial conditions in the latter county enabled horticulture to establish itself and thrive, but in Calaveras that was not the case, and land increasingly was being put into pasturage for cattle and sheep. That required greater acreage, as revealed in the records.

Statistics on the percentage of farms operated by owners further support the conclusion that Calaveras County was not a victim of land specu-

lators. In 1880, 98 percent of the farms were operated by their owners, and in 1900 that figure temporarily dropped to 82 percent before rising to 88 percent in 1910.[38] Thus, the Calaveras Prospect was correct in observing: "The speculating millions want larger tracts than we can offer, but the more modest homeseekers can be well provided with homes in our rolling hills and our small valleys."[39]

Who were those modest homeseekers who tried their luck at farming? A goodly number were immigrants from Europe, but of course the native-born were well-represented as well. From an early date, the foreign-born were mentioned in the local newspapers as being active and successful agriculturalists, whose example should be followed by all others. The San Andreas Independent, for instance, praised the immigrant farmers for recognizing the value of developing a small farm and chastized the "American" element which turned up its nose at anything shy of 160 acres. "Hence, the Germans, French and Italians constitute the bulk of our small farmers. In the crowded countries of Europe they have learned the value of an acre of ground . . . . But if anyone will take pains to enquire, it will be found that two acres of vineyard or well arranged garden is worth full as much per annum to the possessor in this State, as fifty acres of corn or wheat ground in Missouri or Illinois."[40]

Research findings for the Melones area also noted the "multi-ethnic pattern" of ownership, especially as it applied to French, German, and Italian settlers.[41] But an occupational analysis of the county's foreign-born voters for 1877 and 1908-09 reveals neither a large concentration in

farming or ranching or a dramatic increase from one period to the next. In the case of the Italians, 1.5 percent were in agricultural occupations in 1877, and 1.9 percent in 1908-09--hardly a dramatic increase for this large and important group. For the other major ethnic communities the increases were as follows: 1.6 percent of the French were agriculturalists in 1877, and 3.5 percent in 1909; the Germans jumped from 1.5 percent to 3.1 percent, while the Irish went from 0.9 percent to 3 percent; the English remained unchanged at 1.2 percent.[42]

Of course the registration lists may only be an accurate reflection of the employment status of voters and not county residents in general. It seems reasonable to assume, however, that those who voted most likely represented the stable element of the county which had a vested interest in its development, whereas nonvoters were largely drifters. If this is true, then in nineteenth century America, when voter turnout was usually high, the immigrant voters of Calaveras did mirror the farming/ranching concentrations of their respective communities. Too much can be made of statistical data, so that the human dimension of the story is lost. To preclude that possibility in this unit, it is worth looking at several case studies of immigrants involved in Calaveras County's agricultural development.

Evidence demonstrates that Italians were engaged in agricultural enterprises from an early date. Some of those individuals were truck farmers, cultivating a small plot of land in vegetables and fruit trees and then marketing their produce in the mining camps. This was true for

Andrea Lagomarsino, who entered the county in 1857 and after a short time joined John Queirolo and John Solari in the vegetable garden business. Acquiring and terracing land near Mokelumne Hill, they planted it in beans, onions, lettuce and other marketable produce, which was subsequently sold in the towns and mining camps throughout much of Calaveras.[43]

Lucca Canepa and Giovanni Sanguinetti of Vallecito also grew vegetables and sold them to the miners during the 1860s and later. So too did Nick Costa, who owned the Italian Gardens on Middle Bar Road in the late 1870s.[44]

Some of these immigrants and their descendants remained in farming. Illustrative was Lorenzo Pendola and his grandson Virgil Ghiglieri. Pendola settled in the Melones area in the 1870s, although he had entered the county in the 1850s. By the 1890s his ranch consisted of more than 155 acres and was planted in vegetables and fruits (the ranch was well known for its tomatoes) which were sold locally. Following his death in 1900, the Pendola Ranch was operated by his wife and subsequently by his grandson Virgil Ghiglieri.[45]

A segment of the so-called "Italians" was in fact of Swiss origin. (Such well-known "Italians" as Luigi Domenghini and Giovanni Rodesino of Mountain Ranch were exemplary.) Approximately 3 percent of that group listed in the Great Register of 1877 were involved in agriculture. Among them was John DeMartini of Bear Mountain. DeMartini acquired the Boston Ranch near Bear Mountain by way of marriage to the daughter of Jacob Leoni, another Swiss who had begun to develop that property in 1850. Like

many county farmers, he devoted his ranch to a variety of horticultural products which he sold in the towns of Valley Springs and Mokelumne Hill.[46]

Finally, a few words should be devoted to the Japanese, an immigrant group usually not associated with the county and never numerically significant there. The first Japanese arrived in America in 1869, and the following year the Calaveras Chronicle was able to report that "a strolling Japanese troupe" had performed in Mokelumne Hill.

