

SUISUN VALLEY GRAPE GROWERS ASSOCIATION.



As Seen in...Solano Magazine

Changes through the seasons — Suisun Valley gates are unlocked

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One of our favorite trips—maybe because it is so close yet seems so far away—is to go to Suisun Valley. All year long, there is something for everyone, from the variety of wineries, quaint restaurants, the farm stands and u-pick farms, unique shops and cozy bed and breakfasts.

Does all that sound a little crazy? Are you thinking maybe we didn't check our information? Currently, these options don't all exist in Suisun Valley. Sure, there are some fantastic wineries and tasting rooms as well as farm stands and u-pick farms, but not enough for a weekend getaway. However, with the passing of Solano County's new general plan, Measure T, in the November 2008 election, the Suisun Valley and nine other agricultural regions are now open to new agritourism development



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Thus far, Suisun Valley's major obstacles in realizing its goal of being an agritourism destination have been lot size and business type restrictions—such as allowing bed and breakfast inns—as well as limitations on what vendors can sell. But much of this was changed by the passage of Measure T. Adam Cline, farm assistance revitalization and marketing coordinator for Solano County, says that the new general plan will foster the creation of an environment where various agricultural activities can flourish, and gives “farmers options and flexibility to stay viable.”



“We want people to view Suisun Valley as a place to spend the day,” says RON LANZA, vice president of the Suisun Valley Grape Growers Association (SVGGA). “A place where they can visit a few wineries, enjoy a meal and sit at a picnic ground.”

Lanza feels those days are not far off. He doesn't hesitate to illustrate how much the valley has grown just over the past few years. For example, three years ago there were only two wine tasting rooms; today, there are five. To Lanza, 10 wineries is the magic number. “I'm a firm believer that there needs to be an anchor, and the anchor for Suisun Valley will be the wine. If we had 10 wineries to visit we would be considered a little wine region.” Lanza and the SVGGA believe the wine will bring in the other businesses needed to further develop the region.

Suisun Valley gates are unlocked - Mankas Corner - Solano Magazine - Dec '08-Jan '09 Despite growth, Lanza wants the valley to maintain its quaintness, which means keeping all of its ag roots. As an agritourism destination, farm stands will stand strong next to wineries and restaurants. Eateries like Manka's Corner foster that spirit, according to Lanza. He says that for this lofty goal to be realized they need to “continue promoting the valley, to keep the enthusiasm within the community and to attract enough vendors to open the new businesses.”

