

***The Winegrape Guidebook
for Establishing Good
Neighbor and Community Relations***

California Association of Winegrape Growers

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Establishing Good Neighbor and Community Relations

The wine and winegrape community faces increasing challenges as its neighbors and the general public become more concerned about environmental and social issues. California's projected population growth of more than 20 million people in the next 25 years will put a tremendous strain on the state's resources, including water, energy, land, air and environmental quality. In the past couple of years, the headlines in California have demonstrated growing pressure on vineyards and wineries to become better neighbors. Issues vary widely, including treatments for Glassy-winged Sharpshooter, farmworker housing, hillside erosion, oak woodland habitat removal, increased traffic to tasting rooms, and hospitality events that create noise and light pollution.

This guidebook aims to help winegrape growers, vintners and regional associations take a proactive, collaborative approach to environmental and social challenges. It provides general advice as well as specific examples, which demonstrate successful approaches to

issues facing more and more members of America's wine and winegrape community.

The communications strategies described in this handbook are only brief descriptions of complex processes. The guide contains only skeletal information, and novices should do additional research or seek professional advice before pursuing further media attention.

This guidebook is a living document. Readers are encouraged to add to it and help it grow. It can be a useful tool to make wine an integral part of the American culture.

Why Collaborate?

The wine community is a vital part of a larger community with diverse interests and varied perspectives. Collaboration is part of respecting the views of neighbors, consumers, environmental groups, and the general public.

Collaboration will bring more positive results than the alternative, confrontation. Dr. Lori Ann Thrupp of the U.S. EPA recommends the following strategies when working with stakeholders on environmental and sustainability issues:

- Build awareness through information exchange: increase understanding of diverse stakeholders' views, interests and visions;
- Establish informal or formal networking links;
- Identify common aims or mutual interests (as well as areas of difference) to work toward a goal;
- Increase cooperation on sustainable management of resources and/or environmental responsibility;
- Improve business opportunities through increased stakeholder involvement on environmental issues.

Collaboration will raise your credibility and legitimacy, increasing the public's trust and accountability. It will also make you more

War on Pest Exposes Sonoma County Debate

THE GLASSY-WINGED SHARPSHOOTER
People are concerned about pesticides spraying to combat the winged sharpshooter. Here is how pesticide use in vineyards compares with the top three pesticides used in California.
Top 3 Calif.---

Vineyard Neighbors See Only Wrath From Grapes
■ Land use: Wine boom is turning oaks and pasture into vast acres of vines. 'It's a sterile environment,' a critic says
By BETTINA BOXALL
TIMES STAFF WRITER
PASO ROBLES, Calif. — At a distance they resemble nothing so much as freshly dug military cemeteries, these baby vineyards with their precisely regimented rows of metal stakes marching up and down the Central Coast hills. Under the winter sky they are bare, save for patches of grass sprouting between the long lines of vines. It is a view Lorraine Scarpace sees from her patio, down the road and on the drive back to town, hills after hills, acre after acre the same. "I'm who lives in what has traditionally been cattle and grain country but is fast becoming wine country. 'I don't know. I've devastated. I don't know. I've almost would rather see him than that, it's so bad. At 1 [developers] plant trees.' Up and down the state, here voices are being raised as California's hallowed wine is driven to a vineyard. Such coastal counties as Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, and San Diego are requiring environmental review of new vineyards if they impact as much as oak woodlands, wetlands or streams. Rancher McMillan was involved in a recent San Luis Obispo County effort to require permits for removal, as well as replanting and offset tree loss. It was a soft guideline, but oak-

GRAPES: Vines Replacing Oaks
An increasingly common sight in California: white tubes protect newly planted vines near Paso Robles.
Winery. "Why are people picking on me for providing beautiful viewshed?" Kendall-Jackson has been asked on plenty since it bought a 101-acre vineyard in Santa Barbara County. U.S. rules to requiring environmental review of new vineyards if they impact as much as oak woodlands, wetlands or streams. Rancher McMillan was involved in a recent San Luis Obispo County effort to require permits for removal, as well as replanting and offset tree loss. It was a soft guideline, but oak-

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knowledgeable about the issues and diverse points of view. Collaboration leads to richer input, yielding more creative and constructive solutions.