Japanese attempts at agriculture in the county were limited in both scope and duration. In 1887 a small party of those immigrants settled at Valley Springs under the direction of a fellow countryman, named "Mr. Inouye." Reports vary as to the intention of the small colony, some suggesting that the Japanese intended to commence growing tea plants, while others claimed Inouye hoped to plant 10,000 orange trees or to "establish an experimental nursery at his place and . . . import his stock direct from Japan. He will bring many new plants and flowering shrubs which will add much to our already well supplied flora."[47]

The success of the local Japanese colony is unknown, but presumably Inouye's plans never materialized beyond the initial stage of settlement. The last mention of either him or his colony was in May 1888, when the Calaveras Prospect reported that he was incarcerated in Japan for having written something which displeased the emperor.

The native-born population, as well as the foreign-born, was well-represented in local agriculture. Names such as Root, Garland, Druerson, Russell, Lake, Beatty and others were frequently mentioned in connection

with early farming endeavors. Perhaps the best evidence of the heterogeneous composition of Calaveras' farming population and one of the few bright spots in its agricultural past was in viticulture and viniculture.

Section V

Grape growing and wine making had been introduced to California by the missionaries, but it was in the period after the discovery of gold that they developed as an important California industry.

By the mid-1850s, vineyard land in California increased significantly, reflecting the prevailing belief of agricultural and commercial interests that demand for wine outside the state was growing and that California's soil and climate were well-suited to grape culture. Further encouragement came from the California Agricultural Society which, by 1859, was contending that investment in vineyards would yield greater financial returns than the declining gold mining industry. That same year the state legislature did its part to encourage viticulture by exempting from taxation all newly planted vines for four years.[48] Thus in the five years after 1855, more than 6,000,000 vines were planted in the state. Illustrative were El Dorado and Tuolumne Counties. The former jumped from 24,000 vines in 1856 to 77,472 in 1858, and the latter went from 9,000 to 50,000 between 1857 and 1858.[49]

In Calaveras County the first grapes were planted in 1851. The Sacramento Transcript recorded that "A man has just set out 1,000 grape cuttings on the Calaveras--noted for its wild vines--and quite a number have done likewise in different places."[50] By mid-decade a number of other

Calaveras residents had also planted vines. Most of these were no more than several acres in size and usually comprised but a section of a fruit garden, such as that of S. W. Brockway of Mokelumne Hill. His list of trees and plants, like the Garden of Eden, seemed to include a bit of everything: "a Catawba grape vine," figs, "a Jefferson plum," "a cherry tree," nectarine, dwarf peas, "a Bartlett pear," "a Virgolien pear," apples--"a pippin," "a Peck's Pleasant,"--apricots and peaches. Other growers were Dr. Russell, of Vallecito who had 300 vines, all of which were three years old and "growing luxuriantly"; Mr. Dearbone, of Sandy Gulch, whose vines included the Black Hamburg, the White Hamburg, and the Muscat di Alexandria; and finally, Madame Cataia (Catae), who lived near Mokelumne Hill and on whose three-acre garden one could find the "fruit of the vine gracefully /hung/ through the lattice-work of tastefully constructed arbors."[51]

Reportedly, Madame Cataia's vineyard produced over 7,000 pounds of grapes and would "with ordinary luck" exceed 70,000 pounds the following year. The local press was clearly booming local viticulture as well as reporting the news. From such accounts, boosters publicly concluded that "/w/e have now substantial evidence of the adaptability of much of our mountain soil for grape growing" and urged others to copy the success of local vineyardists so that the county would become "prevalent in the cultivation of this excellent fruit." Among those growers singled out for "creditable mention" and emulation were: Mr. Schrack, of the Golden Gate Ranch; Dr. Soher, of Big Bar Bridge; Judge Thompson; Dr. Holbrook;

