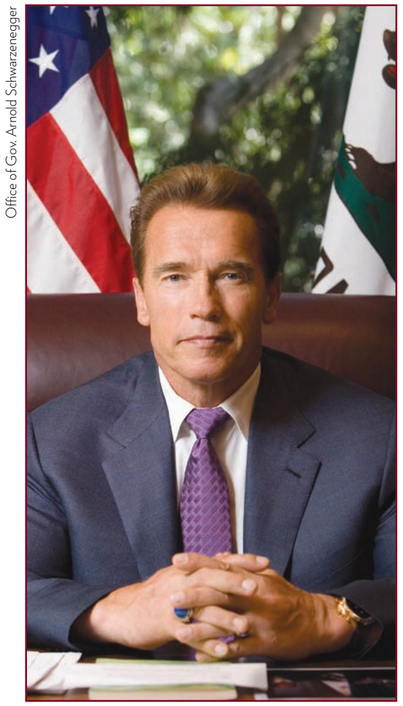
Schwarzenegger Signs New Sonoma Wine Law



Office of Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger

More grapes from Sonoma County are now required in wine with Sonoma on the label

At least 75 percent of grapes used to make wine must be from Sonoma County in order for the region to appear on wine labels or in a brand name, according to a new law signed by California's Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger Sept. 30.

"California produces some of the finest wines in the world. From the delicate Pinot Noir of the Central Coast to the Cabernet from Napa or Sonoma, our state boasts an abundance of remarkable wines," said Gov. Schwarzenegger in a statement. "This bill is important for wine makers and consumers as it protects the integrity of Sonoma County wines by ensuring that a bottle's label accurately reflects its contents."

The Senate bill introduced by Sen. Wesley Chesbro, D-Arcata, applies to wine produced, bottled or labeled after Dec. 31, 2008. It was designed to close loopholes in federal brand name legislation from 1986 in which a grandfather clause exempted brand names already in use.

The new law has its detractors. "It's inconsistent with the Napa statute," said Wendell Lee, general counsel for the Wine Institute, the California wine industry's main lobbying organization. "It's very selective in the protection that it rendered. It was pretty clear to us that some of the unintended consequences would be dramatic if we didn't make an effort to change the bill." The lobby did have an impact: "It started out as a fairly overreaching bill," continued Lee. "In its first incarnation it would have applied to all counties, but as more counties started to object to being included, it shrank rapidly from a 54-county bill to a one-county bill."

One change that Lee considers a win: "Carneros straddles both Napa and Sonoma. There's a provision within the bill that allows for wineries located in both counties to use the term Sonoma in their advertising."

"We saw a lot of inconsistencies—and there should be consistent laws," says Gladys Horiuchi, spokesperson for the Wine Institute. "This is not to say that anyone will be out of compliance—we have the federal laws. We just want the individual county laws to be consistent. It can be very confusing to have these county regulations on top of the federal regulations."

As an example, Horiuchi cites the North Coast viticultural area. "It contains five counties, including Sonoma," she says. "Federal regulations require that 85 percent of grapes are from within the boundaries of the viticultural region in order for the name to appear on the label." But now in order to use the name Sonoma in advertising, producers would need 75 percent of grapes to be grown in that region alone.

California is one of the largest wine producers in the world, supplying more than $27 billion in products every year. The wine industry contributes $45.4 billion to the state economy and 200,000 jobs. California's 1,300 commercial wineries are predominantly small or family owned-and-operated businesses.

Christie's Images Ltd. 2006

Sold, to the Romulan in the Front!

STAR TREK WINE BOTTLES AUCTIONED OFF FOR THOUSANDS

Two empty wine bottles recently sold for $6,600 at an auction at Christie's New York. Used as props in the 2002 movie *Star Trek: Nemesis*, the Chateau Picard labels boast a 2267 vintage and were designed by graphic artist Monica Fedrick for the film, according to the official lot notes. The bottles appear in the Data character's memorial scene at the end of the movie.

Part of a sale to celebrate the CBS Paramount Television Studios series' 40th anniversary, the bottles were estimated to go for $700 and were one of 1,000 lots of *Star Trek* memorabilia including costumes, props, set dressings and detailed models. The auction brought in $7,107,040—more than double expectations.

Cabernet Sauvignon May Help Alzheimer's Patients

NEW STUDY POINTS TO MORE HEALTH BENEFITS FROM RED WINE

Cabernet Sauvignon may help reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease when consumed in moderation, according to a study directed by Mount Sinai School of Medicine.

"This new breakthrough in findings is another step forward in Alzheimer's research," said the study's co-author, Dr. Giulio Maria Pasinetti of Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York City. "These findings give researchers and millions of families a glimpse of light at the end of the long dark tunnel for future prevention of this disease."

An estimated 4.5 million Americans have AD, for which currently there is no known cure or effective preventive strategy. This study is the first to report that Cabernet Sauvignon significantly reduced the deterioration of spatial memory function and a type of neuropathology, based on its findings with mice. "This study supports epidemiological evidence indicating that moderate wine consumption, within the range recommended by the FDA dietary guidelines of one drink per day for women and two for men, may help reduce the relative risk for AD clinical dementia," says Dr. Pasinetti.

Dr. Pasinetti collaborated on the study with other researchers at Mount Sinai and at the University of Florida's Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition. It is published in the November 2006 issue of *The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology Journal* and was presented at the Society for Neuroscience meeting in Atlanta in October.

By Jove, the English are Selling Wine

SALES OF WINE MADE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM HAVE RISEN FOUR CONSECUTIVE YEARS

Sales of English wines have increased an average of 30 percent each year for the past four years and are expected to jump even higher, according to Julia Trustram Eve, spokeswoman for English Wine Producers, a marketing association for English wine producers. Average production of English wine is 1.9 million bottles (with less than 10 percent currently exported), but this year's harvest may produce 3 million bottles. "We have the promise of a bumper crop—potentially the largest on record," Eve said.

Global warming may be a factor. "Global warming has contributed a long, warm autumn season, which ripens the grapes wonderfully and brings forward the start of harvesting," Eve remarked. "Additionally, vineyards are creeping further north—this year alone, two 10-acre vineyards were planted just outside York—although the greatest region of expansion is still the southeast of England."

In addition to a warmer climate, Eve attributes the rise of English wine to better publicity and the subsequent awareness of English wines. "The greatest publicity our industry has received has been over the international awards some of our producers—particularly our sparkling wine producers—have achieved."

English Wine Producers

Workers dutifully harvest grapes for England's largest wine producer, Chapel Down Wines.

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Every Sunday we host a Winetaster's Brunch, a four course Brunch, including Frogtown wine pairings.

~ MENU ~

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2004 Steel Chardonnay

Strawberry Cheesecake Pancakes
2004 Vineaux Rosé

Chicken Cannelloni
2004 Sangiovese

Handmade Desserts & Coffee

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For additional information, please visit:
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