Telling Your Story

The wine and winegrape community has a story to tell — one that will foster understanding and appreciation of its role in the community. Telling the story involves doing research, understanding and targeting an audience, developing a message, and delivering that message in a clear, honest, persistent fashion.

The primary factor in an effective communications strategy is developing positive relationships. Whether you are communicating with your neighbor, a county supervisor, or a news reporter, your relationship counts. It must be based on honesty and it should be proactive, not defensive. You have a good story to tell. Most people just want to understand the facts, so make sure you're providing them with the truth. Tell it like it is, not like you want it to be.

Doing the Research

The first step in developing an effective outreach strategy is understanding the mood of the community. This step involves research and legwork. Don't trust your own personal opinion.



Researching the community's mood can take the form of a formal questionnaire, informal or scientific polling, one-on-one interviews, or visiting with folks at the coffee shop or local service clubs.

It's also important to know your adversaries. Find out who they are, how they operate, what they want, and where you might have common ground. Read the news coverage of their activities, study their publications, learn how their opinions are shaped, and talk to them. Perhaps most important, listen carefully to what

they are saying!

Reaching Your Audience

Who are your audiences? Neighbors? News media? Lawmakers? Environmental groups? Labor groups? Government regulators?



Scientists? The general public? Each audience requires specific communication tools.

Start with your neighbors. Develop a plan to build relationships with them and maintain steady, positive contact with them.

Reach the news media, and eventually the general public, through press releases, interviews, special events, public speaking, editorial board meetings, op-eds and letters to the editor, vineyard and winery tours, newsletters and the Internet.

Meet with government officials on a regular basis. Participate in local, regional and state organizations, such as the California Association of Winegrape Growers, Wine Institute and Family Winemakers of California to reach lawmakers and regulators.

Hold meetings with environmental or labor leaders in "neutral" places or invite them to tour your operations. Seek common ground and try to develop mutual goals. Include them as stakeholders in your decision-making.

Decide who your audiences are and develop communication strategies for each of them.

Identifying Your Message

Once you have targeted a specific audience, develop a message that will provide a constructive connection. Your message must be honest, interesting and backed up with the facts. Be specific. Be relevant. Stick to the point. Use examples.

Robert Mondavi Winery published a brochure highlighting its "Natural Winegrowing" philosophy and practices. It provides very

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Connecting with Community Values

Background: Napa Valley winegrape growers increasingly face hillside and watershed issues, while wineries are feeling pressure on issues such as traffic, noise and light pollution. Linda Reiff, executive director of the Napa Valley Vintners Association (NVVA) observed that members may have mistaken their consumers' affection for wine for their neighbors' affection for their practices. NVVA responded with an aggressive community relations program, and the first step was to get a handle on community sentiment toward winegrape growing and wine making.

Challenge: Research, not personal opinion, is essential to understanding community values. Guesswork and intuition do not provide an adequate basis for building successful strategies.

Action: NVVA sent a mail survey to 30,000 Napa County households. Of 436 responses, 176 had comments. While the comments were useful, NVVA wanted to conduct more thorough research before developing a game plan. They built a team of industry members to conduct one-on-one interviews with 100 people in the Napa Valley.

Results: The one-on-one interviews were key to connecting with the community. Their findings formed the basis of a

proactive community relations program. In addition, the personal contacts established during the interview process grew into productive industry relationships with community and environmental leaders.

By working with environmental leaders, NVVA developed a joint position with them on watershed task force recommendations and is pursuing a Green Certification program for Napa County vineyards.

Among the negative feedback was concern about lack of farmworker housing. NVVA responded by supporting an industry self-assessment to increase funding for housing projects.

To help educate neighbors and earn their trust, NVVA developed a mailer about the wine industry's practices and contributions to the community. Some of the most positive feedback reflected appreciation for the industry's charitable giving. The Napa Valley Wine Auction over the past 20 years has raised \$30 million for the local community.