S. W. Brockway; William Higby; and A. P. Dudley, of Mokelumne Hill.[52]

By the early 1860s, outsiders were also considering the foothills suitable for grape culture. "The fact that the foothills of this State are admirably adapted to the culture of the grape, particularly for wine-making purposes, cannot be too often repeated," wrote the San Francisco Bulletin in a front page story on the "Vineyards in the Foothills."[53] Mountain wines were now touted as possessing superior flavor owing to the red and granitic quality of the foothill soil. Even the lack of adequate irrigation was considered an asset and periodicals such as the California Farmer observed that the vines flourished without it.[54]

Given this chorus of local and outside promotion of the grape, it is not surprising that the amount of acreage devoted to it increased rapidly during the 1860s. When a San Francisco newspaper reported that the county had 24,000 vines in 1859, the San Andreas Independent was quick to question the accuracy of that statement and upped the number to a "safe" 96,000. That correction may have been closer to the mark, for the California Agricultural Society placed Calaveras in eighth place in California grape acreage in 1860 with at least 36,463 vines. (Until the 1880s, the number of vines rather than acres was the format for reporting grape production. Evidently it was reasoned that interested outsiders would be more impressed by the number of vines.)[55] Translated into acres (700-1,000 vines per acre), Calaveras had between 255 and 364 vineyard acres.

This healthy increase in grape plantings was not confined to Calaveras, for other counties reported similar jumps. Unfortunately no concrete

information is available on the specific grape varieties which comprised the majority of the county's plantings. Apparently, French grape stock was introduced earlier there than in most of the other California counties.

Antonio Delmas of Santa Clara County is generally credited with being the first to introduce French cuttings in 1852-53, but Calaveras was not far behind. Madame Cataia's garden reportedly had a variety of foreign grapes, including the Fontainbleau. Although the year of planting is unknown, it must have been at least three years prior to the 1858 news story, for it took that long for grapes to produce a crop in the quantity described. Thus 1855 or even 1854 may have marked the introduction of that variety in Calaveras, and a Mr. Beatty had "several samples of French varieties" in 1857.[56]

In addition to the expansion of grape acreage, state and local wine production increased substantially by the mid-1860s. In 1860, Calaveras produced only 277 gallons of wine and counted only five winemakers. By comparison, it was below El Dorado County's 6,464 gallons and 24 winemakers, but ahead of nearby Amador County, which had only 87 gallons and seven winemakers that year.[57] Such small production clearly indicates that the wine was intended for home consumption rather than commercial production. But it was not long before that situation changed significantly; by 1870, Calaveras would become one of the state's largest wine producers.

The little available evidence points to 1866 as the year when the county's wine production began to increase, as vineyards came into fruit

by then. (This is compatible with statewide trends showing an increase in wine production sometime after 1863.) The Copperopolis Courier noted in January 1866 that local wine output could not keep up with the demand "notwithstanding the fact that tens of thousands of gallons are manufactured annually." Elsewhere the paper observed that within a ten-mile radius of Copperopolis wine was being produced by numerous individuals, but regrettably it failed to provide any production statistics. The San Andreas Register wrote that the Cuneo brothers of San Antonio expected to make a large amount of wine that season, and that a Jenny Lind resident had 3,000 bearing vines, from which 3,000 gallons of wine were anticipated.[58] More impressive still was the 20,000-vine spread of Joseph Major of Vallecito, who in 1867 commenced building a wine cellar one-half acre in size to store his approximately 1,000 gallons of 1866 vintage. Finally, there was Frederick Mayer, whose Mokelumne Hill wine cellar was described in 1871 as being "one hundred feet by twenty, fire proof, in which from eight to ten thousand gallons of wine are now stored. . . . Huge casks, containing six hundred gallons each, are ranged along one side of the cellar, while a rank of well filled pipes, hogsheads and barrels is placed vis-a-vis."[59]

