BATF  
Washington, D.C. 20226

Re: American Viticultural Area

Dear Director:

In accordance with 27 CFR 4.25a (e) (2), the El Dorado Wine Grape Growers Association hereby petitions for the establishment of an American viticultural area to be named "El Dorado". In support of this petition we offer the appended evidence and descriptions.

There are currently 164 acres of producing winegrape vineyards in El Dorado. In addition, there are 252 acres planted, but not yet bearing, and many more are in the planning stages. Daily inquiries are made from prospective new growers investigating the suitability of this area for their vineyards.

El Dorado has within its boundaries six bonded wineries, ranging in size from 3000 gallon fermenting and storage capacity, to 30,000 gallons. Planning is underway for more wineries. These wineries all have vineyards, and, to be entitled to use the estate bottled designation, seek to have the area approved.

Although most of the El Dorado grapes are crushed by its own wineries, other wineries in California are marketing wines with the El Dorado County appellation, and therefore, also have an interest in the establishment of "El Dorado" as an American viticultural area. Some of the brands currently offering El Dorado wines are, Boeger, David Bruce, Ravenswood, Sierra Vista, Sutter Home, Stevenot, Shenandoah Vineyards, Amador Foothill Winery, Kenworthy, and Santino.

All of the wine grape growers, and winery owners, within the area are in support of this petition. To our knowledge, there is no opposition to this petition.

FRANK HERBERT, PRESIDENT  
El Dorado Wine Grape Growers Association
PREFACE

Prior to the discovery of gold in what was later to be the State of California, the Sierra Foothills were very slightly populated, primarily with Indians and trappers or hunters. To support the rapid influx of population following the discovery of gold at Coloma, came the beginnings of agriculture. An important part of this was the growing of grapes: in the 1860's El Dorado County probably had more grape vines than Sonoma or Napa County. Wine from these grapes was very good and won prizes and awards. Interestingly, one of the most significant figures in viticulture in the later gold rush days, was James W. Marshall, himself, the discoverer of gold.

The diminishing population, as the gold played out, the scourge of phylloxera, and the Volstadt Act, all caused the grape/wine industry to virtually disappear by the end of World War II.

In the 1960's, however, renewed interest took place. Test plots were established. Advice and counsel was sought from the University of California. All signs indicated that certain areas of El Dorado County could again produce grapes that would make premium wines - encompassing most of the significant varieties.

The Boeger Winery in Placerville was started in 1973 at the site of the old Fossati winery. Boeger Wines, made from their own grapes and from a vineyard near Coloma, have consistently won awards and received favorable reviews from wine writers. The Sierra Vista Winery in Pleasant Valley was started in 1977, and it too has won awards and favorable reviews. Presently four more wineries have been bonded, and others are in various stages of development.

Vineyard growth has paralleled that of the wineries. From 11 acres in 1967, the area now has a total of 380, planted to 15 different varieties, including Chardonnay, Reisling, Gewürztraminer, Sauvignon Blanc in whites, and Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petite Sirah, Syrah, and Zinfandel in the reds.

Because there are parts of El Dorado County where it is not possible to grow premium grapes, it would not be accurate to use the County as the designated area. We propose that only the smaller portion of the county where it has been established, both in the past and currently, that premium grapes can be grown, be given the appellation "El Dorado".

Following is the body of our evidence to support that position.
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SECTION ONE

EVIDENCE THAT THE NAME "EL DORADO" IS
LOCALLY AND NATIONALLY KNOWN TO REFER
TO THE PROPOSED VITICULTURAL AREA
A selection of current newspaper, magazine and other articles is appended to this petition to show that "El Dorado" has been receiving local, state and national recognition for a number of years (Appendix A). Not all of the references are to the name "El Dorado" per se, but some are to towns within the proposed viticultural area, or to the general vicinity. Refer to Table I for a listing of areas described in Appendix A, a cross reference to the articles in which they appear, and the frequency of appearance. The three most frequently appearing names, in order, are: El Dorado County, Placerville and El Dorado, all of which are evidence that "El Dorado" is the appropriate name for the viticultural area.

Since Placerville is a city within the area, it is not appropriate for it to bear the name for the entire area. However, because it is known to be within the area, references to it, and public knowledge that it is a grape growing region are evidence in support of the petition.

El Dorado County is not the appropriate name because it denotes the political subdivision, all of which is not included in the region. However, references to the county are evidence that the El Dorado region is known, because almost all of the agricultural lands of the county are included within the boundaries. Refer to Section Two for elaboration of this point. It can be argued that the thousands of bottles of El Dorado County appellation wines which have reached consumers have spread the word via the labels that "El Dorado" is a region. In addition, the many wine newsletters, such as "California Grapevine", "Balzer's Private Guide to Food & Wine", "W.I.N.O. Newsletter", etc., which have not been included in Appendix A, have routinely reviewed El Dorado County wines and hence some portion of the readers are no doubt aware of the "El Dorado" region.

TABLE I
INDEX OF WINEGRAPE GROWING AREAS WITHIN "EL DORADO" TO WHICH THE CURRENT ARTICLES (APPENDIX A) REFER

<table>
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<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
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<th>FREQUENCY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Apple Hill</td>
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<tr>
<td>Camino</td>
<td>3,4,6,9</td>
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<td>Coloma</td>
<td>1,3,6</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>&quot;EL DORADO&quot;</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>El Dorado County</td>
<td>1,2,3,4,5,6,7,9,13,15,16,18,19,20,21,22,24,25</td>
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<td>Fairplay</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foothill(s)</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold Country</td>
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TABLE I (continued)

<table>
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<td>Mother Lode</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oak Hill</td>
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<td>Pleasant Valley</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shingle Springs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Foothill(s)</td>
<td>9,19,20,22,23,25</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somerset</td>
<td>9,21</td>
<td>2</td>
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</table>

None of the other names in Table I is the appropriate name for the region, because they are either towns or sub-areas within it, or refer to the entire Mother Lode or Sierra Foothills. Because the re-emergence of this area as a premium grape growing region dates only to about 1970, there is some tentativeness as to naming evident in some of the articles. In fact, most contain more than one name. It is quite clear from the texts, however, that there is a consensus that there is a region as proposed, and that the name "El Dorado" pinpoints it -- it could not be interpreted to refer to any other area. Following are some highlights from the articles of Appendix A which are offered as evidence that the name "El Dorado" is known.

Local El Dorado County citizens were being made aware of the region through "THE GOLD MINE" which proclaimed in 1972 that "the new vineyards of El Dorado promise to set the county's name once again on the lips of connoisseurs of California's fine wines." (Article 1). In the 1973 SACRAMENTO BEE article headlined, "El Dorado Shows Budding Grape Wine Industry", the UC farm advisor was quoted "that since 1964 when a UC Davis viticulturalist indicated that El Dorado County would be an ideal spot to grow winegrapes, agricultural and farm specialists (there) have been attempting to cultivate the winegrape industry. They are apparently on the threshold of fulfilling that aim." (Article 2). In 1974, in the "COUNTRY LIFE" magazine section of THE SACRAMENTO BEE, the points were made that "in areas of Fairplay, Placerville, and Camino at elevations of between 2,000 and 3,000 feet... this county is known for its deep soil and climate beneficial to vineyards." (Article 3). In the September 1974, "GOLD MINE", the local business community was given a run down of several grape grower's activities to show that "the renaissance of the El Dorado County wine industry is for real". (Article 4). In a 1974 MOUNTAIN DEMOCRAT article about the inclusion of a winery in the Apple Hill Growers Association, it was noted that it
"already has started producing wines such as gave El Dorado County an honored name in the wine world during pre-prohibition days. The winery has more than a 100-year history." (Article 5) In a 1976 article on "The foothills wine industry" appearing in the Business section of THE SACRAMENTO UNION, it was noted that "A steady increase in the demand for wine stimulated a statewide search for new growing areas capable of producing top quality wines and in 1965 the trial plantings began. Evaluations by the Department of Enology at Davis continued to provide positive evidence of the suitability of El Dorado County for producing dry wines of exceptionally fine quality." (Article 6) In a 1977 article about the potential for the viticultural area, in the "CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN STATES GRAPE GROWER" magazine, it was said that "Famous grape growing regions of the world often become known by the wines they produce ... And, of course, there's El Dorado County, which has brought forth Hangtown Red." (Article 7) Note the title on the photographic cover page for the October 14, 1978 "CALIFORNIA LIFE" section of THE SACRAMENTO BEE: "The Vintners of El Dorado" --- evidence of its recognition as a viticultural area. In the text of the story, it was said that "El Dorado County's wine industry, the oldest yet newest premium wine producing region in California, just won't die." (Article 9) In THE WINE SPECTATOR, a national publication, in his 1979 article "Head for the foothills!", Richard P. Watson advised his readers that "Wines from Placerville and Plymouth are beginning to show up (in markets) .... this may well be a new appellation region to watch." (Article 10) In the annual review of Cabernet Sauvignon in the "CONNOISSEUR'S GUIDE TO CALIFORNIA WINE" the reviewers note the winemaking history associated with "areas near 'Hangtown' (Placerville)", and go on to say that the winery "seems destined to prove that there was viticultural merit in this mountain region". (Article 11) Robert Lawrence Balzer, the eminent wine connoisseur, wrote in his nationally syndicated column, "The Placerville locale, re-emerging as a fine wine area, especially for Zinfandel, has been bringing some fame to this foothill gold rush area ...". (Article 13) And also Jerry Mead, another nationally respected wine critic and columnist, wrote that the "wines carry a new appellation, El Dorado County, that should eventually earn a reputation the equal of such names as Napa, Sonoma, Mendocino and Amador". (Article 16) Note that the headline for Article 16 reads, "Superb Wines From El Dorado". More direct evidence of national recognition of "El Dorado" is the article in the KANSAS CITY TIMES featuring one of the areas wineries. (Article 18) In a March 1980 column from Carmel, California, it was reported about "a relatively new growing region, El Dorado County, an area in the Sierra Foothills in what used to be Gold Rush country ... you can look to hear a great deal about El Dorado County in coming years." (Article 19) In Mead's June 15, 1980, SACRAMENTO BEE column on award winning wines, he said that "the gold for (the) 1977 El Dorado County shows the promise of this emerging Sierra Foothills wine growing region is being fulfilled." (Article 20)
The fact that winning in the Orange County Fair Commercial Wine Competition brings recognition, on a national scale, to the El Dorado region is the subject of Article 21. In another article about the Orange County winners, Mead said in the July 6, 1980 THE SACRAMENTO BEE column, that the "1978 'El Dorado County' made a statement for this emerging Sierra foothill region". (Article 22) Harvey Steiman, in his July 23, 1980, SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER column, refers geographically to the new region, stating "the Zinfandel, from the Mother Lode Country in the Sierra foothills, has the typical berry-like aroma ..." (Article 23) It was noted in the August 15, 1980 MOUNTAIN DEMOCRAT article that "the prize cup ranneth over for El Dorado County wines and grapes at the Amador County Fair wine judging last week, keeping flowing the recent recognition of the county's vineyard products." (Article 24) Harvey Steiman prefaced his SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER story about the 1980 Amador County Fair wine awards with a brief history about the Sierra foothills wine areas. (Article 25) In the September 11, 1980, "Breakaway" section of THE SACRAMENTO UNION, it was noted that "there are more than a dozen fine wineries which begin less than 50 miles east of here in historic Placerville ... These wineries are rapidly becoming famous for their rich and powerful Zinfandels." (Article 26) In conclusion, the foregoing quotes were selected to show specifically that the proposed viticultural area is known locally, statewide, and nationally through the mass media and the wine press. The reader is requested to review Appendix A in its entirety where the evidence is overwhelming that "El Dorado" is known to refer to the proposed viticultural area.
SECTION TWO

HISTORICAL AND CURRENT EVIDENCE THAT THE PROPOSED BOUNDARIES OF EL DORADO ARE AS SPECIFIED
BOUNDARIES

The boundaries of "El Dorado" have been drawn to include all known and potential premium grape growing areas within El Dorado County. Factors of soils, climate and terrain limit this to areas above 1200 feet elevation, and below 3500 feet. Because contour lines were extremely convoluted, range and township lines have been used to smooth the upper elevation boundary on the east, and the lower elevation on the west. The county lines form natural north-south boundaries -- the steep, craggy canyons of the North Fork of the American River on the north, and the South Fork of the Consumnes River on the south.

