

**For immediate release**

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**ZINFANDEL HERITAGE VINEYARD HARVESTS 1.6 ON 10/12/06  
1.6 TONS FROM EXPERIMENTAL VINEYARD IN OAKVILLE**

Oakville, Napa Valley, spring 2007---Zinfandel grapes from the one-acre Heritage Vineyard within UC Davis' Experimental Station in Oakville were harvested on October 12, 2006. Storybook Mountain winemaker/owner Jerry Seps is the winemaker for The Heritage Vineyard for the 2006 vintage. He explained: "Jason Benz, who has immediate supervision of The Heritage Vineyard, did an excellent job again in 2006. Given the diverse materials, growth patterns, the nature of the soil at the Oakville site, and the unusual aspects of the vintage, it is only with great care that he brought out the best in these vines. Considerable culling was necessary this year, but the 1.6 tons that emerged on October 12 came with attractive flavors and potential."

The grapes were picked in the early morning and transported immediately to Storybook Mountain in Calistoga. On the high side were L-malic acid at 3.62 g/L, potassium at 1990 mg/L, Brix at 26.5 and pH at 3.69. Ammonia and alpha-amino compounds were on the low side at 125mg/L. The must was adjusted as appropriate during a long 17-day fermentation. Malolactic was initiated upon barreling, and completed by mid December. The wine is aging in 2003 Hungarian oak barrels. Bottling is not currently planned until early 2008.

"What is beginning to emerge is a relatively forward wine of complexity and rich flavors, with good weight and an attractive finish," Seps commented recently.

The Heritage Vineyard is an unusual and unprecedented collection of Zinfandel selections from historic vines averaging over 80 years of age planted in vineyards all over California.

Zinfandel Advocates & Producers, a group of Zinfandel-producing wineries and consumer Zinfandel enthusiasts, has supported research into Zinfandel at the Heritage Vineyard since 1998, contributing a total of \$207,240. "These are the largest grants from an independent organization focused on one specific wine-grape varietal," explained Dr. James Wolpert, the Chairman, UC Davis Department of Viticulture & Enology. ZAP also funds a number of other Heritage Zinfandel projects, including the Amador Foothills Experimental Vineyard, publication of a resource directory and scholarships.

Each year a different ZAP winemaker member makes the wine: 1997 was made by Nils Venge (Saddleback Cellars); 1998 by Robert Biale (Robert Biale Vineyards); 1999 by Matt Cline (Trinitas Cellars); 2000 by Rod Berglund (Joseph Swan Vineyards); 2001 by Joel Peterson (Ravenswood); 2002 by Ehren Jordan

(Turley Wine Cellars), 2003 by Paul Draper (Ridge Vineyards), 2004 by Kent Rosenblum (Rosenblum Wine Cellars) and 2005 by William Knuttel (Dry Creek Vineyard & Ottimino).

The Heritage Vineyard wines are always---and only---available for purchase at ZAP's Annual Festival Tasting at Ft. Mason in San Francisco every January.

Tasting notes available at [http://www.zinfandel.org/about\\_zin/](http://www.zinfandel.org/about_zin/).

In 1989 Wolpert and a team of scientists (UC Extension Viticulturalist Emeritus Amand Kasimatis, UC Extension Farm Advisors Glen McGourty, Ed Weber and Rhonda Smith) began going on "Zinfandel safaris" throughout California searching for Zinfandel vineyards planted before 1930 and specific vines which were known to produce distinctive and superb quality wine. Today the three "phases" in the Heritage Vineyard total 90 different selections from 12 different regions---Alameda, Amador, Contra Costa, El Dorado, Mendocino, Napa, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Clara and Sonoma Counties and the Cucamonga region in southern California. Another aspect of the ongoing research into the Zinfandel grape is Dr. Carole Meredith's search for Zinfandel's origins.

Zinfandel has an important role in American cultural history as well as American viticulture. It is the only wine grape varietal considered unique to the U.S. by the federal government. "Zinfandel is at the heart of California's contribution to the world of fine wine. Just as Europe has established the reputation of the historic varietals, California has established Zinfandel and set its standard of excellence for the world," Paul Draper explains. Stylistically, it is the most diverse wine made in the U.S. and possibly in the world. "Zinfandel is a grape variety of noble stature and we are fortunate that it has no historical stylistic context anywhere else in the world which restricts our winemakers' creativity," Dr. Wolpert explains. "Few New World wine regions have had the opportunity to create a new great wine," he adds. Numerous California Zinfandel vineyards were planted in northern California during the Gold Rush. From the 1860s to the early 1990s it was the most widely planted varietal in California; this is why Zinfandel is called "America's heritage grape."

The Heritage Vineyard is planted at 6x8 feet (row x vine) spacing in gravelly Bale loam soil on St. George rootstock. The vines are hand-pruned and trained in the "goblet" shape as they would have been in the nineteenth century. "The Heritage Vineyard requires authenticity," explains Wolpert. "We need to replicate the conditions which gave Zinfandel its reputation. Our use of St. George as the rootstock, nearly square spacing and head-trained spur-pruned vines supported only by stakes is a design you would have seen a hundred years ago. Our only concession to modern viticulture is a subsurface drip irrigation system," he adds.

What is the long-term goal of the Heritage Vineyard research? "It's our responsibility as vineyardists, winemakers, craftsmen and keepers of the flame that we seek out the purest and finest quality clones of Zinfandel in California, isolate them, nurture them, study them and then possibly make them available commercially on a large scale, all to insure that Zinfandel moves into the next millennium in its most superb incarnation," explains Kent Rosenblum of Rosenblum Cellars, a ZAP vintner. "The Heritage Vineyard is a vibrant 'ongrowing' museum of the grape," adds winemaker Mary Buckles Pisor, who helped make the 1997 Heritage Vineyard Zinfandel at Saddleback Cellars. "The vineyard is of tremendous historical and viticultural interest to those fascinated by Zinfandel. For the consumer, the Heritage Vineyard is living history and provides an easily accessible demonstration of where Zinfandel is really made---in the vineyard. For the wine industry, it has special significance because it represents a resource for future plantings of Zinfandel with a broad range of selections."

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