The 1870 census wine production statistics confirmed the expectations of local growers about the large quantity of wine being made in the county. Calaveras' 99,860 gallons produced by 116 winemakers made it the fourth largest amount in the state. Only Los Angeles (531,710 gals.), Sonoma (308,496 gals.), and El Dorado (118,831 gals.) were

greater.[60] Those statistics, of course, reflect the reality of 1869, but the Calaveras Chronicle reported that 250,000 gallons were produced in 1870 and anticipated 400,000 for 1871. There is no way to confirm the accuracy of those figures (they were probably somewhat inflated for promotional purposes), but they may have been realistic. As late as 1872, newspaper items recorded such observations as, "Viniculture is becoming one of the principal occupations of our citizens. . . . There is scarcely a ranch in the county without its vineyard. . . . For the past five or six years the quantity of wine manufactured has been steadily on the increase."[61]

The quality of the local wine is another question which cannot be answered. As early as 1866, however, Judge G. W. Griswold, whose vineyard was near "the great copper leads" sent four bottles of his 1864 and 1865 mission grape vintages to Washington, D. C. for exhibition. How his wine fared in the evaluation of the Commissioner of Agriculture is unknown, but a "Mr. Logomassino" of Jesus Maria produced a wine which took first place at the California State Fair in 1871.[62]

The decade of the 1870s was the high point in the viticulture/viniculture history of Calaveras County. Thereafter decline set in just as it did for local horticulture in general. As early as the 1880s, wine production had dropped to 49,210 gallons and the number of winemakers had declined to 64. By 1900, only 26,680 gallons were made.[63]

A temporary reversal of this pattern occured in the early 1920s as a result of Prohibition, which made the commercial production of wine illegal but allowed limited home winemaking. The price of grapes jumped

upward--within a two-year span they climbed from $25 per ton to $200--and in Calaveras as elsewhere, a flurry of vine planting followed. Whereas there had been only 100 acres of vines in 1900, in 1924 there were 445 acres. In 1925, the state grape market collapsed due to the tremendous increase in production brought about the rising market price. Before long Calaveras was back on its downward course, with only 324 acres in 1930 and a meager 63 in 1979.[64]

What factors account for the dramatic transformation of the viticultural industry of Calaveras County, so that within a single decade (1870s) it dropped from the fourth largest wine producer to seventeenth?

The phylloxera disease which hit the California vineyards in the 1870s and 1880s, and appeared in Calaveras by 1880, no doubt accounts for part of the decline.[65] But even though it probably drove some local farmers out of business, phylloxera is an inadequate explanation by itself. How does one account for the strong rebound by other hard-hit wine counties while Calaveras commenced a long-term decline? Perhaps quality wine-making proved beyond the reach of the foothill county.

By the 1870s, California's grape growers were coming to understand that quality wine required more knowledge, better facilities, and greater financing than was possessed by most individual growers. Recognition of the inherent problems in producing a good foothill wine came from the Sacramento Union in 1885: "The fruits of the foothills have always been distinguished for their excessive sweetness and high flavor. But while this is a merit in all table fruit, it is an obstacle to the production of a

dry, light wine. The grape ripens too early and in the summer the fermentation cannot be controlled, besides the percentage of saccharine matter is too great for complete fermentation, sugar is left unfermented and the condition called "milk sour" with which we are too familiar, takes place in the spring, ruining the wine, except for vinegar."[66]

Many growers began to sell grapes to wine-making concerns capable of meeting the public's demand for reliable tasty wine. But in Calaveras and the other mountain counties where access to outside markets was extremely limited, growers found that they could neither ship grapes to the wineries or produce a good wine locally. To correct that situation efforts were underway by the late 1860s to establish companies with adequate cellars and equipment.

Although no solid information exists regarding this development in Calaveras, perhaps the cellars of Charles Gardella and Frederick Mayer, both of Mokelumne Hill, were part of that trend as was the Amador Wine Association, which came into existence during the 1870s. The ensuing national depression of the mid-1870s drove many of these newly-created wineries out of business, and by 1880 there were only 45 statewide while there had been 139 ten years earlier.[67] With few of the county's wine producers exceeding 1,000-2,000 gallons of wine and unable to compete with the remaining outside wineries, many of which had a 100,000-gallon capacity, the result was an economic nightmare. Many simply gave up grape growing and wine-making altogether.