Common Courtesy, Common Sense

Background: Pete Opatz, former chairman of the Sonoma County Grape Growers Association, advises wine industry members to be aware, be involved and be courteous with their neighbors. “It’s now considered common courtesy to explain your farming practices to your neighbors,” Opatz said. “If you’re not doing these things, you could become the next headline.”



Challenge: “Walk a few steps in your neighbor’s shoes,” Opatz proposes. Engage in a little “viticulural therapy” to ease your neighbors’ fears and increase their understanding and empathy. Let them know why, how, when and what you’re doing.

Action: The Sonoma County Grape Growers Association developed a detailed plan for winegrape growers to communicate with their neighbors. It begins:

- Listen and respond to our neighbors.

- Use sound practices.
- Tell neighbors why our practices work.

Have a plan for working with neighbors. Reach out to them when they first move in — or you do. Touch base frequently, person-to-person. Meet on the front porch, in the kitchen, or at the mailbox. Listen to their concerns. Talk about wine and your passion for growing grapes. Inform them about your cultural practices



and explain your commitment to sound practices. Share your philosophy, and why you’re committed to sustaining the soil, preserving surrounding habitats, minimizing the need for pesticides, and maximizing quality.

Result: Growers and vintners are working with neighbors, building bridges, and earning support. “Our worst failure will be our silence,” Opatz warns. “Get involved!”

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specific information about different aspects of winemaking, from grape to glass, including practices that protect the health and safety of workers, community and the environment.

Specifics on vineyard management include:

- Integrated Pest Management, with information on what it is, how it works, and how Cal-EPA has recognized Mondavi’s leadership in this area;
- Planting cover crops that improve the land’s natural fertility, control erosion and host beneficial insects;
- Creating a biodiverse habitat in the vineyard by planting trees and other vegetation to attract beneficial insects

and predators;

- Conserving soil through composting and manual weeding; and
- Conserving water and water sources.

Mondavi’s message is effective because it is specific, truthful and it responds to the interests of neighbors, regulators, lawmakers, and the consuming public.

Reaching the News Media

The first thing to keep in mind in working productively with the news media is that reporters want something newsworthy to write about. You can start by developing your message and by examining what you hope to accomplish by getting media attention.

Developing the Message

Sonoma County Grape Growers, in an effort to reach out to vineyard neighbors, developed a values statement. Members use the values statement as a guide when talking to their neighbors about their stewardship of the natural resources, production practices, and the connection between good management and excellent wine.

Values Statement: Grape growing is our business. We follow responsible practices in order to sustain the land and build a sense of community with our neighbors by:

- Being considerate and courteous, reaching out to neighbors to keep them informed of vineyard practices and goals.
- Supporting our workers with ongoing training, competitive compensation and housing.
- Notifying residents adjoining our vineyards who want to know when we will be dusting sulfur or spraying and being aware of our possible impact on others.
- Using integrated pest management so that pesticides are only applied when pests pose economic risks. We choose materials that are effective, yet have low environmental impacts.
- Recognizing water as a precious resource and striving to conserve it, keep it clean, and use it efficiently.
- Sharing our experience with our grower colleagues to ensure that all growers – new and experienced – are familiar with regulations and utilize best farming practices.
- Responding conscientiously if our neighbors have questions or concerns.

We are committed to farming so that everyone benefits today and tomorrow.

The next step is choosing the right tools to communicate. According to Mike Miller of Brown-Miller Communications, your communications effort might include one, two or all of the following tools:

- Press releases
- Press Kits
- Press Conferences
- Interviews
- Editorial Board Meetings
- Media Events
- Op-eds and letter to the editor

Writing a Press Release

The press release is a short, factual description of, or point of view on, an event or issue prepared for the media. Keep it to one or two pages, and make sure it's newsworthy. It can announce a special event, present a position on specific issues, or deliver facts on the status of harvest, weather effects, production practices, conservation measures, etc.

The essentials of a press release are:

- Who?
- What?
- When?
- Where?
- Why?
- How?

Be sure to include contact information on the top of the press release (name and phone numbers) and don't forget the date. Every news release should contain the phrase, "For Immediate Release." Under the heading, start the release with a headline that is quick, catchy and explanatory.

