



Rain. Sun. Fruit. Juice.

Drought mindset persists for Paso Robles CAB Collective members even after wet winter

September 26, 2017 (Paso Robles, Calif.) – A five year drought, followed by an historically wet winter and a record-breaking heat wave have culminated in a promising harvest for members of the [Paso Robles CAB Collective](#) (PRCC). With harvest at full throttle, member wineries are seeing their drought survival techniques being rewarded with above average yields of long, loose clusters. The even ripening hints at a vintage that will be renowned for its flavor concentration and complexity of fruit.

“The rainfall this year created a significant rebound in our water tables and eliminated the need to irrigate during the winter months and we’re optimistic that the healthier soils will produce a benchmark vintage across our red Bordeaux varietals,” said Andy Niner, owner of Niner Wine Estates.

PRCC member wineries began taking proactive measures in their vineyards as the drought took its toll. Beginning with an abnormally dry year in 2012, the Paso Robles AVA quickly progressed from moderate to severe to extreme drought levels and eventually reached the Exceptional Drought designation in 2014, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor. It became evident to members that a new norm was developing across the state and the traditional methods for irrigation and vineyard management would need to adapt. The result has been a conversion to deficit irrigation strategies that force roots deeper for moisture, planting of new rootstocks that are drought resistant, and installation of sophisticated devices, including soil monitoring stations for ensuring that the vines are truly in need of water.

The wet winter, which quickly washed the excess salts from the soil and improved water tables levels, was juxtaposed by the summer’s late heat wave which featured temperatures peaking at 115°F in early September. While more extreme than in prior years, the summer heat was not unexpected and provided an opportunity to test new techniques such as trellising with wider cross arms and use of shade cloth. David Parrish, winemaker at Parrish Family Vineyard, has been leading the shade cloth movement, working to develop a product that offered a weave suitable for airflow and easy hanging, in addition to being cost effective and reusable. The white cloth aids in light distribution, filtering the direct sunlight and reflecting the natural sunlight throughout the day resulting in more even lighting and more consistent fruit.

As PRCC vintners diligently worked toward the conclusion of another successful harvest they also find themselves reflecting on the lessons learned over the last five years. Most have been growing grapes in Paso Robles long enough to recognize that one wet winter does not change the long-term forecast and the next drought is likely imminent. To ensure viability over time, the vintners acknowledge that changes made in their vineyards over the last five years will need to continue.

Sponsors of the Paso Robles CAB Collective are: [Smurfit Kappa](#), [The Tasting Panel Magazine](#), [The Somm Journal](#), [Seguin Moreau](#), [Fiji Water](#), [Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance](#), [The Bottle Meister](#), [Martinez Farming](#), [Travel Paso Robles Alliance](#), [Encore Glass](#), [Umpqua Bank](#), [Nomacorc](#), [Pacific Premier Bank](#), [Cork Supply](#), [Crop Production Services](#), [Farm Credit West](#), [Lafitte Cork & Capsule](#), [TricorBraun](#), [Moss-Adams](#), [Peltier Glassworks](#), [Portocork](#), [Longcrier & Associates](#), [Glenn Burdette](#), [The Blueprinter](#), [Vineyard Professional Services](#), and [Breakaway Tours and Event Planning](#).

The 28 distinguished wineries of the Paso Robles CAB Collective are: [Adelaida Vineyards & Winery](#), [Allegretto Vineyards & Wines](#), [Ancient Peaks Winery](#), [Brecon Estate](#), [Calcareous Vineyard](#), [Cass Vineyard & Winery](#), [Castoro Cellars](#), [Chateau Margene](#), [Clos Solène](#), [DAOU Vineyards & Winery](#), [Eberle Winery](#), [Halter Ranch Vineyard](#), [Hoyt Family Vineyards](#), [J. Lohr Vineyard & Wines](#), [JUSTIN Vineyards & Winery](#), [Lions Peak Vineyards](#), [Niner Wine Estates](#), [Opolo Vineyards](#), [Parrish Family Vineyard](#), [Pomar Junction Vineyard & Winery](#), [RN Estate Vineyard & Winery](#), [Robert Hall Winery](#), [Rotta Winery](#), [San Antonio Winery](#), [Sextant Wines](#), [The Farm Winery](#), [Treana Winery](#) and [Vina Robles Vineyards & Winery](#).

ABOUT THE PASO ROBLES CAB COLLECTIVE

Formed in 2012, the Paso Robles CAB (Cabernet and Bordeaux) Collective (PRCC) is an independent collaborative effort of leading Paso Robles growers and producers of Cabernet and red Bordeaux varietals specific to the Paso Robles AVA in California. The PRCC strives to promote to trade, media and consumers the full potential of the Paso Robles region in producing superior quality, classic and age-worthy Cabernet and red Bordeaux varietals that compete on a global stage. For more information, please visit www.pasoroblescab.com.

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