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Specialty Crop Block Grant from CDFA Put to Work by Zinfandel Advocates & Producers Organization Aims to Preserve California's Legendary Zinfandel Vineyards

Rough & Ready, CA, November 20, 2019 — Today, recognized and acknowledged on several social media platforms as National Zinfandel Day, the Association of Zinfandel Advocates & Producers (ZAP) shared the on-going work being done due to a Specialty Crop Block Grant received from the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA). The funds awarded have been used to conduct a baseline “State of Zinfandel” survey by Full Glass Research (FGR) and to initiate a communications plan to increase awareness of small-block Zinfandel farming and single vineyard designated Zinfandels.

“We’ve completed the initial survey and we’re now at the start of the campaign,” announced Duane Dappen, D-Cubed Cellars and ZAP board of directors’ president. “Today, on National Zinfandel Day, ZAP released a video teaser. Over the next several months, will execute several traditional and social media programs utilizing shorts from the video and more.” Video teaser found here <https://zinfandel.org/legendary-zinfandel-vineyards-video-release/>.

For the study, FGR drew on its own archives, Nielsen retail scan data, California Agricultural Statistics Service (CASS) grape acreage and crush data, Wines & Vines Analytics, a survey of ZAP winery and grower members and some primary research to write the report. Established in 2005, Full Glass Research specializes in industry, economic and market research for food and beverage producers.

Total sales of red Zinfandel are estimated by FGR to be between 3.2 million and 3.4 million cases. Sales of red Zinfandel above \$20 a bottle increased in stores. Direct-to-consumer sales were up in 2018, as were sales of Zinfandel over \$20 in the 3-tier distribution system generally. However, overall wholesale depletions were down in 2018, as were overall sales in scanned retail food and liquor stores.

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CDFA Specialty Crop Block Grant Put to Work by ZAP, page 2

In terms of wines on the market, there are 1,750 red Zinfandels, of which 460 are vineyard-designates and 117 labeled “reserve.” Old Vines account for 274 Zinfandels. There appear to be good high-margin opportunities for wineries that can sell Zinfandel purchased at \$1000 to \$2000/ton from quality vineyards in developing regions such as Lodi.

“While the per ton average of Zinfandel grapes sold in California remains low at \$600, due to high volume production of white Zinfandel, over 17,000 tons of grapes were sold for red Zinfandel priced above \$2,000 per ton. And, 60% of respondents to our ZAP questionnaire say they purchase Zinfandel grapes from old vine vineyards. Together, this indicates to me that the variety is healthy among fine wine producers and consumers,” states Rebecca Robinson, executive director, Zinfandel Advocates & Producers. “Our organization’s heavy lifting is to stay competitive as a variety and preserving legendary Zinfandel vineyards in an ever-changing marketplace, where red blend wines and alternative beverage alcohol products have recently entered by storm,” added Robinson.

To do so, ZAP has engaged in a communications campaign that includes video storytelling, trade seminars, media relations and integrated social media. Social media virtual gatherings of influencers will share the #LegendaryZinVineyards story, bloggers will assist in boosting audience reach, writers will tour regions throughout California to meet with Zinfandel growers and makers to learn their stories and those of other specialty crops and ZAP will push content through their website, blog and social channels while engaging with new and existing audiences to increase awareness of California’s Zinfandel message.

One such virtual gathering, utilizing Twitter, occurred Wednesday, November 13, one week before National Zinfandel Day, to share the message with online influencers and provide content to share. During the one-hour session, 13 participants tweeted and retweeted 513 total times to 129,600 followers, reaching an audience of 5.56M, according to Meltwater Monitoring. ZAP also encouraged participating influencers to post blog articles about National Zinfandel Day.

As stated in September 2018, with the announcement of the grant award, increasing the awareness and therefore profitability of small-block Zinfandel farming, ZAP believes vineyard owners will be able to preserve historic plantings for future generations. “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 tour,” stated Rebecca Robinson. Today, she states, “We’re happy to share our progress and we’re looking forward to the campaign phase and then providing you the results.”

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CDFA Specialty Crop Block Grant Put to Work by ZAP, page 3

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 and @zap.zinfandel on Instagram.

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