The first paragraph of the press release must clearly state the main point of your issue or event in an interesting manner. A reporter might not get past the first paragraph if it doesn't capture enough interest, so don't bury the punch line at the bottom.





Fill in the rest of the release with all the pertinent facts on the issue. Use quotes. Use short sentences. Keep the words active, easy and personal. Be factual. Be concise.

Distribute your release carefully — to the right people, at the right time, and with the proper follow-up.

Creating a Press Kit

A press kit is a collection of related printed material (releases, fact sheets, photos, speeches, background materials, etc.) provided to the media for their publication, broadcast or background use. The kit is a useful hand-out for a tour, special event, press conference or meeting.

Holding a Press Conference

The press conference is an event for the

media to communicate information about an idea, activity or program. It enables reporters to ask questions and pursue their areas of interest in a subject. It can take place anywhere — in a room, in front of a building, in a vineyard or at a winery. The location will depend on the information you want to convey.

Start by sending a brief news advisory, with contact information, informing the audience of the purpose, place, time, date and principal participants in the event.

The conference should start with a brief opening statement, brief introductions of key participants, and then short remarks (less than 5 minutes) by each participant. Finish by inviting questions from the media.

Granting an Interview

An interview is the basic tool of news

Delivering the Message to Policymakers, Media, Public

Background: The Lodi-Woodbridge Winegrape Commission (LWWC) recognized the need to open direct lines of communication with local government, the community, the news media and the wine-consuming public.

Challenge: To create more local awareness of the contributions the wine industry makes to the community.

Action: The Commission developed a three-part strategy:

- LWWC board schedules formal joint meetings with Lodi City Council on an annual basis.
- LWWC staff conduct an annual circuit of speaking engagements at local service clubs.
- LWWC staff and growers are proactive in relations with press.

Result: Their strategy enables strategic partnering on mutually beneficial projects, such as the Conference and Visitors Bureau and the Wine and Visitor Center.



gathering. It is not a conversation. The reporter wants news, and you can provide expertise and insight to make the story complete. The reporter may ask tough questions and it's easy to feel defensive. Don't be. Answer the questions honestly and convey your message. Use it as an opportunity to disseminate the message you have carefully developed. The California Farm Bureau Federation offers the following tips on interviews:

- Make the interview worthwhile. Tell your story!
- Deliver key points.
- Don't get angry with a reporter.
- Challenge efforts to put words into your mouth.
- Don't be evasive. "No comment" signals you have something to hide.
- There's no such thing as "off the record."
- Always consider microphones and cameras to be "on."
- If you don't know the answer, say so, and then offer to find the answer.
- Be reachable for follow-up.
- Return calls promptly.
- Tell the truth. A half-truth is a lie.

What is Newsworthy?

- Something out of the ordinary — something unique
- The beginning of a project or event
- An anniversary of an event or issue
- A progress report
- Significant progress toward a solution
- A human interest story that evokes emotion

- Be positive!

Visiting the Editors

Editorial meetings can be helpful to inform newspapers, radio and television programs about significant issues. The editorial meeting should take place at the newspaper office or radio or television station. It may involve the entire editorial staff or a couple of reporters.

Keep the meeting brief. Provide as much printed material as possible (by now you've

Checking Your Values - A Five-Step Test

Honesty and sincerity are keys to a successful community relations strategy.

Paso Robles Vintners and Growers Associations developed a five-way test for upholding member values and standards:



- Am I producing the best quality wine and/or grapes possible?
- Am I respecting the environment and using our natural resources wisely?
- Have I considered my impact on our industry and my neighbors?
- Am I doing my part to give back to the community?
- Are high ethical standards being practiced in my place of business?

already developed a good press kit.) If you can't answer a question, say so, and promise to get back to them with an answer. As always, be honest and positive.

Showing Appreciation

Many state and regional associations build media relations by staging special events. These

can be farm tours, media appreciation dinners, awards banquets to recognize an outstanding reporter, or informal backyard barbecues.

