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*Suisun Valley Grape Growers Association (SVGGA)
Experiences a Metamorphosis in Name...to...*

Suisun Valley Vintners & Growers Association (SVVGA)

Suisun Valley, CA: When the Suisun Valley Grape Growers Association (SVGGA) was formed in 2003 as a wine grape coalition, it had two main goals:

1. To advance awareness of the Suisun Valley American Viticultural Area, established in 1982.
2. To be sending their message of Ultra Premium winegrapes, in all direct sales methods, to all of their contacts.

According to SVVGA President Roger King, “The long term direction of that initial approach tied in with our strategic plan of brand building the Suisun Valley AVA. After the first year, we looked at the results of those initial efforts, and each year thereafter we’ve built upon all of our successful aspects. Getting our professional grape sales and PR strengths in place for a major roll out was the solid foundation for our forward movement. Within that first year, we finally began to be recognized as an Ultra Premium, wine-grape growing region by many, and that was very rewarding”

2004: By their second year, the grape growers had accomplished launching a website that was content rich, including the appellation history, facts, maps, members, and a buyer-seller forum. The importance of the Website was a critical communications tool, easy to use, and made a strong statement for their commitment to excellence in grape

growing. The emphasis for the grape growers remained a focus on all things related to their viticultural practices.

It wasn't until late September in 2004, when an extremely high score was given to Ted Osborne's Olabisi wine, which originated from Suisun Valley grapes, that the wine world also began to take serious notice of their wines. The growers now realized that the quality of their grapes receiving this kind of third party endorsement was of real benefit.

2006: By February 2006, the squeeze of consolidation forced adaptive innovation in Suisun Valley, and the grape growers became focused on growing niche fruit to complement a specific variety. They started growing artisan varieties in small quantities; they began seriously dropping fruit, cutting leaves, and hand-holding each vine in their possession. They also began finding buyers from outside of California; e.g., Ohio, upstate New York, etc., and identifying "home winemakers."

2007: SVGGA created a S.W.O.T. analysis, which then allowed for the creation of a strong Strategic Plan for their future. They took into account all current market conditions and shaped a solidly structured, mapped future for Suisun Valley. Then, in June of 2007, the **Suisun Valley Wine Cooperative** was created, which was just the beginning of other wineries that would begin to find a home in Suisun Valley. This began a segue from thinking only in terms of grape growing to hosting wine events that would showcase Suisun Valley wine as an end product. At the end of 2007, Suisun Valley celebrated ~ with huge success ~ their 25th AVA Anniversary, with winery tastings of their Suisun Valley appellation wines and a Winemaker Dinner.

This was their turning point...

2008: In December of 2008, Suisun Valley again celebrated their AVA's Anniversary with winery tastings of their Suisun Valley appellation wines and enjoyed their Second Annual Winemaker Dinner.

2009: Passport weekend was created by a newly formed Vintners Committee in February, and their Third Annual AVA Anniversary was again celebrated in December. Suisun Valley had found its niche, annual events.

These kinds of consumer activities, which have begun an exodus into the valley, necessitated the separate Vintners Committee, in order to handle all ongoing wine related activities. This gave pause to the Board of Directors; namely that they have now become as involved with the wine companies of Suisun Valley as they have been with the grape growers, with activities that also have as much focus as what the grape growers have been achieving.

This dichotomy of function is what has required the name change.

The visual is very subtle, but side-by-side, that slight change demonstrates a significant growth within and for Suisun Valley.



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