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Specialty Crop Block Grant from CDFA Awarded to Zinfandel Advocates & Producers for Zinfandel Stories: Preserving California's Legendary Vineyards

Rough & Ready, CA, October 2, 2018 —The Association of Zinfandel Advocates & Producers (ZAP) today announced the award of a Specialty Crop Block Grant in the amount of \$259,141 from The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA). The funds awarded during the next two years will support the association's launch of a campaign called: "Zinfandel Stories: Preserving California's Legendary Vineyards."

Economic forces are pressuring farmers to replant California's Zinfandel vineyards with varieties that are not uniquely Californian. By increasing the profitability of small-block Zinfandel farming through increasing demand for single vineyard designated wines, ZAP believes vineyard owners will be able to preserve historic plantings for future generations. "The grant will give us the opportunity to expand Zinfandel's appreciation and reach," explains Rebecca Robinson, Executive Director of ZAP. "This project will raise awareness of this issue by connecting consumers with farmers, winemakers, and vineyards via multiple touch points including innovative storytelling, media, consumer and trade events, and tours."

Zinfandel, which is almost exclusively grown in California and represents a fading number of legendary vineyards with decades-old vines, has not been receiving the attention it deserves. As such, Zinfandel Stories: Preserving California's Legendary Vineyards, will build on ZAP's 27-year history of creating meaningful experiences and building relationships between Zinfandel producers, winemakers, growers, and enthusiasts. Through compelling storytelling in various media channels, educational exhibits, and live events, the awareness of Zinfandel will rise throughout the states and beyond, stirring demand, trial and adoption of the variety with its rich history and vibrant personalities of today's Zinfandel producers.

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California grows 99 percent of the world's Zinfandel and ZAP's 170 member-wineries purchase grapes from over one hundred small-block vineyards. By preserving them and increasing demand and product availability for vineyard designated Zinfandel, per-ton and bottle prices will rise—benefiting both small-block Zinfandel farmers and wineries that associate vineyards with their premium brands. Increased revenue for farmers will reduce pressure to replant Zinfandel with non-California specific varietals, allowing iconic vineyards to continue serving as important economic drivers for local agriculture and tourism industries. For many farmers, their small-block vineyards have been in their family for up to five generations. This project provides them with resources to continue their family tradition.

California received \$22.6 million from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's 2018 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP), most in the country. More than \$72 million was awarded nationwide. California Department of Food & Agriculture will fund 83 projects, awarding grants ranging from \$25,000 to \$300,000. This is ZAP's second CDFA grant and ZAP is one of only three wine associations to receive a 2018 award along with California Wine Institute and the Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance.

About Zinfandel Advocates & Producers (ZAP)

Created for Zin lovers by Zin lovers, Zinfandel Advocates & Producers (ZAP) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. ZAP is dedicated to advancing public knowledge and appreciation for American Zinfandel and its unique place in our culture and history. ZAP actively involves hundreds of wineries and thousands of enthusiasts. Together, ZAP is gaining a national and international understanding of Zinfandel as America's grape, serving as an innovator and industry leader in the world of wine. ZAP members enjoy benefits throughout the year including access to ZAP's Premier Winery Experience program. ZAP can be found online at Zinfandel.org, on Facebook @ZAP.org and on Twitter @thezinfandelorg.

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