So that the proposed El Dorado Viticultural Area can be seen in its entirety on one map, the Map of El Dorado County (Quad Map Index) has been included in Appendix C. The areas highlighted in red are the titles of the applicable USGS maps. The areas to which the historical report (Appendix B) and the public record (Appendix A) refer are highlighted in yellow.

HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

Historical data will show that El Dorado County has a long and well publicized history of grape growing. Public knowledge of El Dorado County as a region is evidence that the proposed boundaries are correct. This is obviously true in the case of the north and south boundaries which are identical to the county lines. In the case of the eastern boundary, it represents the upper limit of possible agricultural activity. It is general knowledge that the rocky, mountain terrain and climate of the Sierra Nevada Mountains limits farming to the lower elevations, so it is herein assumed that public knowledge of El Dorado County as a grape growing region also supports the eastern boundary as correct. The modern market for premium winegrape varieties, and the viticultural fact that such grapes are suited to cooler regions, are evidence which supports the western (1200 foot elevation) boundary. Even though there were some vineyards planted below the 1000 foot elevation in the historical record -- less than 10% of the total acreage in 1889 -- it does not contradict the assertion that the boundary should be drawn higher, on the basis of elevation. There are no current vineyards of premium grapes today planted below the 1200 foot elevation. It will be shown that almost every historical reference to grape growing areas in "El Dorado" falls within the proposed boundaries, which serves to reinforce them all as correct. Refer to Table II (page 6) for a list of those areas, and to Appendix C for their location on the map.

Mr. Charles L. Sullivan's report, "HISTORIC WINEGROWING IN EL DORADO COUNTY" is submitted as historical evidence that the proposed boundaries are correct, and is attached to this
petition as Appendix B. Not only does Mr. Sullivan offer a detailed account of acreage, growers, locations and economics of "El Dorado" grape growing, but also he documents it by references to periodicals and records, both historic and current, that show that the material was and is public knowledge. The fact that (1) virtually all of the areas he describes are within the proposed boundaries of "El Dorado", and (2) that references to El Dorado County itself can be assumed to establish the boundaries, as explained above, and, (3) that these areas have been publicized since 1855, all show that the proposed boundaries are correct.

CURRENT EVIDENCE

Numerous articles are appended to this petition which show that the public attention has been drawn to "El Dorado" for several years as a winegrape growing region (Appendix A). The specific areas referred to in the articles have been indexed in Table I and highlighted in yellow on the map. That they all fall within the proposed boundaries is current evidence that the boundaries are as specified in this petition. All references to the county of El Dorado reinforce the boundaries as well, because the boundaries take in all possible viticultural lands in the County except those below the 1200 foot elevation, where no premium wine grapes are planted.

TABLE II
INDEX OF AREAS TO WHICH THE SULLIVAN HISTORICAL REPORT RefERS

COLOMA
COULTERVILLE
DIAMOND SPRINGS
EL DORADO
EL DORADO COUNTY
EL DORADO DISTRICT
GARDEN VALLEY
GEORGETOWN
GOLD HILL
GREEN VALLEY
KELSEY
LATROBE
MICHIGAN FLAT
MUD SPRINGS
PLACERVILLE
SHINGLE SPRINGS
UNIONTOWN
SECTION THREE

EVIDENCE THAT THE GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES OF "EL DORADO"
PRODUCE GROWING CONDITIONS WHICH DISTINGUISH IT FROM
SURROUNDING AREAS.
CLIMATE OF THE EL DORADO REGION

The climatic conditions which distinguish "El Dorado" from surrounding areas will be presented in relation to the four seasons. One of the most important factors is not seasonal, however. Throughout the year, the evenings and nights are cooled by breezes which originate from the Sierra Nevada Mountains to the East.

WINTER

Winter temperatures fall to 20° to 35° at night and warm up to 40° to 60° Fahrenheit in the day. More than half of the annual precipitation falls in the months from December to March. Average annual rainfall ranges from 33 to 45 inches, varying with elevation. For every 300 foot rise in elevation, precipitation increases 3 to 4 inches. The higher average elevation of "El Dorado" as opposed to the lower foothill areas, and the Central Valley, guarantees it a more favorable growing climate as far as rainfall is concerned. The moisture-laden winter storms from the Pacific Ocean are carried across Central California by the prevailing west to east winds.

"The Coast Ranges catch some of the resulting rain, especially in the north, but there is no barrier at the Golden Gate and the heaviest precipitation occurs to the east and north of the gap as the air ascends the gradual western slope of the Sierra." 1

The winter fog, so typical of California's Great Central Valley and the coastal valleys, rarely extends above the 1200 foot elevation in "El Dorado"

SPRING

Spring temperatures occasionally fall below 30 Fahrenheit, but more often range from 30° to 45° Fahrenheit at night. Daytime temperatures warm up to 50° to 70° Fahrenheit, with late spring temperatures at times reaching 80° Fahrenheit. Approximately 20% of the annual precipitation falls in the months of April and May. In some years, when little rain falls during these months, the grapevines begin to use some of the available stored water.

SUMMER

Diurnal temperature variation is greater in "El Dorado" than in the other regions of California. Summer temperatures commonly fall to a minimum of 50° Fahrenheit at night, and rising often to 90° Fahrenheit during the day. Cool mountain breezes temper the influence of the great valley's hot air mass, and for every 300 feet rise in elevation, a temperature drop of 1° Fahrenheit occurs. Little or no rainfall occurs during June, July, August, or September except for a rare

1 Sierra Nevada Natural History, Page 13
thunder shower created by the influence of the Sierra Nevada. Unlike many of California's wine regions, the influence of smog is almost nonexistent.

AUTUMN

An Indian summer is characteristic of autumn in "El Dorado", extending the growing season into October. Cooler nighttime temperatures of 35° to 50° Fahrenheit, with slightly cooler days in the 70° to 80° Fahrenheit range are typical. Little rainfall occurs until late October and November, insuring ideal maturation of the grapes and no problems associated with a wet harvest. Daily westerly breezes from the Sierra Nevada Mountains lower actual vine temperature below the ambient air temperature. The long warm days and cool nights ripen the grapes to an unexcelled quality with distinctive character apparent in the wines of "El Dorado".

SOILS OF THE EL DORADO REGION

The El Dorado region is on the western slope of the central Sierra Nevada. It is dominated by steeply dipping, faulted and folded metamorphic rocks that have been intruded by several types of igneous rocks. Overlying the bedrock in many places are mantels of river gravel and volcanic debris.

Parent material exerts one of the strongest influences on soil formation in this region. Most of the soils are on uplands, formed in place in material weathered from metamorphic rocks or andesitic conglomerate rock.

Typically, in the western part of "El Dorado" below 2000 foot elevation, the land is steep and angular, consisting of faulted and folded metamorphic rocks. Metamorphic rocks are generally not easily weathered -- they commonly form shallow gravelly soils that have many outcrops. The metamorphic rocks are fine-grained and form soils that have a surface texture of loam, and silt loam.

In the southern part of "El Dorado" in the 2000 to 3000 foot elevation range, the land typically consists of granitic rocks and is rounded and smooth with a basin-like appearance. Soils underlain by granitic rocks occupy places where the overlying rocks were stripped away and the Sierra Nevada batholith is exposed. The parent rock is weathered to a considerable depth, and the soils are 3½ to more than 5 feet deep. The weathered rocks contain many angular, coarse grains of sand, mainly quartz, that form soils that have a surface layer of coarse sandy loam. Typical vegetation in this region is Ponderosa Pine.
In the volcanic areas of land above the 2500 foot elevation throughout "El Dorado", the terrain is flat and smooth (Camino ridge). The andesitic conglomerate (volcanic mud flows) is deeply weathered, especially in the Aiken soils, because the material is porous and weathers easily. The andesite is moderately grained and forms soils that have a surface texture of loam and sandy loam.

Soils represent a cumulation of the effects of climate, geology and vegetation. The soil characteristics play an important role in the winegrape's productivity and quality. In "El Dorado", although the soils vary in texture and depth, their parent materials were all formed from common Magma materials of the great Sierra Batholith. This is in contrast to the lower foothill and the central valley regions, where the soils are sedimentary (transported materials of ocean sediments, stream deposits, etc.), and consist of a conglomerate of materials representing the changing erosive patterns of the geologic past. In contrast, "El Dorado" soils are residual (formed in place) and igneous in origin, and have the characteristics described in detail in the foregoing.

The significance to grape growing of the unique soils of "El Dorado" is that it differentiates it from neighboring areas in several ways. Some of the positive aspects which favor winegrape growing in "El Dorado" are:

1. The soils are acidic, having a pH range from 5.0 to 6.2, in contrast to the alkaline soils common throughout California.

2. Hardpans, claypans and restricting layers are uncommon.

3. Soil water drainage and infiltration rates are moderate to fast.

4. High water table conditions which are unfavorable to grape growing are near non-existent in "El Dorado", unlike the Central Valley.

In conclusion, it has been shown that both the climate and the soils of "El Dorado" are different from surrounding areas, and that these geographical features produce unique growing conditions which distinguish it from others.
SECTION FOUR

A NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF "EL DORADO"
BASED ON FEATURES WHICH CAN BE FOUND
ON THE U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY MAPS
BEGINNING at a point being the intersection of the North Fork of the American River and the Northerly line of Township 11 North, Range 8 East, M.D.M., thence, generally in a North-easterly direction along said North Fork of the American River which is also the El Dorado County Boundary, to the point of intersection of said river and the easterly line of Township 13 North, Range 11 East, M.D.M.; thence, Southerly along the township lines to the Northeasterly corner of Township 11 North, Range 11 East, M.D.M.; thence, Easterly along range lines to the Northeast corner of Township 11 North, Range 12 East, M.D.M.; thence Southerly along township lines to the Southeast corner of Township 11 North, Range 12 East, M.D.M.; thence, Easterly along range lines to the Northeasterly corner of Township 10 North, Range 13 East, M.D.M.; thence, Southerly along township lines along the Easterly line of Township 8 North, Township 9 North, and Township 10 North, all Range 13 East, M.D.M. to the point of intersecton with the South Fork of the Consumnes River; thence, in a Westerly direction along the South Fork of the Consumnes River, which is also the El Dorado County Boundary, to the point of intersection of said river and the Easterly line of Township 8 North, Range 10 East, M.D.M.; thence Northerly along township lines to the Northeast corner of Township 8 North, Range 10 East, M.D.M.; thence, Westerly along range lines to the Northeast corner of Township 8 North, Range 9 East, M.D.M.; thence, Northerly along township lines to the Northeast corner of Township 11 North, Range 9 East, M.D.M.; thence, Westerly along range lines to the point of beginning.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Art. No.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title of Article and Name of Publication</th>
<th>Page No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>9/72</td>
<td>&quot;New Wine In Old Vineyards&quot;, The Gold Mine, Placerville, CA</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>2/23/73</td>
<td>&quot;El Dorado Shows Budding Grape-Wine Industry, Hopes to Encourage Growth&quot;, The Sacramento Bee, Sacramento, CA</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>8/1/74</td>
<td>'Wine Revival', &quot;Country Life&quot;, The Sacramento Bee, Sacramento, CA</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>9/74</td>
<td>&quot;Old Dreams in New Bottles&quot;, The Gold Mine, Placerville, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>11/21/74</td>
<td>&quot;Apple Hill Expands to Include Pioneer Winery on Carson Road&quot;, The Mountain Democrat, Placerville, CA</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>11/14/76</td>
<td>'The Foothills Wine Industry', &quot;Business&quot;, The Sacramento Union, Sacramento, CA</td>
<td>5,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>9/77</td>
<td>&quot;...And Now There's Hangtown Red&quot;, California and Western States Grape-grower, Fresno, CA</td>
<td>7,8</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>9/29/78</td>
<td>&quot;Reminiscing&quot;, The Mountain Democrat, Placerville CA</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>10/14/78</td>
<td>'The Vintners of El Dorado...California's Oldest Yet Newest Wine Country', &quot;California Life&quot;, The Sacramento Bee, Sacramento, CA</td>
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<td>4/1/79</td>
<td>&quot;Head for the Foothills!&quot;, The Wine Spectator, San Diego, CA</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>7/13/79</td>
<td>'Winery's Take Root in the Hills', &quot;on the go/living&quot;, The Modesto Bee, Modesto, CA</td>
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* Chronicle
NEW WINE IN OLD VINEYARDS

From heavy on the side and long to the nose, with a rich fruit and mellow finish, the welcome reemastteness of the wine grapes growing today in El Dorado County’s battle fields is getting momentum. Almost annually in the grape industry, there are a few new ventures which will add their part to the fruitful development. But, after sampling a few of the grapes in recent times, we can say the grapes in El Dorado County are ripe and ready for the production of high quality wines.