Have articulate leaders of your community there, prepared to help deliver your message. The relationships that develop at these events will likely lead to news stories in the future. Hand out your press kit and send them home with a nice bottle of wine!

Conducting Tours: "Hear It Through the Grapevines"

Background: The Central Coast Wine Growers Association chose to take a proactive approach with neighbors, politicians, regulators and environmental advocates. "We're a high profile industry," CCWGA President Kevin Merrill said. "People want to know what we're doing."

Issues: Central Coast growers face concerns ranging from pesticide use and run-off to preserving endangered species and oak woodland habitat.

Program: CCWGA conducts "Hear It Through the Grapevines" vineyard and winery tours to enhance communication and understanding. The tours usually include three vineyards or three wineries and cover topics ranging from sustainable farming and endangered species to traffic and noise.



Craig Macmillan of Royal Oaks Winery has these thoughts on putting together a successful program:

- Make sure the invitation list includes the right people: Invite your biggest detractors (environmental activists, irate neighbors, skeptical politicians)

— don't just preach to the choir. Invite County Supervisors, State Legislators, Members of Congress and their staff. Include the news media. Don't forget local business leaders, chambers of commerce. Include your neighbors.

- Open the dialogue *before* a problem emerges. Meet often and regularly.
- Use qualified, well-prepared speakers who have anticipated concerns and issues. Pair growers with outside experts (University of California, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, etc.)
- Pick the hottest issues and face them head-on.
- Follow up with seminars and forums on issues that the public perceives as problems.
- Co-sponsor events with other stakeholders (Environmental Defense



Center, County Agricultural Commissioner) for more credibility.

Results: The tours have generated a lot of favorable

news stories, gained the understanding of local, state and federal officials, and forged constructive relationships with environmental leaders. "We've found common ground and mutual goals," Macmillan said.

Building a Web Site to Tell the Environmental Story

Opportunity: A web site can reach a vast audience, including consumers, opinion leaders, policy-makers and the news media.

Environmental Success Story: An excellent web site example is www.fetzer.com, which portrays Fetzer Vineyards as “an environmentally conscious grower, producer and marketer of wines of the highest quality and value.” It describes the company’s quest to continually improve the winery’s energy efficiency, vineyard practices, and sustainability of general business operations. The site says, “From the time this initiative began in the late 1980s, Fetzer Vineyards has:

- Become the industry leader in farming grapes organically. Fetzer Vineyards has 360 acres of certified organic grapes. The Fetzer family farms 1,100 acres of certified grapes. Together we are the largest grower of grapes grown organically on the North Coast and are certified by the California Certified



Organic Farmers (CCOF).

- Established company-wide recycling. All bottles, cardboard, plastic, aluminum, FAX paper, computer paper, antifreeze, waste oil, fluorescent tubes and glass are now recycled.
- Saved thousands of dollars in dump fees by reducing the amount of material hauled to landfills by 93 percent since 1991, through company recycling and waste diversion pro-



grams. These efforts have been recognized by the State of California, with Waste Reduction Awards Program (WRAP) awards for the past seven years. In 1997, Fetzer Vineyards was recognized as one of the top ten recycling companies in the state.”

Working with Regulators

Some people from the government really are there to help. You just have to find them. The California Environmental Protection Agency offers a variety of grants, available to the wine and winegrape community, to encourage environmental stewardship. The Winegrape Pest Management Alliance (PMA), comprised of grower organizations from across the state, receives \$100,000 a year from Cal-EPA to support adoption of reduced-risk pest management. The California Association of Winegrape Growers is responsible for implementing the project, which focuses on

sustainable sulfur application and reduced-risk weed management.

Winegrape growers led the list of “natural” innovators honored in 2000 for their work in integrated pest management (IPM). Cal-EPA’s Department of Pesticide Regulation recognized the Sonoma County Grape Growers Association, Vino Farms, and Wente Vineyards for work ranging from harboring beneficial insects to replacing pre-emergence herbicides with mechanical, cultural and post-emergence alternatives.

