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## CA Grape Crush Report: Mendocino County Strong in Top Varietals – Prices Climb, Yield Remains High

Feb. 10, 2014 – Ukiah, Calif. -- The 2013 harvest was a strong success for most Mendocino County vineyards and wineries, according to the National Agricultural Statistics Service's 2013 Preliminary California Grape Crush Report. 2013 yielded another record tonnage and Mendocino prices continue their strong surge. The overall value of the harvest was the largest on record for the county.

As the grape market tightens, the prices for Mendocino fruit continue their climb. Chardonnay prices continue their rebound throughout the county, up 13% from their 2010 lull. Mendocino Pinot Noir held strong at an average of \$2,652 per ton, with Anderson Valley fruit commanding premiums substantially above this mark. In the 2013 harvest, Cabernet Sauvignon displaced Pinot Noir as the county's second-highest yielding varietal, following Chardonnay in the #1 spot. Pinot continues to be Mendocino's highest-earning crop per ton, earning nearly the same prices as the much larger neighboring regions.

"Here in the northern reaches of Mendocino County, wineries are still talking about the nearly perfect 2013 vintage," according to Jake Fetzer of Masút Vineyard and Winery. "In one of our newest growing regions, Eagle Peak, the Pinot Noirs are showing tremendous color and depth."

Mendocino Vineyards harvest a total of 77,709 tons, which measures nearly 12% above the 5 years average. Of the key varietals grown in Mendocino, Chardonnay (15% above average), Cabernet Sauvignon (17%), and Sauvignon Blanc (30%) showed the best results. Pinot Noir and Syrah held to similar patterns as previous years. Many consider nearly all of these figures as terrific news for the county.

"This report focuses on quantity, but you can see what it says about quality, too," says Dennis Walsh of Judson Hale Winery in the Yorkville Highlands. "We are a very small producer of Pinot and Chard. We manage those varietals so we don't over-crop and our tonnage is very consistent from year to year. Our wines keep scoring higher vintage after vintage, and we feel that the 2013 vintage of Pinot is exceptional and will show very well when released in 2015."

The Grape Crush Report is a compilation of annual grape harvest transactions published by the US Department of Agriculture. For more analysis from our growers and wineries, please contact our experts on the next page:

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