Those who remained in viticulture generally reverted to the pattern

which characterized the county in the late 1850s and early 1860s: two- or three-acre plots in which vines and fruit trees co-mingled. Wine was made mainly for home consumption, with the surplus being sold locally. This was the pattern that characterized the Italians, a group which had been actively involved in grapes for a number of years. Their local prominence leads to a final area of inquiry, namely the role which immigrants played in the establishment of viticulture and viniculture in the county.

From its inception Calaveras was a multicultural society with large numbers of immigrants from both Europe and Asia as well as Latin America. Because there was a substantial French population in the county during the 1850s and because Mokelumne Hill was both its chief point of concentration as well as one of the prominent early grape planting portions of the county, it might be concluded that this wine-drinking people pioneered the local grape industry. Perhaps that accounts for the early introduction of French grape stock in Calaveras. Yet there were also a number of Germans in the county at that time and they were also well-versed in wine-making. Could they have initiated that industry? Or might it have been the Mexican or Chilean element which possibly introduced the mission grape stock? It could also have been the Italians, or the old-stock Americans. Unfortunately, there is no way of answering the question, for statistics on grape culture in the foothills do not exist for the earliest years of the county's history and the extant newspaper backfiles are silent on the subject.

What little information we do possess concerns the mid-1850s and by then viticulture was already being promoted as a better financial investment than mining. Based on the names mentioned in newspaper articles (a very subjective source, to be sure) the native-born element is most frequently associated with grapes.

The 1860 Federal Census lists five individuals who said they were grape growers and winemakers. Only one can be identified as foreign-born, Francis Mercier of Mokelumne Hill, who worked both as a miner and farmed 100 acres at Chili Gulch. On his land he erected a hotel--Chateau Mercier--where guests could consume both his home-grown produce and wine.[68]

Old stock Americans continued to be involved in viticulture over the ensuing decades, but it was in the mid-1860s that the Italians were beginning to be singled out for comment. In 1866, the San Andreas Register reported that "The Italian population of this county have /sic/ in many places turned their attention to the /grape/ business, and have some very fine vineyards which flourish well under their care." That same year the California Agricultural Society observed that in one Calaveras township, Italians were the chief cultivators of the vine and that they "seem to understand the business better than Americans."[69]

Even after the heyday of viticulture in the 1870s, Italians continued to be heavily identified with that business. The Directory of the Grape Growers, Wine Makers and Distillers of California for 1891 lists 36 individuals for Calaveras County, one-third of which are Italians. Among

those names are Charles Gardella of San Andreas, who had the largest acreage (40) of any individual. Other well-known names included Louis Costa (30 acres); Peirano and Gagliardo (Galeardo) (25 acres); J. Sanguenetti (6 acres); and A. Sigaluka (20 acres). The latter was probably a misspelling of Sciaccaluga, the Vallecito family that renamed itself Pyshon and operated a winery in that town for a number of years.[70]

The staying power of Italians in the wine industry is difficult to explain. Perhaps that group's tendency toward occupational diversification enabled it to cultivate the grape while simultaneously pursuing other sources of income and thereby ride out the economic storm which hit viticulture in the late 1870s. It may also have been that many Italians were content to farm only a few acres and make wine for themselves. In that case they remained unaffected by the boom and bust mentality which characterized the formative years of that industry. The explanation remains uncertain.

The 1891 Directory also lists several German names among the grape growers. Unfortunately, that group's role is still a mystery. For the record, Frederick Mayer should be discussed briefly. A native of Bavaria and baker by profession, he immigrated to New York in 1850 and California in 1851. Not long thereafter he arrived in Mokelumne Hill and practiced his craft until 1859, when he purchased 55 acres devoted largely to vineyard. Over the years Mayer experimented with a variety of vines, but his preference was clearly for those of his native Germany: Shassle, Zinfandel, and Riesling. Manufacturing wine as well, he constructed a wine

cellar in the late 1860s, and by 1885 had become one of Mokelumne Hill's richest men.[71]

Mayer's success in local viticulture may have been atypical, but his involvement was further evidence of the multi-ethnic origin of that industry. No single group was totally responsible for its development, for each brought to bear its special talents and insights.

If Calaveras viticulture reflected the cosmopolitan character of the county, it also was a microcosm of the ups and downs in the local boosters' efforts to establish a viable horticultural industry. Those attempts were largely unsuccessful, so that by 1900 cattle and sheep ranching were the main forms of county agriculture.

