

Vineyard Open House Quick Reference

Objective of event:

To foster communication and positive relationships between Napa County vintners and growers and their neighbors.

Date of event:

Saturday, April 27th
3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Locations

- ✓ American Canyon: Nord Coast Vineyard Service - Green Island Rd.
Contact: Julie Nord
- ✓ Carneros: Cuvaision Vineyard/Walsh Vineyard Mgt. - Duhig Road/Hwy. 12/121
Contact: Martin Mochizuki
- ✓ Napa North: Sterling/Mumm vineyard - corner of Oak Knoll and Hwy. 29.
Contact: Vince Bonotto
- ✓ Napa South: Robert Sinskey Vineyards - Brown's Valley
Contact: Kirk Grace
- ✓ Napa East: William Hill Winery – 1761 Atlas Peak Road, Napa
Contact: Glenn Salva
- ✓ Napa West: Renteria Vineyard Mgt. - corner of Redwood and Dry Creek Roads
Contact: Oscar Renteria
- ✓ Yountville: Napa Wine Co. - corner of Yountville Cross Road and Yount Mill Road
Contact: Sheldon Parker
- ✓ St. Helena/Rutherford: Beringer - York Creek vineyard
Contact: Bob Steinhauer
- ✓ Pope Valley: St. Supery - Hardister Ranch.
Contact: Josh Anstey
- ✓ Calistoga: Site located on Hwy. 29, before Tubbs Lane
Contact: Vince Arroyo

Vineyard Open House **Helpful Hints for Communication**

Before the event

- Send a personal event invitation to your neighbors. A template will be provided to each site host so you can customize the invitation flyer with your specific site information.
- Better yet, make a personal call or hand deliver an event flyer.
- Invite community leaders, including teachers, council members, and business owners with whom you are acquainted to attend the event.
- If appropriate, post flyers at local stores and gathering places.

Day of Event

- Introduce yourself and speak clearly and loudly.
- When sharing information, explain and be specific. People want to know what, how, why and when things are happening in the vineyard. Once people understand the reasoning and the timing, the fear or concern is often dispelled (see Talking Points).
- If you are unable to provide an answer a question posed by a guest, simply say, "I don't know, but someone will get back to you with an answer." Event coordinators will be on hand to get guest contact information and will follow up with answers to such questions shortly after the event.
- Consider having your vineyard manager and other workers on hand to provide person-to-person communication with neighbors. This helps put a face on the industry.
- Give out your business cards to neighbors.
- Listen. Sometimes it is the most valuable thing you can do.
- Don't forget to ask questions as well, and use this opportunity to get to know your neighbors.
- Bring wine to share – especially if it comes from the vineyard site featured during the event. *One case should be more than sufficient.* This will further enhance the connection your neighbor makes to the vineyard and will add a nice personal touch to your presentation.
- Relax and have fun!

General Good Neighbor Communication

- Follow up and respond in a timely manner. If someone calls with a question or concern, return the phone call within a day. Often people just want to hear an apology if you've made a mistake, or an explanation if they don't understand what is going on in your vineyard.
- Accommodate simple requests. Try to work out a compromise if a neighbor has a simple request.
- Don't make promises you can't keep. If you can't fulfill a request, just let the neighbor know that you are sorry, and why it is not possible.
- Try to notify your neighbors in advance of any operations that may cause concern or interest (e.g. sulfur applications, harvesting, work that will create dust). Let them know for how long they can expect the work to continue. Communicate with them also regarding changes in scheduled operations and let them know why (e.g. it was too windy, too wet, etc.). This reinforces your willingness to communicate with them and your commitment to caring for our natural resources.
- Lower noise levels when possible (e.g. limit number of tractors in one field at a time; test new equipment for noise levels before purchasing; keep equipment in safe and proper working order; have employees park cars away from residential areas and talk quietly during late night/early morning hours; fill equipment tanks away from neighborhoods).
- Consider inviting neighbors close in proximity to your vineyard(s) and/or winery to pre- or post-harvest activities or events. A pre-harvest effort subtly lets them know that a period of intense vineyard activity is approaching and they will perhaps be more understanding. A post-harvest activity is a great way to include them and to show your appreciation.
- Your neighbors can be your biggest headaches or your biggest fans. Most neighbor conflicts arise out of lack of knowledge. There are many benefits to a simple, personal communication from you.

Vineyard Open House Talking Points and Information Guidelines

These talking points are merely meant to serve as a guideline to the information you will be sharing. These are some of the key points that event guests should understand at the end of the day. In addition, there will be NVVA, NVGGA, and Agricultural Commissioner staff members on hand at each site to assist guests with questions and information.

