



Sonoma, Ca (August 15, 2018) - The Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Alliance (SVVGA), a non-profit trade association representing more than 100 wineries and 140 grape growers in Sonoma Valley, welcomed the first grape pick of the 2018 Harvest this morning at 4:00am at Sangiacomo Family Vineyards' Kiser Vineyard in Los Carneros. Approximately 20 tons of Pinot Noir grapes were brought in for sparkling wine for Gloria Ferrer Caves & Vineyards. This is the 194th winegrape Harvest in Sonoma Valley.

“The 2018 Season is shaping up to be very nice,” said Steven Sangiacomo of Sangiacomo Family Vineyards, a third-generation grape grower and farmer in Sonoma Valley. “We are a little later than the last three years but those were early years so we are close to what would be normal maturity. The yields look to be promising but the exciting part is the extended hang time should lead to more developed flavors in the grapes. Long way to go in the race but we are off and running as they say. “

To commemorate the beginning of the 2018 vintage, the entire Sonoma Valley community will participate in a valley-wide bell ringing at high noon this afternoon. Growers, vintners, the local wine community, Sonoma Valley Fire and Police departments, local elected officials, industry partners and more will gather in the Sonoma Plaza today to celebrate the start of Harvest with the official bell ringing.

In recognition of Sonoma Valley's kickoff to the 2018 Harvest, Congressman Mike Thompson (CA-05) will have the American Flag flown over our nation's capital!

Earlier this July, SVVGA commemorated another new tradition called the Harvest Kickoff Party, where more than 250 vintners and growers gathered at Serres Ranch to share in a celebration and toast of the region's most anticipated time of year. During the kickoff, Steven Sangiacomo stood in for his father Angelo Sangiacomo who was voted the Honorary Bell Ringer of the first commemorative Sonoma Valley Harvest Bell. To further commemorate this new tradition, the American Flag flown over the capital will be dedicated to the Sangiacomo Family who rang in harvest.

SVVGA Board President and vintner Kenneth Juhasz of Auteur Wines, quotes, “Our heritage of leadership in California winemaking, exceptional growing conditions and iconic vineyard sites, and commitment to winegrowing and winemaking world-class wines is especially evident in the grapes and wines we are producing.”

SVVGA encourages community members and the public to follow along today on Facebook and Instagram for live video of the bell ringing, and later this season as harvest continues across Sonoma Valley.

SVVGA recognizes the hard work and unprecedented dedication of Sonoma Valley vintners, growers and our skilled labor force in producing the highest quality winegrapes and world-class wines.

### **About SVVGA**

The Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Alliance (SVVGA) is a non-profit organization serving over 500 members who share a mission to promote awareness of Sonoma Valley's grapes, wine and history as the birthplace of the California wine industry. Sonoma Valley comprises six of the seventeen American Viticulture Areas (AVAs) of Sonoma County: Bennett Valley, Los Carneros, Moon Mountain District, Sonoma Coast, Sonoma Mountain and Sonoma Valley. To learn more about the SVVGA visit [www.SonomaValleyWine.com](http://www.SonomaValleyWine.com) or call 707-935-0803.

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