

**Sonoma County Grapegrowers, Vintners, and Tourism
launch new Sonoma County brand mark and marketing campaign**

SANTA ROSA, SONOMA COUNTY, CALIF., Aug. 15, 2012 – Sonoma County's wine, grape, and tourism industries unveiled a new brand mark and marketing campaign on Wednesday afternoon.

The presentation by leadership of Sonoma County Vintners, Sonoma County Winegrape Commission, and Sonoma County Tourism Bureau included introduction of the new Sonoma County brand mark. The brand mark, which is in the style of a stencil or stamp designed to convey the unique craftsmanship at the heart of grape growing and winemaking in Sonoma County, has been approved by the Boards of all three organizations to adopt as their organization logos.

An unusual caveat for the Sonoma County brand mark is that it will be made available for use by other Sonoma County companies and organizations after September 15 when they meet simple usage guidelines.

"Through our brand essence work, we defined the character of Sonoma County as genuine, independent, and adventurous," said Honore Comfort, executive director of Sonoma County Vintners. "Likewise, our core audience can be described as 'experience seekers' – people who are confident, independent thinkers with natural curiosity and a sense of discovery, who like to try new things. This is the audience we want to reach, and we feel like Sonoma County is a great match for them."

In addition to the brand mark, the "We are Sonoma County" marketing campaign was introduced. The program will include print and on-line advertising, social media, co-op advertising, website, trade and retail programs, sales promotion tools, and other components. Initial print campaign advertising is slated for late fall placements in national food and wine magazines.

The advertising is designed to stand out among advertising from other wine regions, and features an eye-catching vertical design highlighting the contrasts in Sonoma County in winemaking and grape growing to inform consumers of the range and depth of the region in a compelling way.

"The branding and campaign all focus on the fact that Sonoma County and its American Viticultural Areas (AVAs), along with our heritage as the birthplace of the California wine industry, make us unique among premier wine regions," said Nick Frey, president of the Sonoma County Winegrape Commission. "And the people who have contributed so much to our rich heritage over the past 150-plus years provide the stories that create our genuine image, demonstrate our independent nature, and which provide the experiences of discovery and exploration for wine consumers. After all, we are Sonoma County."

"The diversity of Sonoma County is our challenge and our strength," said Ken Fischang, president/CEO of the Sonoma County Tourism Bureau. "By working with the Vintners and Winegrape Commission on this project, the Tourism Bureau is able to promote some of the world's best wine and one of the world's best wine regions."

This launch of the Sonoma County brand mark and advertising campaign was two years in the making, initiated when market research indicated a strong need for improved awareness and understanding of Sonoma County and its AVAs among wine trade and consumers.

The process involved several important phases, overseen by a strategically focused marketing team of grape, wine, and tourism industry marketing leadership managed jointly by Sonoma County Vintners and Sonoma County Winegrape Commission. The first phase focused on work with BHC Consulting to define the brand essence and target audience for Sonoma County as it relates to grapes, wine, and tourism. That work then guided the development of the brand mark for

Sonoma County, designed by Landor Associates, a strategic brand consulting and design firm. Finally, development of the marketing campaign and design guidelines were developed by the Asterix Group.

For more information about the new Sonoma County brand mark and the “We Are Sonoma County” marketing campaign, visit WeAreSonomaCounty.com.

* * *

About Sonoma County Vintners:

Sonoma County Vintners (SCV) is the leading voice of Sonoma County wine, dedicated to raising awareness of Sonoma County as one of the world’s premier wine regions, noted for its heritage of artisan winemaking, distinct growing regions, and extraordinary quality. Founded in 1944, SCV represents more than 175 wineries of all sizes throughout the county. Learn more about SCV at www.SonomaWine.com.

Media Contact: Sara Cummings

Director of Communications
Sonoma County Vintners
3637 Westwind Blvd.
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
707-522-5849
sara@sonomawine.com
www.sonomawine.com

About Sonoma County Winegrape Commission:

Sonoma County Winegrape Commission was established in 2006 as a non-profit marketing and educational organization dedicated to the promotion of Sonoma County as one of the world’s premier grape growing regions. SCWC’s goal is to increase awareness and recognition of the quality and diversity of Sonoma County’s grapes and wines through dynamic marketing and educational programs targeted to wine consumers around the world. For more information about SCWC and its programs, visit www.sonomawinegrape.org.

