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The Petaluma Gap is named as Newest American Viticultural Area (AVA)

This long-awaited ruling recognizes the distinctive growing characteristics of this unique region.

Petaluma, CA, December 7, 2017—The Petaluma Gap Winegrowers Alliance (PGWA) applauds the final rulemaking by the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB), establishing the Petaluma Gap on California’s North Coast as its newest designated AVA. This ruling defines the unique grape-growing area in southern Sonoma County and northern Marin County and acknowledges the region’s distinctive aspects based on topography and the effects of persistent wind and fog on the grapevines. Of the 4,000 acres of vineyards in the 200,000-acre region, 75% are planted to Pinot Noir with most of the remaining acres equally planted to Chardonnay and Syrah; other grape varieties comprise less than 1% of the planted acreage.

“We are very excited to announce the official approval of the Petaluma Gap AVA in the Federal Register” said Rickey Trombetta, President of the Board of Directors of the PGWA. “Being able to proudly include this designation on our labels makes it easier for consumers to seek out and identify the wines of our members. Local winemakers have long known that grapes grown in the Petaluma Gap ripen more slowly than in surrounding regions, allowing later harvest times which results in more complex flavor development while preserving natural acidity. With today’s finalization of the AVA, winelovers and members of the wine trade will have the opportunity to become more familiar with the distinctive quality and flavor profile of Petaluma Gap wines.”

The PGWA petition was submitted to the TTB in February 2015 and the proposal to establish the Petaluma Gap as an official AVA was published by the bureau in October, 2016. The final rule was published on December 7, 2017.

The Petaluma Gap AVA includes some 80 winegrowers and 9 wineries, with additional fruit sold to many other wineries throughout northern California. 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.