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Petaluma Gap Winegrowers Celebrate the First Anniversary of the Petaluma Gap American Viticultural Area (AVA) on January 8th with a Showcase of Wine Labels and 90+ Point Ratings

Petaluma, CA, January 9, 2019 -- On January 8, 2018, the first wine labels bearing the Petaluma Gap American Viticultural Area (AVA) were submitted by winemakers to the Alcohol, Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) for approval by the federal government. A year later, the Petaluma Gap Winegrowers Alliance (PGWA) are cheering on its growers and winemakers for the plethora of wines now bearing the AVA on the label and for the accolades these wines are receiving from top wine writers and reviewers. "We are thrilled to see so many of our winery members receiving 90+ point ratings on the wines they are making from grapes grown in the Petaluma Gap. The wind that defines our wines is challenging for our growers, but also rewarding for our winemakers. Grapes grown in the Petaluma Gap typically ripen more slowly, but there are many rewards that result from the longer hang-time" said Justin Seinfeld, winemaker for Rodney Strong and President of the Petaluma Gap Winegrowers Alliance.

There are now dozens of winemakers who have labeled their wines with the Petaluma Gap AVA and more than half of PGWA members have received 90+ point ratings on wines produced from Petaluma Gap fruit. At the first anniversary celebration on January 8th, videos were shown of the Petaluma Gap labels and those wines that have received top ratings. "It's been a busy year from the Petaluma Gap Winegrowers, with a formal celebration in May of the approval of the AVA where government dignitaries presented proclamations from the State of California and the Federal Government for the approval of the AVA, a series of technical seminars to educate members on select topics focused on the Petaluma Gap AVA, and participation in several Sonoma County Vintners' promotional events including the Sonoma County Barrel Auction, Taste of Sonoma and the Sommelier Summit," said Cheryl Quist, Executive Director.

"At a recent board of directors meeting, we agreed that the approval of the AVA is not the end-goal of our mission, it was really just the beginning. The next phase is to educate consumers about Petaluma Gap wines, and having the AVA on the label is the first step in that process" said Erica Stancliff, Vice President of the Board and Winemaker at Trombetta Family Wines. The group plans several activities in 2019 including a technical seminar series and continued activities with Sonoma County Vintners, as well as participation in other industry events. For more information see www.petalumagap.com.

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About the Alliance

Founded in 2005, the Petaluma Gap Winegrowers Alliance (PGWA) exists to educate members of the wine trade and consumers about the Petaluma Gap and to increase awareness of the region's unique growing conditions and resulting wine quality. PGWA additionally supports member winegrowers and vintners within the region through ongoing programs and communications designed to help them maximize their success within the industry. The group's membership is made up of grape growers, wineries, associate business members, sponsors and local community members with a passion for the region and its wine. Throughout the year, the group conducts educational events and tastings independently and through the Sonoma County Vintners.