A few of the new vineyards have been planted in the area around Sacramento. In fact, the first production of grapes this spring will be ready for the market in the near future. This is good news for the wine industry as well as for the wine growers who are planning to produce their own wine.

PREPARING THE NURSERY BED

WINE (continued)

Wine growing is not a new thing in El Dorado County. Many vineyards have been established over the years, but the new vineyards being planted are adding to the overall production of wine grapes in the area.

CONCERN FOR HIGHWAY

As part of the Chamber’s job, we must concern ourselves with the needs of our county. One of the biggest concerns is the highway system. With the increase in population and the growth of our county, it is important to have good roads to accommodate the traffic.

GOLD RUSH VINEYARD

The gold rush era of the 1850s and 1860s was a time of great prosperity in El Dorado County. Many people came to the area to seek their fortune in the gold mines. It was also a time when grapevines were first planted in the area.

Old and new blend at Rooger’s

A young man with a somewhat different dream, Greg Rooger recently purchased the Fossett ranch on Canyon Road and plans to have his new winery ready to operate the wine at the Fall of 75. A graduate winemaker with a master’s degree in agricultural economics from Davis, Rooger studied the area carefully before settling here to establish his winery and the vineyard which will eventually help to supply it.

"Rooger is no stranger to wine making. As the youngest son of a famous winemaking family, he is experienced as well as educated in the art. His architect is a specialist in wine design, and the place will be for building a 10,000 gallon capacity winery next year, capable of further expansion as time goes on.

Rooger will be planting 20 acres of grapes in the spring: Cabernet Sauvignon, Zinfandel, and Merlot in the red, Sauvignon Blanc, Semillon, and Pinot Charles, the white. But it will be three years before his own grapes are ready, so he will be looking closely at other vineyards in the county. In the meantime, he is busy harvesting his peach and plum crop, planning the winery, and putting down new rows of his own in the old ranch where the Fossett winery of 1870 still stands.

With more already deep in the county where he was born and the ranch that was his grandfather’s, the neighbor of the late Walker rents each day to his own vineyard in the Del Rio district. Five acres of Chenin Blanc . . . 2000 grapes . . . are thriving after the first year in the rich soil of this gently rolling land. It will be two years before these vines produce a crop, but this spring Walker will plant

University of California from 1950 to 1960 was the same quality, continuing to plant 150 acres a year until 1960. Parking in this area has helped to increase the value of the grapes. The area around the winery and the vineyard is a beautiful setting for a wine tasting event.

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Wine Revival
Hopes Rise For Foothill Vineyards

PLACERVILLE — A sharp increase in the grape harvest and a new winery now ready for its first crush, brings optimism to agriculturists that the wine industry is reviving in this foothill area.

"In one year the acreage of vineyards jumped from 24 to 230, and it now looks like the country is entering its third historical phase in the grape industry," Farm Advisor Dick Reeths explained.

In all, seven ranchers planted a total of 30 acres of new grape stock in areas of Placerville, Camino and Dimond at elevations of between 3,000 and 4,000 feet, where this county is known for its deep soil and climate beneficial to vineyards, the farm advisor said.

Although the bulk of these acres are planted with new vineyards, the area has been cultivated for many years, and is capable of producing wine of high quality, Reeths said.

The Boeger Winery, operated by Greg and Jamie Boeger, sits on a hillside of the historic Elma Frey Ranch along Cerro Road, where Boeger already has planted some wine grape stock and has plans to plant 15 additional acres this fall.

I'll have my tasting room completed in about a month and about the same time I'll be ready to market a limited supply of my first wine crushed on another ranch I lease," Boeger said.

The Boeger Winery has 4,900 gallons of various types of wine aging in special imported French oak barrels, but the winery has a capacity of 50,000 gallons, with room for plant expansion.

Boeger soon will bottle 500 gallons of Johannisburg Riesling and 200 gallons of Chenin Blanc.

"I will have to wait another six months or so before bottling my supply of Zinfandel and another two years for my Cabernet Sauvignon," the young viner said.

El Dorado County, according to both Reeths and Boeger, compares with the Napa County wine country in climate. "And this county has lower land values," Boeger declared.

Historically, this county already has had two significant periods where grapes and wine played an important role.

"The first came with the early rivers and streams and on our rocky slope. The miners were a hardy lot and wine was a needed commodity," Reeths explained.

Boeger was schooled in agriculture at the University of California, Davis and holds a degree in agricultural economics. He is a background in the vineyard/wine area.

"While attending college, I worked alongside my cousin in a winery in Napa County. I've always been interested in the making of wine," Boeger said.

Boeger's winery, ready for its first crush nearly a year ago, has the capacity to produce 50,000 gallons of wine per year, and is expected to produce 3,000 cases of wine in its first year.

Boeger made his first El Dorado County "crush" at the Gold Hill Winery, which he helped.

So far, according to Boeger and Reeths, 1976 vintage of this area's wine grapes has proven "very exciting.

"There are some indications our wine will have a character all their own, mostly because of our mountain climate...we have an ideal climate," Reeths said.
El Dorado Shows Budding Grape-Wine Industry, Hopes To Encourage Growth

PLAY TULLE — "The wine zone may spread to El Dorado County if the wine-growers are to be believed," said Dr. Bruce B. Wrighton, professor of agricultural economics at California State College at Los Angeles.

"The climate is well suited to the cultivation of grapes," he said. "The area has a long growing season, with a mild climate and ample rainfall." 

Wrighton said that if the wine-growing industry grows as predicted, El Dorado County could become a major wine-producer in the state.

He added that the county has the potential to become a major producer of wine grapes because of its climate and soil conditions.

El Dorado County has a long growing season, which is ideal for grape cultivation. The area has a mild climate, with plenty of sunshine and moderate rainfall, which is perfect for growing grapes.

The county has already seen an increase in wine production, with several vineyards and wineries being established.

However, Wrighton warned that the area needs to be careful in its expansion to ensure that the environment is not degraded.

"We need to be careful not to over-expand the wine-growing industry," he said. "It's important to maintain the balance between production and conservation." 

He added that the county needs to work with local agricultural organizations to ensure that the wine-growing industry is sustainable.

Kauvar said that the potential for wine production is significant, but the county needs to be careful in its expansion to ensure that the environment is not degraded.

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Apple Hill expands to include pioneer winery on Carson road

CAMINO — The Apple Hill Growers association has voted to expand its boundaries to include a vineyard in the area of the old Carson road.

The vineyard, located in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada, will be the site of a new winery, which is expected to open next spring.

The vineyard, which covers 20 acres, is owned by the Apple Hill Growers association.

The vineyard is expected to produce about 2,000 cases of wine this year, with production increasing to about 5,000 cases next year.

The new winery is expected to create about 10 jobs, with the potential for more jobs as the vineyard expands.

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THE GOLD MINE

OLD DREAMS IN NEW BOTTLES

SEPTEMBER 1974

Two years ago, when we wrote the "New Wine in Old Vignes" issue of the GOLD MINE, the rebirth of a wine industry in El Dorado County sounded like a pipe dream. The promise of wineries and vineyards to come, the account of the real plots, the hopeful growers, the acres of vines planted at extacy-the news was all there. Today, the dream is coming true. The Burger Winery is a $100,000 reality, ready for its first crush this fall. The dream is coming true. Major work has been done on the site by Burger himself. The winery is well under way and will be ready for the first crush this fall. The dream is coming true. The Burgers have been working hard on the site and have already planted 200 acres of vines. The dream is coming true.

Apple wine from El Dorado Vineyards

30 acre Old Ranch in Amador County, just a few miles from El Dorado Vineyards, will be the site of the first apple wine production in the area. The wine will be produced by the owners of El Dorado Vineyards, who have been working hard to establish a new wine industry in the area. The dream is coming true.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

PLACEVILLE - DANCE TO "THE TRAIN," Fairgrounds Sept 1 & 8
SOUTHLAKE TAHOE - FIREMEN'S LABOR DAY BARBECUE Sept 7
DIAMOND SPRINGS - COUNTRY BAZAAR & PANCAKE BREAKFAST Sept 8
PLACEVILLE - STOCK CAR RACING, Fairgrounds Sept 7
SOUTHLAKE TAHOE - MISS SL. BEAUTY PAGEANT, Lake Tahoe Village Sept 8
SPRINGLLE - JUBILEE, Community Center Sept 8
DIAMOND SPRINGS - JUBILEE, Community Center Sept 8
OLD FASHIONED BARBECUE, Sunday Sept 15
POLLOCK PINES - FRATERNITY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEETING, Fifty Spot Sept 17
CHICAGO - COLORADO LOTUS FESTIVAL, Fairgrounds Sept 22
SOUTHLAKE TAHOE - TOPEE GUN CLUB B.B.Q. & SHOOT Sept 22
SOUTHLAKE TAHOE - JUNE MASH ALL-BREED FUN MATCH Sept 23
EL DORADO COUNTY - HEART FUND BENEFIT, Cyclathon, 74 Oct O

THE VINES ARE HIGH AT WATER'S

Willetts, the decision to invest in El Dorado County.

Fifteen hundred vines were put in the ground this May in one acre of El Dorado County. The site was in Amador County, just a few miles from the Burger Winery. The vines were planted by the owners of El Dorado Vineyards, who have been working hard to establish a new wine industry in the area. The dream is coming true.

Unable to wait until she can plant and harvest her own vineyard, Nurse McGuire is approaching the building of his vineyard from the practical standpoint of using what he has until he can get what he wants. Engineer McGuire, an amateur and experimental viticulturist for a number of years, recently purchased the

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Business briefs

A new retirement plan

Wellis Fargo has introduced a unique tax-deferred savings plan for people with 401(k) retirement plans. The plan covers all of the benefits of a 401(k) retirement plan — the Golden Guarantee.

This is a plan for people who are over 50 years of age — and one individual reaching 65 this year. This is the highest level of income that can be earned by anyone. This year, you and your employer can deduct 25% of your income up to $17,000.

Farms loans up

Bank of America has announced that land prices and real estate loans in the Sacramento-North San Joaquin area are up 34.6% during the first six months of this year, according to Mr. McFarland, senior vice president in the city.

