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regular  
City Council mtg  
napa valley vintners

June 21, 2011

Mayor Jack Gingles  
Calistoga City Council  
1307 Washington Street  
Calistoga, CA 94515

Re: Establishing rules to protect Napa wine appellation & grape sourcing

Dear Mayor Jack Gingles and City Council members:

Over two years ago, Napa County wine industry leaders requested that the City of Calistoga adopt wine-related policies that are consistent with the long-established and successful provisions of Napa County's Winery Definition Ordinance (WDO). As you are now faced with more proposals to establish wineries in Calistoga, we urge you to establish rules to be consistent with the WDO.

Recent successful efforts of the agricultural community to gain recognition of the Calistoga viticultural appellation brings Calistoga's name to the fore of the valley's wine marketing, a very important benefit to the city. It is time that the city joins in supporting the high-quality standards that consumers have come to expect from Napa Valley wines.

Long-standing WDO provisions mandate that wineries which are permitted to operate in Napa County must source at least 75% of their grapes from within Napa County. The WDO also restricts public tours and tastings as well as the types of retail sales permitted at wineries. These policies have played a critical role in protecting the integrity of the Napa Valley appellation and, therefore, in protecting the economic base of our entire community. Our economic strength can be attributed to our world-renowned quality and our future depends on protecting and strengthening what we have fought so hard to establish.

We note also that Calistoga is rapidly becoming a center for winery tasting rooms downtown. Winery tasting rooms are distinct from retail wine shops which purchase and sell wines from multiple sources and must possess a Type 20, 21 or 42 license from ABC. Winery tasting rooms are permitted as an off-site use under the Type 02 Producer license from ABC which permits the winery to operate. As they are derived from the winery's license to operate, winery tasting rooms should also adhere to the WDO and pour only wines made from a minimum 75% Napa Valley grapes, which are labeled Napa Valley or a sub-appellation thereof.

Calistoga is now presented with a unique opportunity. Long-famed for its health-giving waters and spas, Calistoga can become a destination for the healthy enjoyment of high-quality Napa Valley wines in conjunction with its traditional historic mud and healing water treatments.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,

Jim Lincoln  
Napa County Farm Bureau

David Beckstoffer  
Napa Valley Grapegrowers

Linda Reiff  
Napa Valley Vintners