

Santa Rosa, CA, November 15, 2011 - The fourth annual Sonoma Summit brought 35 top wine buyers and sommeliers to Sonoma County for a three-day immersion in Sonoma County wines November 7-9. Sonoma Summit is jointly sponsored by Sonoma County Vintners and the Sonoma County Winegrape Commission, and is produced by Full Circle Wine Solutions and moderated by Master Sommelier Evan Goldstein.

In addition to tasting over 80 of Sonoma County's finest wines during seven master classes and other events and activities, attendees met over 45 Sonoma County winemakers and grape growers, which allowed them the opportunity to hear about the vineyard sites, growing conditions, and winemaking firsthand.

Attendees represent some of North America's most prestigious restaurants and hotels and are considered influencers and thought leaders in the wine trade. "Our goal is to teach the thought leaders in key accounts and markets across the US and Canada, so that they can deepen their understanding and appreciation of all that Sonoma County wine offers, and become ambassadors for our wines in their home markets," said **Sonoma County Vintners Executive Director Honore Comfort**.

"This year's Sonoma Summit allowed us to showcase the interactions between grower and winemaker that are essential to producing world class wines," said **Nick Frey, President of the Sonoma County Winegrape Commission**

. "A Sonoma County grape grower participated in almost every session, providing our guests with additional perspective and insights."

"The organization of this event was top-notch and one of the best I have ever attended," said **Robert Smith, MS, Wine Director at Picasso Restaurant, Bellagio Resort, Las Vegas**

. "I leave with a full sense of the people, more understanding of the place, and stories to take home with me."

"I gained a sense of why I like the wines so much, especially Chardonnay and Pinot Noir," Said **Jonathan Pullis, MS, Wine Director, The Little Nell, Aspen, Colorado**

. "Being here and getting a better sense of place is a real plus. I have a better understanding

now of the great balance of the wines, and how it comes to be.”

“It was incredible and a great honor to be here,” said **Wilfred Wong, Head Buyer at Beverages and More!**

“The program is perfect for any serious wine professional and there is plenty to learn no matter how long you have been in the business.”

“The talk about sites, clonal selections, and soils was fascinating. The future of these relatively new growing areas will be even more interesting for me to watch evolve with the deeper understanding that I have gained,” said **Jennifer Heuther, MS, Director of Food and Beverage for Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment, Toronto, Ontario**

“As someone who offers so many Pinot Noirs and Chardonnays on their wine list, being amongst the vineyards, winemakers and other sommeliers to share ideas and explore the wines was really powerful, especially in this type of group and format,” said **Jennifer Knowles, Wine Director, Inn at Little Washington, Washington, Virginia**

About Sonoma County Vintners

Sonoma County Vintners is the leading voice of Sonoma County wine, dedicated to increasing awareness and improving the quality image of its wines to consumers, media, and trade locally and globally. With almost 65,000 vineyard acres planted among the county’s 13 American Viticultural Areas (AVAs), Sonoma County is considered one of the world’s premier winegrowing regions, producing an unparalleled range of varietals and wine styles. SCV has promoted this diversity and quality since 1944, and currently represents more than 175 member wineries and 25 Affiliate Members. For more information on the wines and wineries of Sonoma County, visit www.sonomawine.com

About Sonoma County Winegrape Commission

The Sonoma County Winegrape Commission was established in 2006 as a non-profit marketing and educational organization dedicated to the promotion of Sonoma County as one of the world's premier grape growing regions. SCWC's goal is to increase awareness and recognition of the quality and diversity of Sonoma County's grapes and wines through dynamic marketing and educational programs targeted to wine consumers around the world. For more information about SCWC and its programs, visit www.sonomawinegrape.org

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2011 Sonoma Summit attendees from the US and Canada at MacMurray Ranch in Russian River Valley.