Glimpse the bank loaned $104 million in agricultural loans to 257 farms and ranches in the area this year compared with $83.7 million during the same month last year.

Research decline

If the decline in research and development investment by U.S. is not reversed, it could seriously affect the long-term competitiveness of U.S. agriculture and industry.

According to a report by the National Academy of Sciences, the U.S. has lost its lead in scientific research to Japan and Europe.

The report points out that the U.S. has fallen behind both Japan and Europe in the number of patents and inventions filed in recent years.

Steel wages

Domestic steel producers and their hourly employees are 1.39 more per hour in wage and other employment costs in August than they were the previous March, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The average hourly earnings for all commodities and services for the U.S. is now $24.26.

The Foothills wine industry

Old dreams are being poured in new bottles

By Halmar Forrest Moser

Special to The Union

Appropriately quiet and almost unhurried, the renaissance of wine making in the Foothills of El Dorado County is a phenomenon not so much to be observed as to be experienced. New wineries and heartened vineyarders, in addition to a new breed of viticulturist who can adapt to the soil and climate of our area, are all factors in a new wine industry.

In El Dorado County, the wine industry is developing in a way that is both exciting and encouraging. The area, which has been described by some as a "wine country," is not yet fully realized. The potential is there, and the future looks promising.

The area has been blessed with a climate that is ideally suited to growing grapes. The area is known for its mild winters and warm summers, which are perfect for grape growing.

The Foothills wine region is also rich in history. The area has a long history of grape growing, dating back to the early 19th century. The area has produced some of the finest wines in the state.

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The Foothills wine industry

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Interesting expectations. The Old Dorado renaissance is to get rolling quickly. Some of the high grape prices of a few years ago. It has been taken up thoroughly. The old Fassati Ranch in Pleaserville acted as the newly relocated. Growing up in a Napa winemaking family. George Boeger's sprout of obscurity and making an effort.

Built in 1872, the old Fassati winery now serves as the tasting room for the Boeger Winery, just east of Pleaserville in the picturesque Apple Hill district. The historic cellar is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and visitors are welcome to tour the new winery and picnic under the ancient fig tree.

This 1886 photograph of the Fassati family at their winery shows how little the old stone tasting room has changed. The ranch remained in the Fassati family from 1856, when it was homesteaded, until purchased by the Boegers in 1972.
...And Now There's

Hangtown Red

By Jerry Sper
Associate Editor

Famous grape growing regions of the world often become known by the wines they produce. Such is the case with the Piedmont region of Italy, which is famous for Barbaresco, or the Medoc and Saint Emilion areas of France, from which Cabernet Sauvignon has its beginning, or the Rhone and Moselle valleys of Germany, where Johannisberg Riesling first was developed.

And, of course, there's El Dorado County, which has brought forth Hangtown Red. Hangtown Red! This recently new wine is the work of Greg Boger, owner of the Boger Winery and Vintner, located east of Placerville, Calif. in the Apple Hill District of El Dorado County. It gets its name from Placerville, which was known as Hangtown during the infamous Gold Rush Days of the late 1800's.

Hangtown Red is one of seven wines produced by Boger, who also works as winemaker. The others include Johannisberg Riesling, Zinfandel, Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Chenin Blanc.

One of the best sellers, however, is Hangtown Red. It is Boger's answer to a local Burgundy, blended from Zinfandel, Carignane, Barbera, Ruby Cabernet, Petit Sirah and Cabernet Sauvignon grapes.

Many of the varieties come from Boger's own vineyard, planted on the steep hillsides northeast of Placerville. The average elevation is about 2,300 feet. Other grapes are purchased from nearby vineyards.

Boger, during a recent interview with California and Western States Grape Grower, said the wine industry in El Dorado County actually developed immediately following the discovery of gold at Coloma. Mining communities that sprang up overnight found themselves hard pressed for food and spirits and a lack of adequate transportation directed a need to establish vineyards and wineries close to the patchwork settlements.

"Early El Dorado history shows that the wine industry firmly was established in the county as early as 1855. Of the 8,000 acres under cultivation, about 3,000 acres were in vineyards. The wine industry continued to flourish throughout the late 1880's with 4,300 acres recorded in 1899. Around the early 1900's, general decline in county population caused many of these early vineyards to be abandoned," he said.

Boger said that during the 1920's Prohibition and an accompanying demand for grapes for homes made making again stimulated the county wine industry. Historical data said, indicates the grape industry peaked during that time at about 6,490 acres.

"Poor wine prices after repeal Prohibition coupled with grape phylloxera forced a general decline of grape acreage during the 1930's. Low grape prices at the end of WWII forced the abandonment of remaining vineyards, and only a few acres remained in the area by 1951," he said.

But Boger, and others, believe there is a new trend coming and El Dorado County eventually will be a significant producer of quality grape varieties to be used in dry wines, "exceptionally fine quality," he said. (Boger has a tendency to talk li..."

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Medina of California

Manuel Padilla, Sanger, California grower and Medina rep. Russia Berry discussed grapes in his Medina treated vineyard.

Manuel applied Medina at the rate of one gallon per acre by dropping it into his furrow irrigation water. Response was noted in about two weeks as the plants took on a healthier color. Bigger individual berries with larger and heavier bunches were also noted.

Last week, about 45 days before normal harvest, Medina checked a 500 grape sugar content and found that it was already over 19 points and on all tests averaged more than two points over tests in check without Medina.

Manuel says, "Use Medina, grow a better crop", and Russia Berry holds a good time to get Medina on his following harvest - get the soil and vines in good shape for next winter and spring.

"CALIFORNIA'S DISTRIBUTOR"...
land costs and existing vegetation. As far as climate is concerned, Boege believes an understanding of the general topography of El Dorado County is necessary to see how this particular mountain climate influences grape growing and wine quality. The county is a series of long, gently sloping ridges with deep river canyons dividing them. This configuration results in a stable climate from year to year with warm summer days and cool nights giving optimum sugar-acid ratios essential for the balance of a premium wine. The early growing season is cooler and but this is later than comparable coastal grape regions, he says.

Boeger said mean temperatures in the El Dorado County area are warmer in July and August but are cooler during the critical pre-harvest period of September and October. "Coolness during the month prior to harvest is vital for production of the best quality wines. For this reason, varieties that mature in late September to mid-October are the most desirable for El Dorado County," he said. Frost protection has not been a problem to Boeger, even though he is geared for that eventuality with overhead sprinklers. He said he only has had to use the sprinkler system one time since 1972 to guard against frost. The reason, he said, has been the fact that his vines are located in frost free areas — on ridge tops and near river canyons where an irrigation system serves to protect the vines.

The soil at the Boeger vineyard ranges from sandy to clay loam. It is porous and provides good drainage. It also is rocky and is sprinkled with Live Oak, Digger Pine, Ponderosa Pine, bayon and poison oak.

Although rainfall figures for the area are high ranging from 20 to 40 inches a year, Boeger's overhead sprinkler system is designed to give Boeger the option of frequent irrigation to hasten the growth of the young vines. There have been problems to overcome, too. Boeger said he has had to install a drainage system and the entire perimeter of the property, keeping unwanted grass, weeds, apple, plum and nectarine b a y a l l o a d . Also, weeds have been a serious consideration, particularly in areas that once were orchards. Boeger said he has used Roundup on three and four year old vines to control unwanted vegetation. Other areas have been subjected to frequent discings.

The winery was built in 1973, and the first crush was a year later. The winery consists of 2,000 square feet of space and currently has a 15,000-gallon cooperage area. Boeger thinks the winery will hold 40,000 gallons in cooperage when the operation is going full-scale. He has the familiar stainless steel tanks, American and French oak barrels and stainless steel water-jacketed fermenters.

Last season, the winery produced about 6,000 gallons of red and white wines. This year, Boeger expects to produce about 14,000 gallons. About 25 per cent of that effort will be aimed at Hangtown Red. Originally, all the wines produced at the Boeger site were sold in the same winery located at the base of the vineyard. The two-story structure was built in 1867 by the John Fossil family and is used today as a tasting room and visitor center.

What is Boeger's background? He used to do the state grape reporting statistics, and you know how that can drive you to drink — Hangtown Red. He hopes.

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Head for the foothills!

by Richard P. Watson

Ever since Sutter Home staged its prestigious Napa by using Amador County grapes to produce an excellent Zinfandel some years ago, the popularity of wines from the foothills has been increasing.

Small wineries producing for local consumption only have flourished there for decades, few labels ever getting west of Sacramento.

Slowly that is changing. Wines from Placerville and Plymouth are beginning to show up in pinpoint and even Napa-Sonoma wine stores, and are beginning to appear in the Colorado, Chicago and New York markets. Coming from vineyards between 1,000 and 3,500 feet, amid benefitfully rolling hills, this may well be a new appellation region to watch. It is not only Zinfandel — many other top fine varietals are showing well.

In Placerville, Bigger Winery is the jewel. Long known for its Zinfandels, they are now producing Cabernet Sauvignon, Johannisburg Riesling and Chardonnay. Of high quality, as a Chardonnay I was not able to find. Their Hangtown Red, now vintage-dated, is good value overall. Located slightly northeast of town, it is easy to find and pleasant to visit.

On the same road three miles to the east is Eldorado Vineyards. Intermediated with quality apple production, this one has a way to go before its wines even get to Sacramento. But such a setting!

Below town is Sierra Vista Winery which has recently released a fine Fume Blanc. Hard to find, appointment essential.

At Plymouth drive down to Plymouth produces the other fine winery of the foothills region, Montechina. For a few years known chiefly as a white Zinfandel producer (long before its popularity), they now produce nouveau (both Cabernet and Zinfin-
del), a small variety of whites (including a Mission grape wine of 15% alcohol, 12% sugar), some fine Cabernet Sauvignon and a gigante Barbera (16%) in addition to the staple Zinfandel. This is a label to seek out, and it is readily attaining national distribution status.

Close by in a winery apparently recovering from recent somnambulism is Cosumnes River Vineyards. But don’t look for them by that name for long, they plan to revert to an older label, Story Vineyard, to market their Zin-
fandels. There will soon be a covin-
taged Zinfandel released chiefly from 1976 grapes that is excellent, and the 1977 is grand. Worth waiting for.

Above both is dependable D’Agini-
tini, one of the oldest wineries in California. Distributed in the state, they make a wide range of var-
ietals and mostly generics. The estate-
bottled Zinfandel is best known, for good reason.

Two smaller wineries, Shenandoah Vineyards (Plymouth) and Argonaut Winery (Plymouth) are still local and especially hard to find. The latter has ac-
quised a favoured local reputation to back Zinfandel; hopefully the former will improve on its recent Pinot Blanc re-
lease. If it doesn’t, it will not get out of the Shenandoah Valley even to Sacramento.

The track record is there (in Zinfin-
del), the conditions seem right, eleva-
tion is excellent and the winemakers, many of them, seem to know what they are about. The somnambulism would only justly the trip out east, but don’t overlook the wines of this region next time skiing is bad.

Italian wine sales gaining in America, stats declare

NEW YORK — Italy has captured 50.5% of all wines imported to the U.S. from throughout the world. The 12-month figure for 1978 reveals that Italy shipped 239,651,944 gallons of the Red and white wine that flowed into the U.S., a gain of 23,197,946 gallons over her 1977 figures, according to Dr.

Ludovico Caputo, Italian Trade Commis-
sioner here.

With total wine brought to America from all countries at 78,020,159 gal-

lons, Italy’s share spills over the half-

mark at 33,510,395 gallons by a good splash of 45,130,549 gallons.

Italy is approaching three times the volume of Germany, which trails it by France trails Italy with 13,364,033 gal-
lons, and Germany is still further behind with 13,718,375 gallons. The fourth country in line is Portugal with 9,209,350 gallons.