Section V

The livestock industry is one of the oldest agricultural activities in California. Although it existed prior to statehood, it was the gold rush and the sudden demand for food supplies which led to that industry's rapid development in the 1850s. By 1860, there were more than three million cattle in the state, but that number declined precipitously after the droughts of 1862-64, which nearly destroyed all of the cattle. Subsequently, wheat was to replace cattle as the state's leading agricultural industry, a position it held until the 1890s.

In Calaveras County both of these industries were attempted, but it was only the livestock industry which was to survive. After being temporarily eclipsed by the grape and orchard crazes of the late nineteenth century, it was to emerge as the leading agricultural endeavor.

Whereas there were only 1,981 head of cattle and 18 sheep in the county in 1850, by 1860 that number had climbed to 6,133 cattle, 3,633 milk cows and 8,247 sheep.[72] No doubt statewide trends influenced that development, but so did local considerations. In 1858, a correspondent of the San Andreas Independent (reflecting a minority opinion) wrote that both soil and climate were against the development of general agriculture in Calaveras. The hot summers and lack of water parched the county's hillsides and made the soil too thin for the production of many crops, while its small fertile valleys were "mere incidents to agriculture." "If we cannot be farmers," reasoned the paper, ". . . let us turn our attention to stock-raising; it is a lucrative, honorable and delightful business . . . . Dry and sterile as these mountains appear in Autumn, they nevertheless abound in precisely that sort of grass upon which sheep and goats delight to graze."[73] Not only did agricultural conditions indicate the wisdom of ranching, but so also did local socioeconomic considerations.

As mentioned earlier, by the late 1850s Calaveras' population decline was underway, as was its growing indebtedness. Ranching was seen as a potential panacea. "If our people would pay more attention to the breeding of horses and cattle, and less to the cultivation of political asses, it is our opinion we should sooner get out of debt and reach that goal of prosperity at which all good citizens aim."[74]

Evidently some local residents agreed, for the number of cattle and sheep not only increased, but so did the production of feed crops needed for the cows of the small dairy industry. In 1860, for example, barley was the chief cereal crop, with 37,169 bushels, and in 1890 that figure

was 40,044.[75] No doubt that small 30-year increase reflected the temporary flirtation with other forms of agriculture in the 1870s and 1880s. After 1890, however, ranching recommenced its forward momentum. This is demonstrated in the statistics for improved and unimproved land. In 1870, the former category led, but by 1890 the latter dominated, as it would thereafter. By 1920, Calaveras had more unimproved land than all but five of the 58 California counties. Only 16.1 percent of its land was cultivated, while the statewide average was 40 percent.[76]

In terms of farm acreage size, Calaveras and her neighbor Amador County were moving toward larger holdings, while the remainder of the state was attempting to move away from that pattern, which had been largely the work of the land monopolists of the late nineteenth century. Amador County's Ledger noted that trend in its comment on the findings of the census of 1910:

> . . . /O/ur farmers have declined. Many have sold out to stockmen, and thousands of acres formerly occupied by small farmers are now surrendered to stock raising. These foothill lands have been found peculiarly adapted to cattle, and the stockmen have steadily increased their holdings at the expense of the actual tillers of the soil. The process of cutting up big land holdings to accommodate the demand for small farms, so prominent a feature of other parts of the state, has been reversed here; we have been breaking up the farms to accommodate the increasing herds of the stockmen. How to create a tendency the other way is the problem that faces the foothill sections.[77]

By 1920, the fate of Calaveras County's agriculture had been determined. Henceforth the majority of its arable land would be in pasture, yet the number of local ranchers would decrease because of competition from outside producers. Those who remained would increasingly

operate that business on a part-time basis only.

In retrospect, the history of agriculture in Calaveras does reveal two important ways in which the county has sustained its 1850s heritage. On the one hand, it has perpetuated its early ranching business (a number of long-time county residents are descendants of those early ranchers), and on the other, its public identity remains associated with gold mining. Agriculture was never able to escape the shadow of the miner's pick and drill. While it added to the color of the county's heritage, one must conclude in agreement with the late Coke Wood that "the story of Calaveras is the story of mining."[78]

Footnotes

[1]Walton E. Bean, California: An Interpretive History (New York, 1968), 204.

