



**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Signs of Growth are Spreading through the Valley *Literally and Figuratively*

### Suisun Valley prepares to celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> AVA Anniversary this December 2007

**SUISUN VALLEY:** Viticulture history began for Suisun Valley in the late 1800s. From that time until 1980, Suisun Valley winegrape growers kept their noses to the grindstone quietly growing wine grapes. In 1981, the United States instituted **American Viticultural Areas**, in order to distinguish grape growing regions. By February 1981, the first region to receive designation was Napa Valley, with 225,280 acres.

One would think that it would be decades before “little known” Suisun Valley would become an AVA; however, astute growers in the Western Solano County Grape Growers Association successfully petitioned the BATF, and received formal designation for Suisun Valley as an identified AVA by December 27, 1982. This made Suisun Valley the twelfth California AVA; then, all became quiet again in that winegrape growing region.

AVA (California <u>only</u> documented)*	ACRES	DATE (*Wine Institute)
1. Napa Valley	225,280	02/27/1981
2. Santa Maria Valley	80,000	09/04/1981
3. San Pasqual Valley	9,000	09/16/1981
4. Guenoc Valley	4,396	12/21/1981
5. Santa Cruz Mountains	0.00	01/04/1982
6. Sonoma Valley	4,000	01/24/1982
7. Lime Kiln Valley	2,300	07/06/1982
8. Chalone	8,540	07/14/1982
9. Paicines	4,500	09/15/1982
10. Cienega Valley	0.00	09/20/1982
11. Livermore Valley	96,000	10/01/1982
12. Suisun Valley	15,360	12/27/1982

Continued...

**SVGGA is an organization whose members are committed to growing ultra premium wine grapes.**

Suisun Valley Grape Growers Association \* 4160 Suisun Valley Road, Suite E – 141

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In July 2002, a savvy group of winegrape farmers in Suisun Valley reunited for a common purpose. Without a cohesive marketing plan, the growers realized that they'd continue to be dismissed each harvest as they tried to sell their grapes for fair market value. With their base of operation on the other side of the Vaca Mountain Range (a.k.a. Silverado Mountains), Suisun Valley was constantly being eclipsed by neighboring Napa. The Suisun Valley Grape Growers Association was formed, which has accelerated their purpose, growth, and direction in the last five years in ways no one could have imagined when they began, but can now be visibly acknowledged.

Prior to SVGGA's inception, the **Lanza** family of **Wooden Valley** played a major, albeit quiet, role. In 1955, **Mario Lanza** bought property in Suisun from a friend. For others, like **Dean Frisbie** of **Ledgewood Creek Winery & Vineyards** (who's been in Suisun Valley since 1985, when he first bought a pear farm and converted it to vineyards) coming into the valley was a reinventing of oneself. And for yet others, like **Roger King** of **King Andrews Vineyard**, some have quietly arrived to escape the hectic corporate world. It's been a non-descript endeavor, focused more on growing the fruit than on anything else.

## Signs of Growth



(Left) New cohesive sign program in progress ~ (Right) Suisun Valley Wine Cooperative

As Suisun Valley growers and producers begin to focus on what the association will be doing in the upcoming year to celebrate, they can't help but reflect back on what's happened within the last five, once they decided to drive their message forward.

- Cohesive sign program is in place to distinguish their locations
- Co-op tasting room created (4495 Suisun Valley Road) to showcase wines
- More brands are proudly putting Suisun Valley on their labels as an AVA
- Awareness and demand for Suisun Valley fruit is on the rise
- Great scores for wines appellated to Suisun Valley has produced rapid awareness

The Co-op tasting room is broadly managed by **Doug Sparks** of the **Sunset Cellars** label, with each of the featured brands also assuming tasting room duties. As an early adopter for appellation his wines to Suisun Valley, Doug Sparks of Sunset Cellars was in the right place at the right time. The need for a tasting room within the valley, and Doug's needs to have a tasting room, collided.

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## Current Brands in Suisun Valley Wine Coop Tasting Room:

- **King Andrews Vineyards**
- **Shale Peak Vineyards**
- **Sunset Cellars, LLC**
- **Twilight Ridge**
- **Winterhawk**

## Additional Brands Appellated to Suisun Valley

- **Bask Cellars** (Suisun)
- **Koch Wine** (Suisun)
- **Ledgewood Creek** (Suisun)
- **Mankas Hills Vineyards** (Suisun)
- **Vezér Family Vineyard** (Suisun)
- **Wooden Valley** (Suisun)
- **Croze** (Yountville)
- **Forlorn Hope** (Napa)
- **Manifesto!** (Napa)
- **Olabisi Wines** (Calistoga)
- **Thomas Michael Cellars** (Yountville)
- **Trahan Winery** (Rutherford)

## Tasting Rooms in Suisun Valley

- **Ledgewood Creek Winery**
- **Suisun Valley Wine Cooperative**
- **Vezér Family Vineyard**
- **Wooden Valley Winery**



**Vezér Family Vineyard buildings, Mankas Corner (New addition)**



**(Left) Ledgewood Creek Winery ~ (Right) Wooden Valley Winery**

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