DPR Pest Management Grants went to UC Cooperative Extension in Monterey County (\$15,451 for “Demonstration of Vineyard Floor

Management Alternatives); Central Coast Vineyard Team (\$30,000 for “Reduced-Risk Vineyard Practices”); and Sonoma County Grape Growers Association (\$30,000 for “Promotion of Vineyard and Pest Disease Management and Reduced-Risk Pest Management Practices in Sonoma County.”)

Cal-EPA is working with two wineries, Davis Bynum and Benziger Family Winery, on pilot projects to develop an Environmental Management System (EMS) for their vineyards and wineries. Both participants are developing sustainable agricultural practices to produce biodiversity and soil health. The pilot projects

will test the theory that as environmental quality increases, so does the uniqueness and flavor of the wine and the ability of the vines to remain healthy. The participation of both wineries in the Sonoma Green and Bay Area Green Business Programs is a unique aspect of the pilot. These programs certify businesses that are in compliance with all environmental laws and are operating beyond compliance by implementing pollution prevention and resource conservation activities.

The Central Coast Vineyard Team also received a \$250,000 grant from the State Water Resources Control Board to fund a three-year

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Accommodating Neighbors’ Concerns About Winery Events

Background: The Edna Valley Winery anticipated neighbors’ objections to events such as concerts, weddings, and special tastings. “We wanted to listen to our neighbors and also make sure that the County Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission were fully aware of our activities and plans,” said Becky Gray, Hospitality and Public Relations Manager for Edna Valley.

Issues: Neighbors raised concerns about increased traffic, noise from outdoor music, light pollution and parking problems.

Remedies: Edna Valley started by hosting “neighborly functions” for people who lived within a one-mile radius of the winery. Winery staff listened, carefully and openly, to neighbors’ concerns. They asked for suggestions on how to accommodate those concerns and came up with the following solutions:

Noise: The winery has no outdoor concerts

and keeps all amplified music indoors.

Traffic and Parking: The winery has monitors to ensure that people leaving functions are safe to drive. They work with the county to post directional signs toward winery parking and place staff on site to direct cars to regular and overflow parking.

Lighting: All lighting faces down and is kept at low levels to avoid light pollution.

Events: The winery stopped having Friday evening “Wine Down” events because neighbors objected.



Results: Edna Valley continues to host quarterly functions where neighbors can enjoy the

winery and voice concerns. They inform neighbors of upcoming events, including types, times, music and number of attendees. “We haven’t had a single complaint! The main thing is to keep an open mind, and listen carefully,” Gray advises. “Don’t be defensive. Be the rational one.”

Finding Common Ground

Background: California's Sierra Nevada region hosts a wide range of businesses, natural resources, tourism, and environmental groups. There is potential for great conflict among the diverse interests.



Challenge: The Sierra Business Council (SBC) explicitly rejects the notion that Sierra communities must choose between economic and environmental health. On the contrary, members view environmental quality as key to the Sierra Nevada's economic prosperity, and natural resource conservation as essential to building regional wealth.

Strategies: The SBC provides an excellent example of diverse interests working together toward a common goal. The SBC is a nonprofit association of more than five hundred businesses, agencies, and individuals working to secure the economic and environmental health of the Sierra Nevada region for this and future generations. The council represents a new approach. Its tactics are proactive and collaborative. It operates on the belief that creative solutions rarely emerge without effective leadership.

Specifics: "Our approach is long-term and inclusive," SBC President Lucy Blake said. "Nothing else will ensure our region's lasting prosperity." She told an audience at

the 2001 *Unified Wine and Grape Symposium* about the council's "Sierra Nevada Wealth Index," a periodic assessment of the social, natural and financial capital that sustains the region. The index provides a benchmark of measurable progress toward sustainability, increasing awareness of issues and targeting areas for attention and investment.

Take-Home Message for the Wine and Winegrape Community:

- Learn from people in your industry who are taking the lead in sustainability.
- Take advantage of organizations like *The Natural Step* in San Francisco, which offers hands-on assistance and a roadmap for companies to achieve sustainability.
- Get your overall company going in the right direction. Strive for small, sustained progress, not overnight metamorphosis.
- Find or form a peer group of people who share your goals and can benefit from each other's expertise and experience.