Italy also leads in the shipment of sparkling wines, such as Asti Spumante, sparkling 2,415,610 gal-
lons, or 56.1% of the American import mar-
tet in this category. France, long and correctly a leader in this area, shipped 1,600,354 gallons of Cham-
pagne and other sparkling wines here in 1978, or 37.2%, Caputo reports.

WINE AUCTIONS

In the fine tradition of the Christie’s, Sotheby’s and Heublein fine wine auctions, we regularly conduct silent, sealed-bid auctions in which we offer a tremendous selection of rare, old wines in excellent condition. The bidding procedures are very simple.

In addition to our Auctions we have numerous other offerings of fine wines throughout the year, from carefully selected everyday drinking wines to old rarities for special occasions.

If you appreciate fine wine—for yourself or for others—you should have your name on our mailing list. Please call or write to:

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Heitz having anniversary? He sez yes

by H. Parks Redwine II

Some of you may have already seen or heard of the latest release from Heitz Wine Cellars —the awaited 1974 Martha’s Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon. Better yet, some of you may have already tasted it.

For those of you who have done neither, you may be surprised by the wine’s label. Don’t look for the usual burgundy on buff colored label; instead look for a gray color picture of the winery and surrounding area. The artist is noted as Richard Danislo.

The really intriguing feature, however, is not the change in label format, but the phrase “Anniversary, 1974 Vin-
tage” at the top of the new label, An-
iversary of what? Certainly not Martha’s Vineyard (wines or vine-
yards), and not of the building of the original winery.

I had to ask Joe Heitz, who said that it’s the Heitz family way of celebrating the 100th anniversary of the family’s outright ownership of the winery.

As for the wine within the bottles, according to a recent newsletter from Heitz Wine Cellars, the 1974 Martha’s Vineyard “comes close to the peak” of perfection. Furthermore, it is the first newly released wine they’ve had to “significantly outpace not only other fine wines... [compared] with it, but also... older vintages [of Heitz Vineyards] wines.”

After 17 years, Heitz Wine Cellars is now a complete family operation. Be-
pided to William and Alvin, Alice and David (who is responsible for the 1974 vintage of Martha’s Vineyard), and daughter Kathleen, now a full time Heitz Cellar staff member.
Reminiscing

small holdings from Louis Bonner and Thomas Ralph. He continued managing interests in the Smith's Flat mining district, one of the richest in the county.

John Lombardo's father was a career army officer and served in the Crimean war (1854-56). John had a private tutor in Italy and was quite well educated for the time, which made quite an impression. He married young and lived in San Francisco, where he launched a property business. During this time, his wife, Emanz, with the help of a friend, managed to open a hotel in San Pablo, which became quite successful.

The present distillery building was constructed about 1880. John and his wife, Candia, had one daughter, Sarah A., who remained unmarried and lived with the family. Sarah remembered their parents as lovable, kind, and generous. The family was very well respected in the community, and their home was always open for friends and neighbors.

In 1859, John Lombardo met a young woman from Italy, Emanz, and they fell in love. They married in 1861 and moved to Placerville to start a new life together. John bought a small vineyard and started growing grapes, which he used to make wine.

In 1869, John and Emanz decided to expand their business and built a large winery on the side of Main Street. The winery became one of the most popular in the area, and they welcomed visitors from all over.

The Lombardo-Fossati house and winery about 1880

Lombardo-Fossati Winery

by Anne Schrag

On October 1st, one of the highlights of the Placerville and Historic Tours will be held on Saturday. The tours will feature historical sites and locations that are significant in the city's history.

The Lombardo-Fossati house and winery is one of the most historically significant sites in Placerville. The house was built in 1859 by Giovanni Lombardo, a wealthy businessman from Italy. The winery was built in 1869 by Giovanni's brother, Lombardo Fossati.

The house was originally built as a residence for the Lombardos, but it later became a hotel and became quite popular among tourists.

The winery was a major source of income for the Lombardos, and it continued to operate until 1920.

The Lombardo-Fossati house and winery about 1880

John Lombardo

The winery today

The Lombardo-Fossati house and winery remains one of the most popular sites in Placerville. It is a testament to the rich history of the city and continues to attract visitors from all over the world.
The Boeger Winery is located at 1709 Carson Road in Placerville. Take the Broadway ramp off I-80 for a century on Broadway to Carson Road. Turn left off the freeway in the winery's sign. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays. Phone: 422-9984. El Dorado Vineyards is in Camino. Take the Carson Road (Apple Hill) turnoff in Camino and turn left. Phone: 644-3773. Sierra Vista Winery is located at the end of Rucker Lane off Pleasant Valley Road. Phone: 423-7272.

Placerville — It flourished and brought pleasure to the Gold Rush miners as they hunted around their brush and mud lanes.

It flourished again during Prohibition in the 1930s and brought pleasure to the parched throats of the descendants of the miners — and others. And it’s flourishing again today. And bringing pleasure.

El Dorado County’s wine industry, the oldest yet newest premium wine producing region in California, just won’t die. Agriculture first grew in El Dorado County during the Gold Rush to help supply the tens of thousands of miners’ stomachs — the Sierra footsore. By 1855, 880 acres were under cultivation — 1,000 in vineyards. By 1890, vineyard acreage had increased to 4,400. A population decline around the turn of the century left many of these early vineyards abandoned.

During Prohibition, the industry again sprang to life to supply thirsty home winemakers with grapes. Vineyard acreage at that time was 500 acres, historical records show. The industry declined again with the repeal of Prohibition. By 1959 only a few “hobby” acres remained.

Then in the late 1960s wine started to grow in popularity. And that popularity has been growing ever since. Last year, California drank more than 18 million gallons of wine, 25 percent of all wine consumed in the United States.

And now, much more is going on to publicize the giants of the Napa and San Joaquin Valleys. El Dorado’s vineyard and wine industry is once again flourishing. There are 16 new vineyards in the county growing over 250 acres of grapes, mostly Zinfandel, Chenin Blanc, Riesling and Chardonnay. And there are three new wineries in the county to serve all small family operations — where eight years ago there were nine.

This resurgence started in 1981 with several trial plantings. Grapes from these plantings continue to be evaluated by the ecology department at the University of California at Davis.

*In the garden*

John and Barbara MacCready inspect the vineyard from which they will crush this year for the first time. Last year the birds “harvested” all but three grapes.

The family that crushes together, stays together. Greg Boeger and his wife Sue place grapes in the crusher while sons, Alex and Justin, help. “Grapes from the small El Dorado County vineyards are picked into small crates.”

The Boeger Winery produces 13,000 gallons of wine a year.

John and Greg Boeger sample wine on the balcony of their tasting room, a winery built in the 1870s. The “large” Boeger Winery produces 13,000 gallons of wine a year.

Sierra Vista Winery is located at the end of Rucker Lane off Pleasant Valley Road. Phone: 423-7272.

*In the garden*

Sue and Greg Boeger sample wine on the balcony of their tasting room, a winery built in the 1870s. The “large” Boeger Winery produces 13,000 gallons of wine a year.

The family that crushes together, stays together. Greg Boeger and his wife Sue place grapes in the crusher while sons, Alex and Justin, help. “Grapes from the small El Dorado County vineyards are picked into small crates.”

And bottling there. Production increased slowly the first couple of years until 1972 when he doubled his crush to 12,000 gallons.

About 50 percent of Boeger’s wine is sold “directly out of the tasting room,” he explains. The other half is sold by a broker to San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Boeger isn’t entirely new to wine making. He was graduated from UC Davis with a major in agricultural economics and a minor in viticulture. And his grandfather, Anton Nichols, opened a winery in St. Helena in 1832. Boeger has worked at the St. Helena winery with his cousin who still runs it today.

El Dorado Vineyards, owned by Dick and Judy McQuire, is located just a few miles up Carson Road in Apple Hill. McGregor, a former Placerville city manager, bought his ranch in 1974. “The previous owner had quite a roadside apple business going here when we bought the place,” McGregor says.

The McQuigues have planted seven acres with Cabernet, Merlot and Chardonnay grapes, and this fall will plant Sauvignon Blanc and Napa Gamay.

“With the vineyard,” McGregor says, “we hope to get up to where we’re making between 10,000 and 15,000 gallons of wine a year. That’s a nice family sized production, it seems to us. And our seven acres would take care of about two thirds of that.

“I’ll probably always be a grape buyer. There’s been a lot of Zinfandel grapes planted up here and they really do nicely. In fact Greg Boeger placed first with his Zinfandel in a wine tasting with 15 other wineries, including some in the Shenandoah Valley over in Amador County and some from the Napa Valley. So I figured I wouldn’t plant Zinfandel because I’m sure they’ll be available up here. Right now McGregor’s production is around 1,500 gallons a year. Three quarters of his wine sales are from his roadside apple stand, half of it during...
California's Oldest
Cont. from Page CL 3

The full apple crop. The remaining quarter is wholesaled.

One surprising discovery McGuire has made is that his apple customers and his wine customers are quite different. "The apple buyers come in for wine and they're interested in apples,forget the wine. The wine customers come in for wine, forget the apples."

Sierra Vista Winery and Vineyards is the farthest out, geographically, of the three wineries. Owned by John and Barbara MacCreadys, the winery is located between Frazier Park and Sonora off Highway 120. The MacCreadys bought their mountain ranch in 1972. They now have five acres planted in Cabernet Sauvignon.

"I've been making wine since 1967," MacCready explains. "I started with a few vines in Ohio. Even then I wanted to be a vineyard and maybe a winery. So I tried all about eight different varieties of the grapes available in Ohio and not one of them turned out a wine that was worth anything. So we started looking for a place in California, and here we are."

The MacCreadys got their winery license in 1977 and are crushing out their grapes one at a time from a 30-gallon barrel. The MacCreadys' two young daughters help cork the bottles and Barbara applies the label. "It's our operation very well," MacCready explains. "If I want to come home from my job in Sacramento and bottle a few cases after work I can. With this setup I'm not committed to hours of bottling."

The MacCreadys do offer wine tasting, but because they are "so far off the beaten path," they recommend calling first for an appointment.

So El Dorado County's wine industry is emerging for the third time. And growing. Bonger says he knows of at least two other wineries planned for the county soon, and "people are coming in all the time asking about operating vineyards and wineries."

John MacCready crushes at his Sierra Vista Winery. The smallest of the three El Dorado County wineries, their wine is "put up" one bottle at a time from a 30-gallon barrel.
Great wines from Gold Rush country

ROBERT LAWRENCE BALZER

Winery bosses are sprucing up in California this summer — in a big way. Here are a dozen wines which may be familiar today but may have unforeseen significance tomorrow when assessing the tenor of your wine portfolio, or catching the flavor of the world when you're traveling. In Napa, the Robert Hilliard Winery, Cakebread Cellars, Vintner's Reserve, Raymond Vineyard & Cellar, and Santa Barbara's Landmark Vineyards, Robert's Reserve, and Vintner's Reserve, and in the Paso Robles area, Estrella River Winery and Matanzo Winery.

Each has made more than a small investment. Gone are the days of the small to mid size winery, with a few wines and a few barrels. You can't beat the wine business. But more. Today, the arithmetical shows配方 from the vineyard, and before the first barrel arrives in the barrel, this barrel arrives in the market. This is a critical advantage in a market where the barrels vary in flavor.

For the winemaker, it serves as confirmation. For the consumer, it means to your day, season, and year to year, the beautiful fruit that's already been made. These beautiful wines now are of great importance.

Understanding and understanding, we received two bottles of the wine, a Cabernet Sauvignon and a Cabernet Franc from a new wine company, a completely unknown name. For them, wine is a way of life. They're selling them from their Paso Robles home to 37 counties. After several days, when a wine assessor, a man stopped by for lunch, we decided to pull the corks and give them a try. The Paso Robles

locale, re-emerging as a fine wine area, especially for Zinfandel, has been bringing some fame to this fodder gold rush area. Expectations were not without some hopes for the wine.

