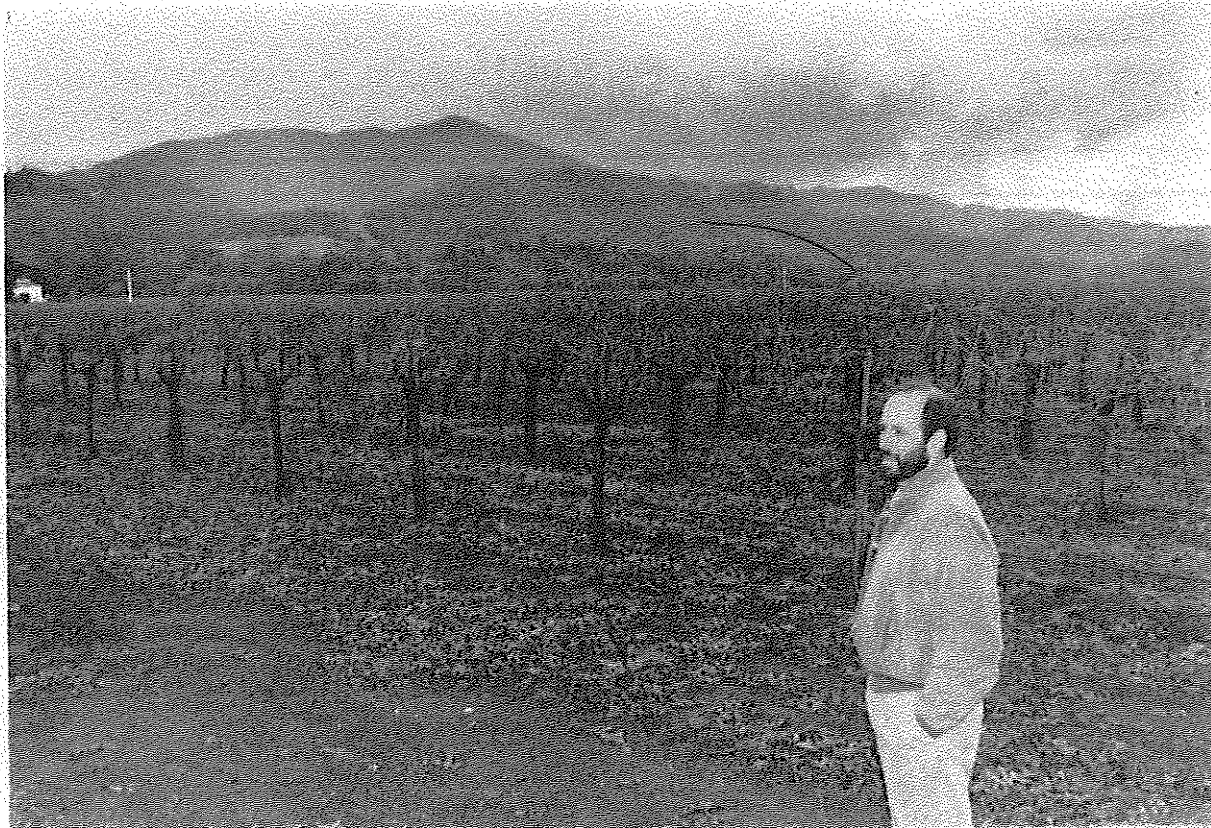


Taking over at To-Kalon



Andy Beckstoffer bought a part of the historic To-Kalon vineyards at Oakville — a purchase that now gives him more than 1000 acres of Napa Valley vineyards. (Star photo by Chuck Stefanetti)

A 90 acre parcel of the historic To-Kalon vineyards off Highway 29 by Oakville Cross Road has been bought by Andrew Beckstoffer, whose Napa Valley holdings now exceed 1000 acres and make

him, according to the industry, the largest non-winery vineyard owner in the county.

Beckstoffer declined to say how much he paid Beaulieu Vineyard for the property.

"When we found that we could add this, we just made sure we did it," he said at the property the other day. "It's a jewel we just couldn't pass up."

The parcel is part of the To-Kalon vineyard started in the 1870s by Hamilton Crabb, a contemporary of the Beringer brothers, Charles Krug, Tiburcio Parrott, and Gustave Niebaum.

Press reports of the time credit To-Kalon wines for startling Europeans and bringing some of the first serious

worldwide recognition of Napa grapes and wines.

Beckstoffer said he hopes to continue to supply Beaulieu with grapes, but also looks forward to selling some grapes to smaller wineries in the valley.

"Many of them have never had the opportunity to deal with fruit like this," he said. "It will be interesting to see what sort of personal wines come out of it."

Phylloxera is present in the vineyard, Beckstoffer said, and he expects to replant over the next ten years — 100 percent to cabernet.

The historic parcel is on the west side of Highway 29 at Oakville, just south of Robert Mondavi.