1. Share your **BACKGROUND, PERSPECTIVES** and **EXPERIENCES**. This information is interesting and important to your neighbors and helps personalize the experience.
2. Briefly describe **YOUR BUSINESS AND OPERATION** such as how many acres you own/farm and the various locations of your vineyards. Talk about the varieties produced, where you sell your wine (especially locally), and any other information pertinent to your business. If you are a vineyard management company – explain what that is.
3. Share some of the **CHALLENGES** of running a winery and/or a vineyard? Conversely, share some of the **MOST FUN or BEST** aspects of the business?
4. Discuss your own **VINEYARD PRACTICES** and the **WHY's** of these practices. Include information about the timing of your pesticide/material applications; equipment you use, etc. Use the **SEASONS** as your guide – share what you do throughout the year.
5. Consider bringing along some of the **COMMONLY USED VINEYARD TOOLS/EQUIPMENT** for guests to see and touch. Explain the uses.
6. Discuss general **WINE INDUSTRY PRACTICES** that may be confusing for the public or those of which they may not be aware (for example, why we harvest at night; the careful way in which we apply sulfur and other materials).
7. Explain **COMMON INDUSTRY TERMS** and what they mean (e.g. Brix). This makes community members feel like a part of the experience and they will be proud to share their knowledge with others in the future.
8. Discuss how you handle the **PROXIMITY OF RESIDENTIAL AREAS TO YOUR VINEYARD PROPERTIES**. If applicable, explain how you have changed or modified your operations to be more sensitive to neighbors.
9. Discuss **WHAT IS BEING DONE** by you and by other Napa Valley growers to encourage and practice **SUSTAINABLE FARMING (e.g. cover crops, IPM), WATERSHED RESTORATION, HABITAT DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE** as well as the reasons and benefits of these practices.
10. Prepare to discuss the **AGRICULTURAL PRESERVE** and what it means to the industry and the community.
11. You may be asked about the **GLASSY WINGED SHARPSHOOTER** and **PIERCE'S DISEASE**. Be prepared to discuss why the GWSS is a concern in our area and what PD does to a vine.
12. Brush up on the **FARMWORKER HOUSING** issue in case you are asked about it.

DID YOU KNOW?

Facts about the Napa Valley wine industry that may surprise you

◀ OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION ▶

While it may appear to the casual observer that Napa County is bursting with grape vines, the truth is only eight percent of Napa County is planted in vineyards and less than three percent remains suitable for grape planting. Napa County encompasses 485,120 acres in total and just 40,016 acres are planted in vineyards. In 1968, Napa Valley vintners and others in the community had the forethought to preserve open space and prevent future over-development of 30,000 acres by enacting the nation's first Agriculture Preserve. Since its adoption, not one acre of land has been removed from the preserve. In addition, local landowners have placed over 11,000 acres of agricultural land in the Land Trust of Napa County, ensuring their land will never be developed. Another 16,000 acres are protected under the Williamson Act, a program that provides incentives to keep land in agriculture production and open space.

◀ SUSTAINABLE FARMING ▶

Napa Valley vintners and growers are at the forefront of sustainable farming practices and innovations, including those that address the responsible use of pesticides. The Napa Valley Vintners Association supports the Napa Sustainable Winegrowers Group – a group dedicated to promoting sustainable farming practices including natural farming, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), pesticide reduction or elimination and, restoration of natural habitats on vineyard properties. Interestingly, the “pesticide” most commonly used in Napa Valley is sulfur. Sulfur, an organic fungicide, is used to control mildew and rot in fruits and ornamental plants. Sulfur is a natural compound found in mineral form in both aquatic and soil environments, and is certified for use in organic farming. It is important to note that the use of pest control products does not necessarily mean exposure. To protect themselves, their families and the environments in which they live and work, farmers and farm workers must conform with strict precautionary measures as specified on each product label, as required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the California Department of Pesticide Regulation. In fact, California maintains the highest standards for pest control in the nation. As a community, Napa Valley vintners and growers support the reduction, and whenever possible, the elimination of chemical pesticides and synthetic fertilizers. Between 1999 and 2000, pesticide use in Napa County decreased by 10%. In addition, use of pesticides other than sulfur decreased by 40% during that same period. The Napa Valley Vintners Association is currently working with other industry groups and the environmental community to develop standards for vineyard planting and operations, which would qualify for “Green Certification.” The purpose of the Napa Green Certification Program is to develop a voluntary program where Napa Valley grape growers can participate in a “farm planning” process that will enhance the watershed and restore habitat with sustainable agriculture while addressing local, state and federal regulations.