But the fragrance that came from the glass of this Paso 1980 Zinfandel, aged in small French oak barrels for two years, is equally drinkable right now, but there were only 200 cases produced. It drinks like a lighter Port, clear from one of the better classified vineyards. The wine is smooth, of fine ruby color, and will hold well with increasing depth and complexity for the next four to five years, if you can keep away from it that long.

The Paso Robles wines are available, naturally, at the winery, a 45-minute drive from Sacramento, and select locations in the Los Angeles and San Francisco market, and a bottle shop in Washington D.C. The winery address is 1700 Paseo Robles, Paso Robles 93446.

In our Wines & Vineyards directory, we found that Greg Rheder was the winemaker at the Bear's wine. "Proudly 1980." All that flavor: "such a young wine." An early morning call the next day direct...
On the way to Beoeger Winery

Wineries take root in the hills

By John Bertheussen
The Modesto Bee
Contact: (209) 516-3900, ext. 12

A trip to California is great wine country today may be more trouble than it's worth. The average visitor, when he can find gasoline for a trip to the Napa and Sonoma valleys, will face hours of traffic and through wine-tours, with machines like postmen by bored California students it is easy to take in the best wineries in a day or stay for a weekend, spreading the sight in Jackson or Sutter Creek or Placerville or another Rush town.

Villayards stretch from Apple Hill above Placerville-aerortheast, to the south and into the Shenandoah Valley, a lush area above Plymouth in Amador County where wines and caviar grace in high-depth areas and the roofs of a major wine industry are beginning to spread over gently rolling hills. Wineries come an even larger area.

The Shenandoah Valley now supports 73 wineries, the best known, perhaps D'Aquisto, a family operation that is one of the oldest continuously operating wineries in California. Two more wineries are scheduled to open this year.

You can findnescornered coast buildings or narrow Russian cas- des shows huge redwood tanks, a few of which are only a few years old. Some of these buildings are now open to the public for wine tasting.

The area is noted for its exquisite wines with style and fruit, and particularly the cava. It is also a popular area for the weekend.

For a more complete list of wine-tours of the Villayards and other areas of California, please see the Wine Institute's self-addressed, stamped, business-size envelope at the front of this story. It contains a tear guide with county-by-county maps and detailed road instructions.

The writer is a member of The Sacramento Bee's capital staff.

Wineries take root in the hills

Noteworthy is the different winery by grapes from the South Bay area, with about 80 percent in California. But what a wine is also acquiring a reputation.

It's a good idea to call these wineries before driving toward the mountain. If you don't know what to expect, you'll likely find the road not on a chart or working his fields. And there will be no one in your tasting sample.

But if you do call ahead, you will receive personalized service and a real appreciation of how wine is made and the love and sweat that go into it.

A recent tour, made at the height of the peak season, showed the problems. It included a tour of Columbia in the Shenandoah Valley, a tour of the Villayards and a tour of the sonoma Valley.

Some of the wines were aged — spiced and spiked to appeal to a wide range of palates. The tour included a visit to a winery in the Sonoma Valley, a tour of the Villayards, a tour of the Shenandoah Valley, and a tour of the sonoma Valley.

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Mead on Wine

By Jerry D. Mead

Superb Wines From El Dorado

NEW WINERIES proliferate in California at about the same rate as new discos records, and have a seemingly similar success rate. Will it be a hit or a miss? The popular musical question of the '80s seems perfectly suited to the many new labels that continue to appear in wine shops across the country.

It is my job to try to keep up with new releases and new wineries, but the truth of the matter is that it just isn’t possible.

I have a “grapevine,” if you will, that includes retail clerks, consumers, producers and even other wine journalists, and all of them say they can’t keep up with all the new wineries, much less all the new releases from long-established producers.

Usually, when I taste a line of wines, I find one or two that are pretty special, a few that are ordinary and a smattering of awful that are either mediocre or disagreeable.

But it is rare that you find a line of wines — either new or old — that I would characterize as both great and interesting. It has always been my policy to tout readers on wines that I feel exceptional, and warn them of wines that definitely should be avoided. Since I can’t write about every wine I taste, the inside word will have to take care of itself.

With that lengthy lead-in out of the way, I am about to tell you about the most exciting new line of wines I have tasted in a very long time. And I do mean the entire line: well, almost. Every wine I have tasted is worth recommending and they are all exceptional wines. It is an exceptional value.

BOEGER WINERY, in the Apple Hill district near Placerville, is exciting for more reasons than one. Not only are the wines generally superb, but they come from a new appellation, El Dorado County, that should eventually earn a reputation of the equal of such names as Napa, Sonoma, Mendocino, and Amador.

Operated by a husband and wife team, Greg and Susan Boeger, the winery is a small, but high-quality operation that is only just getting under way for expansion. Next year, they hope to produce 12,000 gallon cases, and they have both unplanted vineyard land and a winery build completed in 1980.

Greg is a U.C. Davis graduate, and the winemaking shows it by the prices of many of its peers. Fermented totally dry in small oak cooperage, and served in a clean, crisp, but very varietal wine, the finish is long with plenty of oak coming through. Great even better when uncorked for about 30 minutes, assuming you can wait that long.

There is a little point in discussing the 1979 Cabernet Sauvignon, as I understand it is already sold-out. For future reference, though, the wine is very drinkable in the youth. Stu Stimson of California Watch for the 1977 to be released.

One of the best values of all is a protectively named red wine, a blend of a half dozen different red grape varieties, "Hangtown Red" sells for $2.75, and is a blend of Carignana, Malvar, Petit Sirah, Barbera, Cabernet Sauvignon and Ruby Cabernet. The Italian and Rhone varietals seem to predominate, and the wine comes off as a sort of fruity, highly drinkable Petit Sirah with a touch of spice and lots of fruit.

Hangtown Red is as a daily companion to pasta or burgers.

Why call the generic white Chablis? Instead of "Hangtown White." I never figured out, but the under $3 price tag combined with the blend that features Chardonnay. Grey Riesling, French Colombard and Semillon, makes for another outstanding value. Fruit aroma jumps out of the glass; there is more body in the flavor; pleasantly dry finish. If for the dinnertime. I suspect, that caused my fellow tasters to imagine Chardonnay in the blend.

Hangtown Pinot Noir is one of the best in the state, but readers should be forewarned that it is not typical of what usually appears under that name. The touch of sweetness that is so common in the state’s Pinot Noir will not be found here. Fermented bone dry and aged for two months in new oak, this is a pretty pinot’s Chardonnay than an after-dinner sipper. If the price of Chardonnay has you worried, buy this wine by the case. Baffled retails it $3.50.

As an observation, not a complaint, really, the Chardonnay would be more appropriately packaged in a Burgundy bottle than in the tall flint bottle in which it actually appears. The flint shape promises sweetness that isn’t there.

The only wine in the Boeger line with which I found fault was the 1978 Johannisberg Riesling. While the wine is sound and well made, it is finished totally dry and rather high in alcohol. As a result, there is a touch of bitterness in the finish, a common fault of Rieslings when finished dry, at least in California. Hopefully, the 1979 vintage will find the wine with a percent or two of residual sugar, and an equal drop in alcohol.

Salt in a pound of Boeger wines are currently restricted primarily to California, and mostly at the best specialty wine shops. That should change, with distribution expanding, possibly as early as spring 1980.

Those having trouble finding Boeger wines may write for information directly to the winery at: 1780 Carson Road, Placerville, Calif. 95667.
Via The Grapevine: New Wines

**FIRST AGAIN** — More than once, readers of this column have been notified of new premium wineries, entering the market, allowing them to get in on the ground floor for new releases. On several occasions it has provided rare opportunity to appropriate very special wines.

Santa Cruz Mountain Vineyards and Long Vineyards, for example, were first written about here and both now have waiting lists a mile long. Finding a bottle of either of these at a retail outlet is virtually impossible. There simply isn’t enough to go around.

Rocky Ridge Winery, 14500 Del Oro Rd., Denver, Colo.

**Mom ’n’ pop wineries gone**

New wineries tugging for attention

**NEW WINERIES ARE SPRINGING UP in California like mushroom in a forest after a rainy spell. Here are a dozen names which may be unfamiliar today but have interesting stories tomorrow. When scanning the labels of your wine merchant, or catching the tingle on the road when you’re winning a few quizzes.**

In Napa, the Robert Joseph Winery, Cavebird Cellars, Voss Winery, Raymond Vineyard & Cellars in Sonoma County, Landscape, Ch. de Babes, River Road Vineyards in Monterey County, Chateau Vineyard and, in the Paso Robles area, Estrella River Vineyard and Montezuma Winery.

You can be expected to hear about these, too, but find it in the sun, each will be tugging for attention and may expect to bear more news of these newcomers to the field.

**EACH HAS MADE MORE than a small investment. Gone are the days of the mom and pop winery, when, with a few timers and a few barrels, you could be in the wine business. No more. Today, the arithmetic starts with five figure sums, and before the first bottle arrives in the market, this capital-intensive endeavor is nowhere near finished.

For the visitor, it seems an idyllic life. For the realist involved in the day-to-day, season to season, year to year labor in field and cellar, these beautiful red wines are no more palatable.**

Sylvania, unshelled and uncrystallized, rests on still a wine with a completely uncommercialism.

We put them aside to see from their digging journey from the vine to the flask. We have only two bot- tles of wine, a Cabernet Sauvignon and a Zinfandel, from a wine with a completely uncommercialism.

They were made ready to see if their fullness will give them a try. The Zinfandel has been brought up to this level and will be cellared back for at least another five years. The wine is now ready for tasting. In Paso Robles, being as easy to sample as the famous gold rush era area, so we expectations were not without some hope for future.

**THE FRAGRANCE** that rose from the glass of this Boeger 1975 El Dorado County Zinfandel, was so strong it was like a warm, honeyed Zinfandel experience. The most seductive ripe berry perfumed had been released from that wine. Several minutes before we even tasted the wine, it was almost enough to just inhale that wonderful berry fragrance. As we take our Zinfandel, we have been made aware of this wine.

An early morning call the next day did not call this to be a "novice." Greg Boeger’s wines were described by the famous Napa Valley wine family, the Boeger family, whose wines have been known to us.

Greg M., graduate in viticulture and enology from University of California at Davis, we often say, "The little taste that tarts are when they are passing." It’s a privilege to be able to share such good news about good wines with you.

**The wine connoisseur**

Robert Lawrence Balzer

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**Mead on Wine**

By Jerry D. Mead

**By Peter Mar} Vineyard, Rl. 1, Box 404, Paso Robles, Calif. 93448

**HE CONSERVATION DEAD? I really enjoyed that period of time during California's recent drought when restaura- ,"nt's were conserving water by serving a 60% on request. No, I didn't see any clean glasses making little ponds in the table, no chlorine smell rolling up to distract from food and wine, and I could feel good about doing my part for conservation.

With all the talk about saving energy, I can't understand why restaura- ,nts here have gone back to the automatic service of water. Not only are tons of water wasted, but unmeasurable amounts of energy is wasted washing unclean glasses. Not of the energy involved in fixing the leak in the most glasses contain, of the energy used to pump the water. It goes on and on.

Besides, from a practical viewpoint (the restaurant's), they would probably still pour water, mineral water, and other beakers if they didn't provide water in a matter of course.

**CAUTION — My next campaign may be to wear hanging labels placed on all wine glasses, faucets, etc.**

Since FHA and AAPP and a dozen other government agencies want to place warning labels on everything from wine to antifreeze, we have no choice but to follow their lead.

Water can be dangerous to your health, people have been known to drown in it.