"You'll be surprised how much your neighbors, customers and employees will appreciate your efforts," Blake said.

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project addressing non-point source pollution. The CCVT will establish demonstration sites aimed at reducing sediment and nutrient loss, and then monitor the effectiveness of the methods used. Members of the Central Coast viticulture industry contributed matching funds of 40 percent.

The California Department of Conservation issued \$2 million in grants to enable Resource Conservation Districts around the state to kick-start efforts that lead to cleaner water, scenic preservation and improved natural wildlife habitat.

UC's Sustainable Agricultural Resource Education Program (SAREP) also issues grants, with details posted on its web site at www.sarep.ucdavis.edu.

These programs not only provide the funds to launch sound environmental programs, but also add credibility to your efforts. They give official recognition that you can incorporate into your message.

Collaborating with Stakeholders

"Upholding sustainability means inclusion of community interests and accountability to the public," according to Dr. Lori Ann Thrupp of the EPA's Agricultural Initiative. She urges the

Who Are Stakeholders in the Wine Industry?

- A stakeholder is any individual or party (i.e. organization or company) who influences or is affected by decisions and actions for the production of wine and winegrapes.
- Stakeholders include: industry (growers, wineries, retailers, etc.), environmental and consumer organizations, labor groups, government agencies, scientists, and others.

Clarifying Definitions

What is "sustainability?" Diverse stakeholders in a planning session might have different definitions in mind. Use a third-party source, such as the UC Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program, to ensure all participants are operating under the same assumptions.

"Sustainable agriculture integrates three main goals — environmental health, economic profitability, and social and economic equity."

— UC SAREP

wine and winegrape community to learn what motivates stakeholders and be proactive in dealing with them.

"Work on significant changes," Thrupp advises, "Don't just modify the image or advertising." She provides the following tips on collaborating with stakeholders:

- Include local, regional, state or national stakeholders, depending on priorities and concerns to be addressed. Try to pick cooperative, non-contentious individuals.
- Stakeholders can be active members in a committee or groups (preferred), or serve as advisors (less desirable.)
- Invite stakeholders *early* in the process and build cooperation, trust and shared vision throughout the process.
- Encourage open participation and consensus. (Independent facilitation helps achieve this goal.)
- Strive for balance, seek win-win approaches.
- Assure credibility (use third-party if necessary.)
- Clarify who, what, when, why, where



and how you are working together (just like the press release!)

- Clarify terms and goals. Don't rely on assumptions about definitions, principles, values, standards, or process.
- Be specific. Avoid generalities.
- Be truthful. Do not overstate your case or make exaggerated claims.
- Find common ground. Collaborate and communicate.

Kari Birdseye of Wine Institute says there are many organizations that can help the wine community find common ground with environmental, labor and neighborhood interests. Wine Institute is already working with the following groups, among others, to promote sustainability:

- California Environmental Dialogue — a collaborative process where representatives from environmental, business and regulatory stakeholders

are working to address the issues of environmental and economic balances for the state.

- California Council for Environmental and Economic Balance — a unique coalition of business and labor, working on long-term balance in the state.
- California Futures Network — an organization focused on growth issues at the state government level.

The result of successful collaboration with stakeholders, according to Dr. Thrupp, should be increased credibility, trust and bottom-line business interests.

Final Thoughts

Success means being proactive. Procrastination won't make it any easier to deal with difficult issues.

Don't Wait!

Act Now!

Acknowledgments

A January 25th general session at the 2001 Unified Wine & Grape Symposium, "Establishing Good Neighbor and Community Relations Programs," inspired the publication of this guidebook. Panelists for the session and others who contributed their expertise are listed below with their phone numbers. To order tapes of that session, contact Tree Farm Tapes at 800/468-0464. Dr. Thrupp's comments are taken from her presentation to the WineVision Sustainability Task Force (3/12/01.)

Unified Symposium Panelists

July Ackerman, Paso Robles Vintners and Growers Association — 805/239-8463
Lucy Blake, Sierra Business Council — 530/582-4800
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Pete Opatz, Clos du Bois, Sonoma County Grape Growers Association — 707/431-7826
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