[2]San Andreas Independent, Oct. 22, 1859, 2; John S. Hittell, The Resources of California (San Francisco, 1868), 451.

[3]Calaveras Chronicle, Jan. 13, 1872, 2.

[4]San Andreas Independent, Nov. 15, 1856, 2.

[5]Ibid., Jan. 14, 1860, 2; Hittell, Resources of California, 437-38.

[6]Copperopolis Courier, Dec. 15, 1866, 3; San Andreas Register, May 11, 1867, 2.

[7]Calaveras Chronicle, March 20, 1869, 3, April 3, 1869, 2.

[8]San Andreas Independent, Jan. 14, 1860, 2; Calaveras Chronicle, Marcy 20, 1869, 3.

[9]San Andreas Register, Sept. 3, 1864, 2; Calaveras Chronicle, May 1, 1869, 2; Calaveras Chronicle, May 1, 1869, 2.

[10]Amador Ledger (Jackson), May 4, 1872, 2.

[11]Calaveras Chronicle, Nov. 4, 1871, 2; ibid., Jan. 13, 1872, 3.

[12]Calaveras Prospect, Oct. 6, 1888, 2.

[13]Transactions of the California Agricultural Society, 1859, 266-67. See also, San Andreas Independent, March 12, 1859, 2.

[14]San Andreas Independent, April 25, 1857, 2.

[15]San Andreas Register, Sept. 3, 1864, 2.

[16]Mining and Scientific Press, XX (June 4, 1870), 374.

[17]San Andreas Independent, Sept. 26, 1857, 3; April 21, 1860, 3.

[18]Calaveras Chronicle, Feb. 1, 1873, 2.

[19]San Andreas Register, Sept. 3, 1864, 2. See also, Calaveras Chronicle, April 10, 1869, 2; Calaveras Prospect, Feb. 20, 1885, 2; San Andreas Independent, May 28, 1859, 3.

[20]Calaveras Chronicle, April 17, 1869, 2; Calaveras Prospect, Sept. 16, 1887, 2; William F. Heintz, "Agriculture and Winemaking in California's Calaveras County" (unpublished paper, 1979), 18.

[21]Calaveras Prospect, Sept. 16, 1887, 2; Calaveras Chronicle, April 17, 1869, 2.

[22]Calaveras Chronicle, Dec. 3, 1870, 2; Calaveras Prospect, Feb. 20, 1885, 2.

[23]Calaveras Chronicle, Feb. 1, 1873, 2.

[24]Ibid.

[25]San Andreas Independent, Sept. 21, 1857, 3.

[26]Ibid., Nov. 12, 1859, 2; Oct. 29, 1859, 2; April 21, 1860, 2.

[27]Calaveras Prospect, Jan. 25, 1884, 2.

[28]Ibid., Oct. 17, 1892, 3.

[29]Amador Dispatch (Jackson), March 31, 1888, 2; Amador Ledger (Jackson), Nov. 13, 1903, 2.

[30]Calaveras Prospect, July 22, 1887, 3.

[31]San Andreas Independent, Nov. 26, 1859, 2.

[32]Bean, California, 228.

[33]San Andreas Register, June 20, 1862, 2; Mining and Scientific Press, XX (April 9, 1870), 240.

[34]W. Turrentine Jackson, "Historical Survey of the New Melones Reservoir Project Area," (manuscript, University of California, Davis, Jan. 1976), 154-56.

[35]Anon., "Some Calaveras Ranches," Las Calaveras XXIII (Jan. 1975), 14.

[36]Jackson, "Historical Survey," 160-64.

[37]10th, 12th, and 13th Federal Censuses. See Table.

[38]Ibid.

[39]Calaveras Prospect, Sept. 30, 1887, 3.

[40]San Andreas Independent, Nov. 26, 1859, 2. See also, San Andreas Register, June 20, 1868, 2.

[41]Jackson, "Historical Survey," 165, 168.

[42]Calculations derived from the Register of Voters 1877 and 1908-1909.

[43]Norman Lagomarsino, "The Lagomarsino-Werle Family," Las Calaveras XXVI (Oct. 1977), 1-2.

