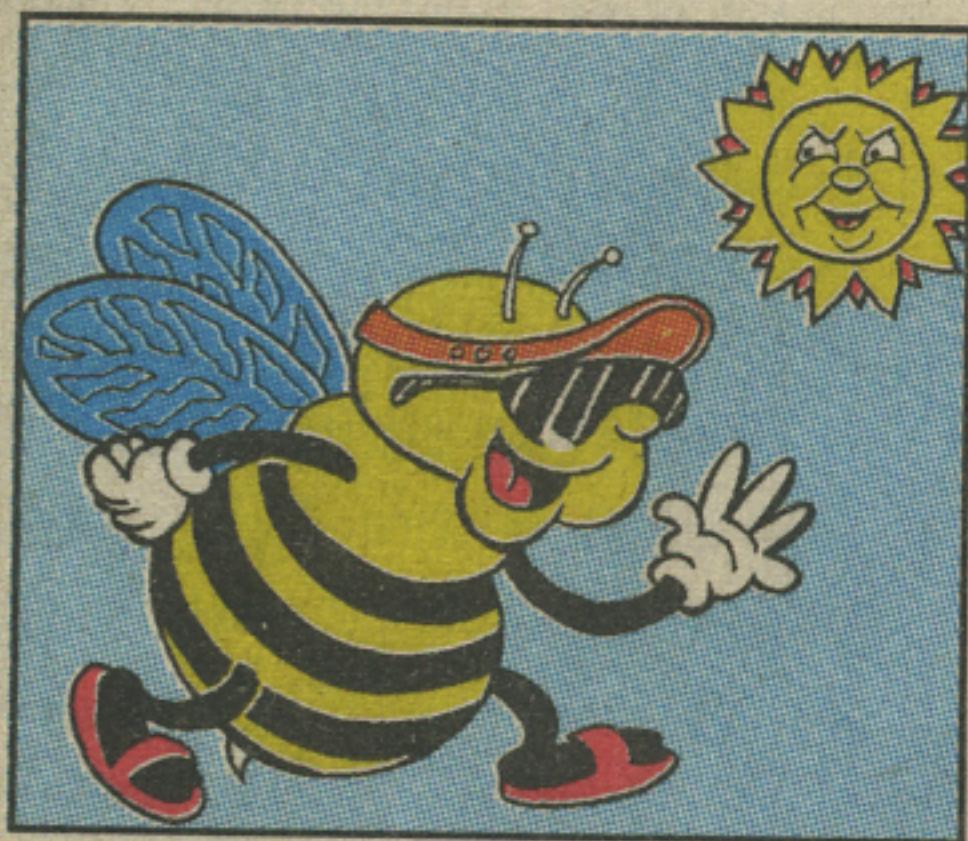


Lake County RECORD-BEE

50 Cents
263-5636 • 994-0106

Saturday
March 18, 2000

WeatherBee



Sunny and warm.
High 76, low 44

Beckstoffer emphasizes quality

Wine grape growers urged to market crop

Jim Shock
Record-Bee staff

KELSEYVILLE — "Quality is the only safeguard. Not just of the grape but the image of the wine," Andy Beckstoffer

advised diners at the annual Lake County Winegrape Growers meeting Thursday.

Beckstoffer, among the 25 largest grape growers in California, is developing the 'Amber Knolls' property between Kelseyville and Lower Lake. He has plans to expand his contiguous holdings beyond the present 400-acre planting

south of Highway 29 several-fold.

"Quality is the only game in town," Beckstoffer told his fellow growers and others in the 200-member audience. "The demand for top quality is ever increasing," he said.

The speaker is identified as the largest seller of premium wine grapes in the North Coast area and the largest non-

winery owner of Napa Valley vineyards. More than 40 wineries compete for his fruit. The family holdings include 1,000 acres in the Napa Valley and 1,000 acres in Mendocino County.

Growing grapes is more than producing a crop he pointed out: "We are in a marketing business. If you grow you
See QUALITY, Page A16

CK PAGE

Lake County Record-Bee

Quality *From Page A1*

have to promote your appellation.

"Napa has successfully created an image for their grapes, the property value, and their perceived quality and it spreads quality over the area," he said.

"Sustainability is necessary for success. To be economically feasible it has to be environmentally sensitive and socially responsible. To be viable you have to participate in the economy.

"The Lake County (grape)

commission does a great job. The supervisors here give more support than others and I appreciate the hospitality. They recognize and reward our contribution to the county.

"We're here to stay," Beckstoffer concluded.

The value of the quality of grapes was illustrated with the distribution of the California Department of Food and Agriculture final grape crush report for 1999 at the gathering.

For Sauvignon Blanc, the

wine grape for which Lake County is most famous, the price for ton of grapes ranged from \$800 to \$1,360 for vineyards producing 2.2 tons to 606.9 tons.

The highest return was reached on a crop of 52.4 tons.

Cabernet Sauvignon, the dominant red varietal, prices ranged from \$1,200 to \$2,300 a ton and production from 3 tons to 281 tons.

The highest value received covered 13.3 tons.