Anything that can rust metal can't be good for you. Can't it?

**BEST BUY TIP — Santa Margherita**

Santa Margherita Pinot Grigio, a California...
WHAT CHEER — NEW WINERY OPENS TO PRAISE

BEST BUY WINERY — New wineries proliferate in California at about the same rate as new disco records, and have a seemingly similar success rate. "Will it be a hit or a miss?" the popular musical question of the fifties, seems perfectly suited to the many new labels that continue to appear in wine shops across the country.

It is my job to try to keep up with new releases and new wineries, but with the truth of the matter is that it just isn’t possible. I have a “grapevine”, if you’ll excuse the term, that includes retailers, consumers, producers and even other wine journalists, and still I can’t keep up with all the new wines, much less all the new releases from long-established producers.

Usually when I taste a new line of wines, I find one or two that are pretty special, several that are ordinary or average, and a few that are rather mediocre or miserable.

At a cruise, I try to tell you about the best and the worst, ignoring the in-betweens. It has always been my policy to tell readers on wine that I find exceptional, and warn them of wines that should definitely be avoided. Since I can’t write about every wine I taste, the middle ground will have to take care of itself.

With that being said, in out of the way, I am about to tell you about the most exciting new line of wines I’ve tasted in a very long time. And I do mean the entire line (well, almost). Every wine I’m about to recommend is not only an exceptional wine, it is an exceptional value.

BOEGE’R WINERY, in the Apple Hill district near Placerville, is excelling for more reasons than one. Not only are the wines generally superb, but they come from a new appellation, El Dorado County. That county recently earned the approval of the United States name as Napo Solo.

Best Buy Winemaker, Greg and Susan Bogner, the wine grower’s target is still small, about 6,000 gallons, but plants are already under way for expansion. Next year, they hope to produce 10,000 gallons, and they expect their new winery to be completed soon.

Bogner is a U.C. Davis graduate and the winemaking chores are his wife’s hand. The machine is for the wines, Bogner, it seems, has won a judgment of many of his peers. Fermented totally dry in small oak coopers, and infused with a lean, crisp, but very varietal wine, the finish is long with plenty of oak coming through. Get even better when it’s aged for about 30 months, announcing you can wait that long. There is little point in discussing the 1978 cabernet sauvignon, as it is already a sellout. For future reference, though, the Bogner wine that most impresses me, though, is 1978 “El Dorado County” sauvignon blanc. Blended to 30 percent semilion, and aged in oak cooperage, it is definitely not a light, fruity tune style. Relatively austere, but not lacking in fruit. Words like smoky, flinty, crisp and dry, come to mind. Two dozen overs, please, and another bottle of this wine. Another bargain, this one priced in the $5 range.

Bogner chardonnay, you’ll be pleased to hear, sells for about $6, and the price of many of its peers. Fermented totally dry in small oak cooperage, and infused with a lean, crisp, but very varietal wine, the finish is long with plenty of oak coming through. Get even better when it’s aged for about 30 months, announcing you can wait that long.

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Bogner’s winery is currently restricted primarily to California, and mostly of the best specialty shops. That should change, with government expanding, possibly as early as spring 1980.

Those having trouble finding Bogner wines may write for information directly to the winery at 1570 Caron Rd., Placerville, Calif. 95667.
You

only the first forbidden fruit

THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE

New brand truly shows promise

By Jack Masters

Amerindian Marthin discovered gold in the Sierra foothills in 1882, and a rush to mine it brought the Mother Lode. This area of fast-made fortunes was immediately filled by thousands of hopefuls who flocked to the town of El Dorado, in search of gold. Lucas Peak, another famous placer, was also opened up, and thousands more rushed to mine it.

However, the real gold rush came in 1897, when the York and San Francisco Mining Company opened the York and San Francisco Mine, located near present-day El Dorado. The mine produced large quantities of gold, and the town grew rapidly.

As the years went by, the gold rush faded, and the town was left to its own devices. Today, El Dorado is a quiet town, with a population of just over 3000 people. The town is known for its rich history, and is a popular destination for tourists and history enthusiasts.

In the above sentence, the word "gold" is misspelled as "goold."
Boeger and Sierra Vista Wineries win awards

Two El Dorado County wineries have received medals in the 1986 Orange County Fair commercial wine competition. Boeger Winery, run by Greg and Susan Boeger, were notified by Jerry Mead, syndicated wine columnist and chairman of the panel of judges of the competition, that they had won a gold medal for their 1977 Cabernet Sauvignon out of a field of 10 entries, and a bronze medal for their 1979 Zinfandel.

John and Barbara MacCready of Sierra Vista Winery, Pleasant Valley, received the same kind of notification—although a bit delayed. When they should have received word of their gold medal for their 1976 Zinfandel they were still in Orange County and didn’t receive word for a couple of days until they had sworn phone messages.

The Orange County Fair is one of the most important competitions for California wineries, with the results of the judging expected to be published in virtually all of the wine newsletters in the country, according to Boeger.

The awards received by Boeger and Sierra Vista wineries will bring national recognition to El Dorado County as a premium wine-growing region, according to the local grapegrowers, who have been striving for Boeger said.

There are approximately 106 acres of producing vineyards in El Dorado County today, and it is the local grapegrowers who have been doing a fine job of keeping our local vineyards productive, according to Boeger.

The MacCreadys, who have been in Pleasant Valley since 1976, planted 200 acres of zinfandel and 100 acres of cabernet sauvignon. They have harvested 100 acres of zinfandel and 100 acres of cabernet sauvignon. They have harvested 100 acres of zinfandel and 100 acres of cabernet sauvignon. They have harvested 100 acres of zinfandel and 100 acres of cabernet sauvignon. They have harvested 100 acres of zinfandel and 100 acres of cabernet sauvignon. They have harvested 100 acres of zinfandel and 100 acres of cabernet sauvignon. They have harvested 100 acres of zinfandel and 100 acres of cabernet sauvignon. They have harvested 100 acres of zinfandel and 100 acres of cabernet sauvignon. They have harvested 100 acres of zinfandel and 100 acres of cabernet sauvignon. They have harvested 100 acres of zinfandel and 100 acres of cabernet sauvignon. They have harvested 100 acres of zinfandel and 100 acres of cabernet sauvignon. 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El Dorado County wines win awards

By HAL SILLSMAN
Staff writer

The prime cup rested (over) for 31 Dorado County wines at the Amador County Fair, judging last week. Keeping this year's recent recognition of the county's vineyard products.

Two wineries, Boge and Sierra Vista, and one vineyard, Madrona, had wines which were highly acclaimed by guests of pre-eminence in the judging. This is the second year in which this cup has been awarded, and the judging process has been expanded to include more categories.

The contest attracted 21 wineries from the Mother Lode, including Amador, El Dorado and Calaveras counties. This was the first year that the Amador County Fair sponsored the event. The judges were selected from the county's most knowledgeable wine critics, including among others, Marco MacCready.

MacCready, a former judge in several wine competitions, has been instrumental in the growth of wine appreciation in the region.

The judges for this year's contest were:

1. Steve Wingo, owner of Boge Winery
2. Laura Viola, owner of Sierra Vista Winery
3. John Hall, partner in Madrona Vineyards

The winners were:

1. Boge Winery (Marco MacCready)
2. Sierra Vista Winery (Steve Wingo)
3. Madrona Vineyards (John Hall)

In related news, Marco MacCready notes that the county's wine industry has seen significant growth in recent years, with new wineries opening and existing ones expanding their production.

INSIDE
EID’s master plan...A-2
City’s historical district law...A-3
County schools budget...A-3
Cub reporters get top awards...A-3
Bennett parking problem...A-5

Wines

Judging at the Amador County Fair was done on the Danish system, Boge explained, where several wines of the same type are able to win gold medals if they score enough points. At a similar contest in Los Angeles, the Boge's 1979 Chardonnay was ranked third out of 51 Chardonnays in the state.

The wines were scored based on taste, aroma, and overall quality. The judges evaluated the wines on their ability to elicit the characteristics of the grape varietal they are made from.

Features Editor Leslie Bush has invited Steve Wingo, who won best of class at the 1979 Orange County Fair, to come to the Amador County Fair to judge the wines.

Results of the Orange County Fair will be published in virtual all the wine newsletters in the country, according to the Boge's.
The wine set

This gentleman wishes to be directed to our Wine Stamp window.

Zinfandel of the early '50's, Sister Horne, incidentally, also made a lovely, light Zinfandel from El Dorado County grapes, so known.

For the record, here are all the medal winners from the 1969 Amador County Fair:


Sauvignon Blanc: 1 - 1969 Sutter Home


The wine set

UNEMPLOYMENT
M - Z

FOOD STAMPS

San Francisco Chronicle

Look to the Sierra

By Harvey Steiman

Only a few viewers understand the landscape of the Sierra foothills out of San Francisco, in what has come to be known as the Mother Lode country. It is between the abandoned gold mines are also a few wineries. To date, neither the vineyards nor the wineries have made the splash that the Gold brought from the region. But give them time, give them space.

Vines have been cultivated here since before the Gold Rush. In fact, many of the Gold Rush miners, like separate Petering out, who planted vines to make wine and keep body and soul together. There was even a time around 1900 when El Dorado County alone, had more vineyards than either Napa or Sonoma. A sad state of affairs.

But except for a few Amador County Zinfandel, serious wine drinkers only recently have recognized the potential. The region is beginning a new chapter in its winery history. The speed with which Amador and Sierra counties, the Shoshone Valley, and the mines at Plymouth and Coloma are becoming increasingly similar to the wine-making techniques of Zinfandel drinkers.

Sister Horne's Vineyard in the Napa Valley was the first to exploit the character of Amador Zinfandel - berry aroma and flavors, high alcohol, wines of power. Sasquatch's vineyard, Duran Cellars recognized the potential in the late 1960s, having tasted a Zinfandel made by one winemaker Charlie Weers who was the late Harry Winery. It had been made from grape grown at the Shoshone Valley near Plymouth. Curt Hager Horne made some wine for his vineyard in the same vineyard. That wine, and subsequent vintages, put Amador County on the map.

Wineries with names like Temescal, Shenandoah, Roeger, Lodi, and Dock Yards have proved the generational promise of Zinfandel at the Mother Lode. The ability to make a wine in a style similar to those found throughout the Sierra Foothills. The wines are being made in the Sierra Foothills.

With virtually all the vineyard land in Napa County planted, very little growth and left in Napa; the search is on for new places to grow grapes for high

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With virtually all the vineyard land in Napa County planted, very little growth and left in Napa; the search is on for new places to grow grapes for high
The Gold Country wineries

By BRYNN PETERSON
Special to Breakaway

If you enjoy touring wineries and tasting their wares, but do not have the time to get up to the Napa Valley, here is a good solution. There are more than a dozen fine wineries which lie less than 10 miles east of here in historic Placer County.

Recently I chose eight of those wineries at random and made a one-day driving tour of the "gold country" wineries. These wineries are rapidly becoming famous for their rich and powerful Zinfandels. The Zinfandel grape seems to be perfectly matched for the climate in this region wise region.

Most of the wineries in El Dorado and Amador counties are tiny and ask that you please admit to their tasting rooms. I was able to show you around and share their tasteful creations.

I began the tour in Placerville at the Beeler winery, a large winery compared to most in the area. Here they have a cute tasting room and regular tasting hours. They are open Wednesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., and are located at 1750 Caesar Road. To get there, take Highway 49 east into Placerville and exit at the St. John's Flat Overpass. Go back under the freeway and you will see a mound of road signs. If you go to their wine shop, you will taste fresh, buttery Chardonnays at a very good price.

After visiting Beeler you may wish to stop in Placerville for an early lunch. There are dozens of good restaurants. I suggest the 1872 Grill, 304 Main St., for good Mexican food, where you are not sitting, and the New York Hotel for fine food, especially for lunch.