◀ **FARMWORKER HOUSING** ▶

We recognize how vital farmworkers are to our industry. Many migrant workers stay with family members or friends during the harvest season. However, many require temporary shelter while they are working in the Valley. The Napa Valley Vintners Association is working actively with others in the agricultural and housing communities, as well as the County of Napa, to provide additional housing for both permanent and seasonal farm workers. Recently, the Napa Valley wine industry raised money through a voluntary assessment to address immediate housing needs. A portion of these funds was used to purchase twelve yurts, which are stable, comfortable and mobile structures. The yurts provided much needed housing for the 2001 harvest. Additionally, Napa Valley vintners worked with state lawmakers, sponsoring legislation to create a permanent assessment on Napa County vineyard land. Proceeds will fund continuing housing needs for migrant farmworkers in our valley. The local economy depends in part on the skill and dedication of seasonal farmworkers – it's important to us that they are treated well. The industry also worked with the County to commission a reliable study to help define the amount of housing needed and the best locations for housing so we can better plan for the future. The Napa Valley Vintners Association, through the Napa Valley Wine Auction, has dedicated more than \$2 million to local organizations to fund affordable housing projects, including those that house seasonal farm workers.

◀ **WATERSHED HEALTH AND MANAGEMENT** ▶

Napa County vintners and farmers are committed to preserving the health of the local watershed. Several growers who are located near creeks and streams have formed watershed stewardship groups comprised of neighbors working together to restore and/or maintain the health of their watershed. Members of the winegrape community, other environmentalists, and county officials are working toward implementing the recommendations of the Watershed Task Force in the form of new conservation regulations. These regulations will go even farther than the historic Hillside Ordinance (enacted in 1991 to prevent erosion), by including provisions for habitat and native plant maintenance. Most growers in Napa Valley use natural methods of erosion control, such as cover crops to reduce dust and runoff and to preserve topsoil. Vineyards and surrounding open space provide a natural habitat for a variety of wildlife species and many growers invite birds, including owls and hawks, into their vineyards by installing special protective bird boxes. The birds of prey are a natural control for rodent and pest populations in and around the vineyards.

◀ **GLASSY WINGED SHARPSHOOTER** ▶

While the State of California enacted emergency regulations to stop the spread of the GWSS, it is the consensus of the Napa Valley wine industry that these regulations do not go far enough. As a result, Napa County has enacted the toughest regulations in the state. One of the most significant reasons for these tougher regulations is so that we are never put in the position of having to utilize pesticides to combat the glassy winged sharpshooter. The Napa Valley plan was developed by the Glassy Winged Sharpshooter Action Team -- the Napa County Agricultural Commissioner, the wine industry, the nursery industry, and environmental groups. As a testament to the wine industry's commitment to excluding the GWSS, in 2001 the NVVA sponsored state legislation that will allow a special assessment on vineyard land in Napa County. Funds from this industry driven assessment will help fund exclusion and inspection efforts. Exclusion of the pest, along with detection as the first line of defense, is the top priority.

◀ **WATER CONSERVATION** ▶

Water is the lifeblood of any agricultural crop, including the wine grapes of Napa Valley. Our vintners view local groundwater as a precious natural resource, to be used wisely and efficiently. By using a variety of modern tools, including software programs, vintners are able to analyze irrigation patterns and monitor local climate to ensure the best, most efficient use of local water. In addition, water management science and innovation, such as drip irrigation and micro-sprinkler systems, help ensure ongoing water conservation by Napa's growers.

◀ **GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY** ▶

Napa Valley vintners are dedicated to the community. The Napa Valley Wine Auction, first held in 1981, is the world's most successful wine charity event with all of the proceeds staying within Napa County. Today, auction-goers from across the United States and a growing number of international guests travel to the Napa Valley each June to participate in the gala weekend. Yet, the heart of the auction remains rooted in the concept of neighbors helping neighbors. In 1999, the NVVA committed \$3 million in Wine Auction Health Care Funds for a new \$8 million health center in Napa to provide a centralized shared facility for local nonprofit agencies which serve the community. In 2001, the Napa Valley Vintners Association contributed \$7.2 million to 27 local non-profit programs and community organizations. Some of these include Healthy Mom's and Babies, Clinic Ole, Garden Haven/Adult Day Care, Sister Anne's Dental Clinic, Hospice of Napa Valley, Boys and Girls Club, Matrix, Nuestra Esperanza, and Napa Valley Community Housing. Through the auction, the NVVA has donated more than \$37 million to Napa County health care, youth development and affordable housing organizations over the past 21 years.



For further information about the Napa Valley wine industry or the Napa Valley

Vintners Association please visit our Web site at www.napavintners.com