Media Contact: Nick Frey

Sonoma County Winegrape Commission
3637 Westwind Blvd.
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
707-522-5861
frey@sonomawinegrape.org
www.sonomawinegrape.org

About Sonoma County Tourism Bureau:

Sonoma County Tourism Bureau is the destination marketing organization for Sonoma County. SCTB markets Sonoma County as a leisure, business and group travel destination. Tourism generates in excess of \$1.3 billion annually for the local economy. The Sonoma County Tourism Bureau offices are located at 3637 Westwind Blvd., Santa Rosa, CA 95403. For more information call 800-576-6662 or visit www.sonomacounty.com.

Media Contact: Tim Zahner

Sonoma County Tourism Bureau
3637 Westwind Blvd.
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
(707) 522-5810
tzahner@sonomacounty.com
www.sonomacounty.com

About BHC Consulting

BHC Consulting is global brand-building, strategy and research practice that develops and shares proven outside-in methodologies and marketing best practices and then embeds them into organizations to help brands grow. BHC is a highly distributed and networked firm led by Hunter Hastings and Trini Amador. Learn more at <http://www.bhcconsulting.com>

About Landor

Landor Associates is one of the world's leading strategic brand consulting and design firms. Founded by Walter Landor in 1941, Landor pioneered many of the research, design, and consulting methods that are now standard in the branding industry. Partnering with clients, Landor drives business transformation and performance by creating brands that are more innovative, progressive, and dynamic than their competitors. With 23 offices in 17 countries, Landor's current and past clients include some of the world's most powerful brands, including Citi, the Council on Foreign Relations, Diageo, Hilton Hotels, HP, Jet Airways, Microsoft, MillerCoors, the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board, PGA of America, Procter & Gamble, Taj Hotels Resorts and Palaces, and Verizon. For more information, please visit www.landor.com

About the the Asterix Group

Asterix Group is a creative branding agency for a new era. We focus exclusively on building strong brands that inspire and engage, developing sustainable customer and consumer relationships as a result. Our teams are located in San Francisco, Napa and Portland, OR, working with clients nationwide. To learn more, visit <http://asterixgroup.com>.

###

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SONOMA COUNTY BRAND MARK

Can other businesses use the Sonoma County brand mark on their product or marketing materials?

Yes, we will be making the brand mark available with a simple agreement to insure the consistent and proper use in marketing materials and packaging. The goal is to maximize consumer impressions of products and services that convey what makes Sonoma County unique and appealing. The usage information will be available by September 14 at www.wearesonomacounty.com.

Is there a cost to use the Sonoma County brand mark?

There will not be a cost to use the mark. We want people to invest in promoting Sonoma County and their products. However, there will be a simple agreement to ensure that all uses adhere to the brand guidelines.

How do I go about getting the brand mark for my use?

The information about using the Sonoma County brand mark will be posted at www.wearesonomacounty.com on September 14.

When does the We Are Sonoma County campaign start?

Initial print and online advertising is slated for fall 2012, with other elements of the program following over the next 12 months.

Where will I see these print and on-line ads? Initial plans include placements in Food & Wine and Wine Spectator magazines with on-line ads on the websites of these publications, and in other food, wine, and lifestyle oriented online channels.

How do I arrange a co-op advertisement in this program?

The full menu of co-op advertising opportunities is in final planning stages for individual wineries and regional associations to participate. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Bryan Carr, SCV Director of Marketing at bryan@sonomawine.com.

How are the three Sonoma County organizations using the same logo? Won't that be confusing?

All three organizations share the belief that having fewer logos for Sonoma County will be less confusing to the community, our members, and most importantly, consumers, over time.

For consumer facing usage of the Sonoma County logo by Sonoma County Tourism, Sonoma County Vintners, and Sonoma County Winegrowers, the Sonoma County brand mark will be used. For internal business applications, each organization will use the Sonoma County brand mark with the organization name below, each in a different color. These logos will replace currently used logos for each organization.

Need more information?

Contact Sonoma County Vintners Director of Marketing Bryan Carr at bryan@sonomawine.com or 707/522-5843.

###