[44]Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Farbotnik, "The Canepas of Vallecito," Las Calaveras XIV (April 1966), 1-2; Calaveras Chronicle, Nov. 9, 1878, 3.

[45]Jackson, "Historical Survey," 170-71.

[46]Anon., "Bear Mountain Ranches," Las Calaveras XXIV (Oct. 1975), 2.

[47]Calaveras Chronicle, April 16, 1870, 3; Calaveras Weekly Chronicle (San Andreas), Oct. 22, 1887, 3; Calaveras Prospect, Oct. 21, 1887, 2; Nov. 18, 1887, 3; Dec. 16, 1887, 3; May 11, 1888, 3.

[48]Herbert Boynton Leggett, "The Early History of Wine Production in California," (M. A. thesis, University of California, Berkeley), 50.

[49]Ibid., 51.

[50]Quoted in Hubert Howe Bancroft, History of California, III (San Francisco, 1890), 46. See footnote 8.

[51]San Andreas Independent, May 9, 1857, 2; Sept. 18, 1858, 2; Oct. 16, 1858, 2. Transactions of the California Agricultural Society, 1861, 221-22.

[52]Ibid., Sept. 18, 1858, 2.

[53]San Francisco Bulletin, Feb. 7, 1861, 1.

[54]Leggett, "The Early History of Wine Production," 86, 92-93.

[55]Transactions, 1861, 3; San Andreas Independent, Feb. 19, 1859, 2.

[56]San Andreas Independent, May 9, 1857, 2.

[57]Ernest P. Peninous and Sidney S. Greenleaf, A Directory of California Wine Growers and Wine Makers in 1860 (Berkeley, 1967), 5-7.

[58]Calaveras Courier, Jan. 27, 1866, 2; Feb. 24, 1866, 2; San Andreas Register, June 23, 1866, 2; May 26, 1866. 2.

[59]San Andreas Register, June 1, 1867, 3; Calaveras Chronicle, Oct. 14, 1871, 3.

[60]Statistics of the Wealth and Industry of the United States . . . from the Original Returns of the Ninth Census (Washington, D. C., 1872), Table IV, 106.

[61]Calaveras Chronicle, Oct. 21, 1871, 2; May 4, 1872, 2.

[62]Calaveras Courier, Nov. 10, 1866, 3; Calaveras Chronicle, Oct. 25, 1873, 2.

[63]Statistics of Agriculture of the United States, Tenth Census (1880), Table V, VII, XV, 34-35, 106, 156-57.

[64]California Grape Grower, Jan. 1933, 12.

[65]First Annual Report of the Board of State Viticultural Commissioners (San Francisco, 1881), 11-13.

[66]Sacramento Union, Jan. 1, 1885, 7.

[67]Leggett, "The Early History of Wine Production," 108-9.

[68]Peninous and Greenleaf, Directory, 60. The other names were Charles Garland, Henry Dwerson, and Lemuel Root, all of Mokelumne Hill, and Adele Rogers of San Andreas.

[69]San Andreas Register, May 26, 1866, 2; Bancroft Scraps, "Agriculture," 18, part 1, 239.

[70]Board of the State Viticultural Commissioners of California, Directory of the Grape Growers, Wine Makers and Distillers of California (Sacramento, 1891), 4.

[71]W. W. Elliott, Calaveras County Illustrated and Described (Oakland, 1885), 64-65; Anon., A Memorial and Biographical History . . . (Chicago, 1892), 354.

[72]Richard B. Stockton, "Populations of Calaveras County," Las Calaveras XXII (Jan. 1974), 13.

[73]San Andreas Independent, April 24, 1858, 2.

[74]San Andreas Independent, May 14, 1859, 3.

[75]Bancroft Scraps, 4. Statistics of Agriculture in the United States Census for 1890, (Washington, D. C., 1890) Tables 5-6, 124-25, 200; Table 10, 278; Table 12, 320; Table 14, 358; Table 24, 502.

[76]Fourteenth Census of the United States . . . 1920, "Agriculture" (Washington, D. C., 1922), VI, Tables I-II and IV, 344-49, 350, 357.

[77]Amador Ledger, Dec. 9, 1910, 2.

[78]Richard Coke Wood, Calaveras, the Land of Skulls (Sonora, 1955), vi.