The Sierra Vista winery (4932 N. 4th St.) is near the Placerville Golf Course. The winery is run by two young men, and is open Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. From Highway 49, go north on 4th Street to the winery.

The new location for the Sierra Vista is very quiet and serene. The tasting room is set in a quiet area, and the winery is surrounded by beautiful trees. The winery is open Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Friday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Next stop is the Dry Point winery, which is located on Highway 49, just south of Placerville. The winery is open Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Friday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Dry Point is a small winery located on a quiet street in Placerville. The winery is open Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Friday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

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HISTORIC WINEGROWING

in

EL DORADO COUNTY

by

Charles L. Sullivan
Los Gatos, California

April 1980
HISTORIC WINE GROWING IN EL DORADO COUNTY

Although wine growing in California was fairly widespread in the coastal areas during the Spanish and Mexican periods prior to the American conquest, it was the discovery of gold in 1948 that actually brought viticulture and eventually winemaking to the Sierra foothills area. Foremost among the counties in which these activities developed in the 1850's was El Dorado County. In fact, so important did wine growing become in the 1860's and the early 1870's that some experts thought the county would eventually become as important as the most developed of the coastal counties. Actually, El Dorado County probably had more grape vines in 1860 than did Sonoma or Napa Counties. Disease and transportation problems, followed by Prohibition, precluded "El Dorado" reaching these heights, but for decades the area was counted among the most important in California wine growing.

The first grape vines here were probably planted near Coloma, south of Rescue, on Sweetwater Creek, perhaps as early as 1849, by a man named Stevens, 32 vines in all. These were expanded and in five years a German from Saxe-Weimer, Jacob Zentgraf, bought the property and by 1857 was producing about 2000 gallons of wine per year. In 1859, Zentgraf had built a little distillery and was selling his wines in Pennsylvania through his cousin in Johnstown, John Schiffhauser. The Zentgraf Winery was in production until the 1890's, when it burned down, but the walls were still standing in the 1960's. This winery was typical of winemaking operations in El Dorado County during the last half of the 19th century.

In 1855, the California Farmer reported about 3000 vines in the county, mostly Missions, but in the next few years as the placer mines gave out and the inhabitants looked about for profitable agricultural activities, many more vines were planted. By 1857, A. T. Taylor had 1650 vines near Placerville. B. F. McCormack was also an important grower, as were C. W. Robertson and Charles L. Ingalsbee near Coloma. By the end of the decade these tentative beginnings had expanded so that in the 1860 census about 800 acres of grapevines could be counted.

1 Ernest P. Peninou and Sidney S. Greenleaf. A Directory of California Wine Growers and Wine Makers in 1860. Berkeley, 1960. According to a report in the Sacramento Record 1874, the first vines in the Coloma area were planted in 1852.

2 California Farmer, November 9, 1855.

3 Alta California, July 9, 1857.
In the Coloma area by far the most important grower was Martin Alhoff. He and Robert Chalmers had built a hotel in Coloma in 1852 and had planted a vineyard, mostly to Catawba grapes to produce wine for the place. In 1860, Alhoff built a winery with lava rock from Granite Hill. He committed suicide in 1867 and Chalmers married his widow. Alhoff won awards for his white wines at the State Fair in 1860, 1861, and 1862. The Transactions of the State Agricultural Society also show prizes for red wines and brandies. It was thought for some years during the 1860's that his successes with Catawba and Isabella grapes for making white wines might indicate those eastern native hybrids as varieties best for winemaking in the cooler northern counties of California.

There were others in the Coloma area, Peter Calyer, Robert Clark, Charles Graves and Conrad Eitzell, all with good vineyards. Near Placerville, G. W. Foster was the chief grower. John L. Knight had a vineyard near Diamond Springs as did Ekin Smith. J. M. Woods was located around Mud Spring, as were several other small holders.

By 1863 there were 772,000 vines in El Dorado County, almost all in the foothills between the elevations of 1000 and 2800 feet. One of the most important of the winegrowers was located at Coloma, famed not for his viticulture, but from the fact that he had been the man who first discovered gold in 1848. He was James W. Marshall, who now spent his time growing vines and serving the area as a nurseryman. He spent the rest of his life here in this activity. By the 1870's, he had 75 varieties in his collection and had imported vines and cuttings from the east coast and from Europe to supply vineyardists in the area.

In 1866, the *Alta California* ran an article extolling El Dorado County as "undoubtedly the leading county in the Sierra wine business." This respected defender of the state's wine industry predicted that someday it might surpass even Sonoma County. The *Alta* was particularly impressed by the 30 acre spread of M. Foster at Placerville and the several vineyards around Diamond Springs, particularly those of E. M. Strout, D. Brooke and M. Snyder. H. B. Newell had a good 10 acre vineyard at Gold Hill. And the El Dorado Wine Company at El Dorado also had 10 acres in vines.

By now there were almost one and a half million vines in the county and the wine product was well over 200,000 gallons. There were also about 7000 gallons of brandy.

The next year at El Dorado the firm of Jackson and Weatherwax headed by C. T. Jackson, was making good enough wine to be able

4 See Peninou's analysis of the 1860 census reports.

5 *Alta California*, May 6, 1866
to establish a short lived depot in Chicago. In 1867, the Diamond Springs district alone made 50,000 gallons of wine. The El Dorado Wine Company, just up the road, was making over 20,000 gallons.\[6\]

The planting of the late 1860's came into full production in the early 1870's. By now a fairly large amount of the county's grape production was going down to the Sacramento Valley to be made into wine by the larger wineries there. Also, a large part of the production went into brandy making. There were no less than 40 commerical distilleries in the county in 1871, mostly small operations. Still, planting continued for a couple of years and although growers complained about prices and markets, there was no talk of pulling up El Dorado vineyards as there was in some of the wine growing areas in the Central Valley and coastal valleys.

By then the Robert Chalmers operation at Coloma had become the dominant wine interest in the area and certainly the most colorful.\[7\] In 1871, the Pacific Rural Press ran an article praising his "mammoth wine cellars" three stories high. He now had 85 acres of vines and also bought widely in the Coloma area, making about 40,000 gallons of wine that season and 15,000 gallons of brandy. His winery capacity was listed as 60,000 gallons. He also made several types of fruit wine.\[8\]

Within three years his vineyard had expanded to 110 acres. His wines and his famed Catawba bitters had found an eastern market and in 1878, he built his famed Vineyard House Hotel in Coloma, an imposing structure that is still standing. By the end of the decade his position in the local industry is best indicated by the results of the competition at the El Dorado Agricultural Association's tenth annual fair in Placerville. Chalmers won awards for the best red, white and sweet wines, and for the best port and sherry. He won special awards for his Angelica, Burgundy, Green Hungarian, sweet Muscat and for his flavored brandies and cordials.\[9\] C. G. Carpenter of Diamond Springs was also developing a good reputation as was Philip Kramp of the same district. In that same year, he won awards for the best brandy and the best sparkling wines.

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\[6\] *Alta California*, December 7, 1867; August 19, 1867; *California Farmer*, May 28, 1867

\[7\] For a remarkable story of this man and his wife see "The Coloma Ghosts", *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 15, 1971.

\[8\] *Pacific Rural Press*, November 11, 1871

\[9\] *Transactions of the California State Agricultural Society*, Sacramento, 1880.
Later in the 1870's another analysis of wine growing in the area appeared, this time in the *Sacramento Record*, titled "Viniculture in the Foothills." The mining camp at Coloma was dead, but the vineyards and orchards were in full bloom. Chalmers was listed as the predominant element in the Coloma area, with 14 others listed as having vineyards of at least five acres of vines. Around Gold Hill, Mr. Veerkamp had 40 acres in vines; there were nine other growers there of note. Michigan Flat had five important vineyardists, George Williams the largest, with 25 acres. And around Uniontown, there were nine growers with ten acres or more. There were a total of 666 acres of wine grapes in these districts. There were also about 100 acres around Coulterville, 15 at Garden Valley, 20 around Kelsey, and 30 at Georgetown.

The Record's article cited a problem that would grow in the next fifteen years. Growers needed another large winery or two for their grapes. Chalmers could not take enough and the other few small ones still left a surplus that had to be hauled down into the Sacramento Valley or made up into brandy right there.

The decade of the 1880's opened with the establishment of the Board of State Viticultural Commissioners, a body that took a special interest in each wine growing area of the state. The entire area of the Sierra foothills was termed the El Dorado District, a clear indication of the continuing importance of that county. George G. Blanchard, the District's first commissioner, indicated in 1881 that there were 1150 acres of wine grapes in the county producing about 2500 tons of grapes per year, a relatively low yield for these days, indicating the amount of dry farming taking place in the vineyards of the foothill area. There were sixteen grape varieties listed, with the old Mission grape still in first place, but with some varieties of a better sort, particularly the Zinfandel and the White Riesling. He noted that the planting boom was now over and the phylloxera had been found in the county. The next year the county's wine product was about 230,000 gallons with about 20,000 gallons of brandy.

In 1884, the *San Francisco Merchant* listed the growers and winemakers in the county. There were now 11 growers in the Coloma area with the Chalmers Winery and that of E. D. Endries, the chief producers. There were 14 growers around Diamond

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10. Transactions of the California State Agricultural Society, Sacramento, 1875, pp. 334-337, copying the article from the *Sacramento Record*.

Springs. C. B. Carpenter had a good winery there, but the Kramp Brothers Winery had taken the lead in the district and would soon pass up the Chalmers operation as it declined after his tragic death. James R. Skinner was the chief winemaker in Green Valley. There were still seven growers around Placerville and three at Gold Hill.12

The number of wine grapes here grew in the 1880's, following the pattern of the rest of the state and by 1888 the State Board of Equalization reported 1715 acres of grape vines. From this point on there was little growth in the county's viticultural product or acreage. Each year, more and more grapes went down to the Sacramento Valley to be made up into wine and brandy. The tradition of high quality in El Dorado continued, but gradually little wine or brandy was made save for local consumption. In 1890, only 60,000 gallons were produced.

After the turn of the century, there was some planting of wine grapes in El Dorado County, as was the case in most of the state. A regular planting boom was taking place in the larger established areas, since wine grape prices had stabilized and were advancing while the industry itself had ended a period of horrible cutthroat competition. Nevertheless, not much wine was made in the county except to slake the thirst of local folk. Most grapes were still being exported to the valley. In 1908, the county had a high for that period of 1770 acres of wine grapes. But as Prohibition approached, the vineyard acreage declined steadily. By 1922, there were only about 500 acres of wine grapes in the county. Much of the production now went into the barrels of local people who converted the local product into homemade wine. Most of the vineyards still in production were concentrated around Placerville, Shingle Springs, Latrobe and Georgetown.13 Prohibition brought many interesting legal and illegal activities to the Sierra foothills.

Toward the end of the dry years there were still about 600 acres of wine grapes in the county, with John A. Winkelmann of Placerville the leading wine grower.14 But viticulture declined steadily in the 1930's. By 1936, there were only 339 acres of wine grapes in the county and no wineries in operation.15

After World War II, there was a residual acreage of wine grapes in El Dorado County. But only 74 acres could be counted in

12 *San Francisco Merchant*, November 21, 1884.
13 *Wines & Vines*, May, 1922.
1954 and this total declined steadily until there were but 11 in 1966. From then on the total increased gradually to 33 in 1971 and jumped to 134 in 1974. In 1978 there were 190 acres of the following varieties:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Acres</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zinfandel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cabernet Sauvignon</td>
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<td>Barbera</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Merlot</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petite Sirah (Durif)</td>
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<td>Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chenin Blanc</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chardonnay</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Riesling</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semillon</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey Riesling</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
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