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Beckstoffer Vineyards Launches Groundbreaking Study on Climate Change and Cabernet

Trial Includes 3,600 Vines with Ten Cabernet Clones on Ten Rootstocks at Beckstoffer's Amber Knolls Vineyard

by Press Release

NOV 5, 2019

Kelseyville, Calif.—Andy Beckstoffer, perhaps the most recognized California grower of wine grapes, announced that Beckstoffer Vineyards, in partnership with University of California, Davis and Duarte Nursery, has launched a groundbreaking trial addressing climate change and improved grape quality for Cabernet Sauvignon at Beckstoffer's Amber Knolls Vineyard in the Red Hills of Lake County. University of California, Davis called the trial "the mother of Cabernet research trials."

"We have been growing cabernet sauvignon since the 1970s, and we are very proud to lead this trial, which will help improve Cabernet Sauvignon quality for years to come," said Andy Beckstoffer, owner and CEO of Beckstoffer Vineyards, which is providing the land and labor for the project.

Trial Details

The trial—Climate-smart Solutions for Cabernet Sauvignon Production—officially launched on August 15 and includes 3,600 vines with 10 cabernet sauvignon clones on 10 rootstocks, which will yield approximately 100 rootstock-clone combinations and will measure a staggering amount of data over the trial's length—approximately eight to ten years. Duarte Nursery is providing all of the planting material for the trial. "The diversity of rootstocks and clones chosen for this project includes some of the most modern cabernet sauvignon clones designed for high quality and for production," said John Duarte, nursery president.

"This trial will give us data that will help inform and improve growing practices for Cabernet Sauvignon across the state for the next two decades," said the trial's lead researcher, S. Kaan Kurtural, UC Cooperative Extension viticulture specialist at UC Davis Department of Viticulture and Enology and Oakville Experiment Station.

Designed to address resiliency in a changing climate, the trial will examine which combinations of clones and rootstock provide the best results with a focus on drought tolerance and water-use efficiency, as well as crop yield and grape quality. It will also look at canopy architecture, yield components, water relations, traditional fruit chemistries, secondary metabolites such as aroma, mouthfeel and color, as well as overall vine performance.


"The idea behind the trial is to gain further insights into the interactive effects of rootstock selections crossed with Cabernet clones and the impact of that on water relations and overall sustainability," said Clint Nelson, ranch manager for Beckstoffer Vineyards Red Hills. "The trial will give us an understanding of the synergistic relationship of clone and rootstock and what combination drives the best quality and production," he said.

Pedro Rubio, Beckstoffer Vineyards Red Hills general manager, said, "Lake County will definitely benefit, but the results from this trial will be critical for the whole industry."

Beckstoffer Vineyards Cabernet Commitment and Investment in the Red Hills of Lake County

For more than two decades, Beckstoffer Vineyards has been committed to proving that the Red Hills can produce ultra-premium Cabernet that rivals the best that California has to offer. The company first purchased land in the Red Hills in 1997, and in 2004 Andy Beckstoffer and a group of growers established the Red Hills AVA in 2004. Beckstoffer now owns more than 3,000 acres in the Red Hills, with 1800 planted to Cabernet Sauvignon.

About Beckstoffer Vineyards: Named "Napa's most powerful grape grower" by both the Wall Street Journal and Wine Spectator, Beckstoffer Vineyards was founded in 1970. Beckstoffer Vineyards is firmly rooted in the soil of Northern California's wine country, with Andy Beckstoffer playing an integral role in the evolution of the wine grape industry since 1970. Joined at the family-owned

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business by his son David in 1997, they share a common mission – to produce the highest quality grapes in Northern California that form the foundation for exceptional wines – and a combined passion for the land and viticulture expertise. Beckstoffer Vineyards first acquired land in the Red Hills in 1997, which after subsequent acquisitions, today totals nearly 3,000 planted acres across three vineyards: Amber Knolls Vineyard, Crimson Ridge Vineyard, and Amber Mountain Vineyard. In total, Beckstoffer Vineyards owns and farms roughly 4,000 acres of vineyards in Napa Valley, Mendocino County and the Red Hills of Lake County.

In 2018, Beckstoffer vineyards in Napa, Mendocino and Lake Counties produced 9,902 tons of Cabernet Sauvignon valued at \$45,617,000 and delivered these grapes to 128 wineries. Beckstoffer is arguably the largest producer of Cabernet Sauvignon grapes, value-wise, in the world.

About UC ANR: UC Agriculture and Natural Resources brings the power of UC research in agriculture, natural resources, nutrition and youth development to local communities to improve the lives of all Californians. Learn more at ucanr.edu

About Duarte Nursery: Duarte Nursery, Inc. (DNI) is a family-owned and operated nursery and the largest permanent crops nursery in the United States.

Companies mentioned in this article:

Beckstoffer Vineyards

Rutherford, CA

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