



The Century Club





California joined the United States in 1850, meaning we're not even 200 years old. So it's remarkable to think that Sonoma County has farms and ranches that have been in business for 100 years or more.

In Sonoma County growing wine grapes and making wine is a way of life, a form of sustenance, a multigenerational legacy, a way of keeping agriculture vibrant and sustained. Grapes have been planted here since 1812, when Russian traders first established Fort Ross on the Sonoma Coast. By 1823, the most northern and final of California's 21 missions was built in Sonoma County and thousands of vines were planted to provide wine to those missions.

Twelve years later, Mexico's General Mariano Vallejo founded the town of Sonoma around the mission and planted more vines, aiming for better quality.

Seven years after California became the 31st state in the Union, Cyrus Alexander planted vines in northern Sonoma County and Agoston Haraszthy founded Buena Vista Winery, California's first commercial winery focused on quality production. It was Haraszthy who brought 100,000 cuttings of 350 varieties

from France, Germany, Italy and Spain, planting these cuttings throughout Sonoma and influencing what we grow and enjoy today.

By 1920, Sonoma County was home to 256 wineries and 22,000 vineyard acres, a thriving industry tampered only by the evils of Prohibition, enduring from 1920 to 1933, which killed all but 50 of those wineries. However, farming continued. With the allowance of home winemaking, vineyard acreage actually grew to 30,000 acres during this time.

By the early 1950s, Hanzell would plant the region's first Pinot Noir and Chardonnay near what we now call Moon Mountain. Gail and Warren Dutton planted some of the Russian River Valley's first Chardonnay in 1967; in 1968 Joe Rochioli Jr. planted Pinot Noir.

By 1981, Sonoma County was designated an American Viticultural Area, among the first in the United States. Two years later, Carneros, Chalk Hill, Dry Creek, Knights Valley, Russian River Valley and Green Valley were further delineated as AVAs. Today, Sonoma County has 19 separate appellations stretched across its 1.1 million acres, nearly 60,000 acres of which are planted.

In 1989, wine grapes became Sonoma County's top earning crop as fine wines replaced bulk and jug wine production, and by 2018 Sonoma County had earned the second highest average price for grapes in the state, with Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay leading the way.

All of these families we honor as inaugural members of the Century Club from across different pockets of Sonoma County survived not only Prohibition, but phylloxera, two world wars, the Great Depression, an American population just learning about wine, changing consumer preferences, a global pandemic and so much more. But they persevered, took chances and grew our wine industry the hard way, with no short cuts. We all benefit from their hard work today. It takes a lot to make it to 100. Congratulations to all.

~ Virginie Boone



The Azevedo Family

Azevedo A-Bar Ranch

The Azevedo family has deep roots in Sonoma County, with the purchase of their Healdsburg property dating back to 1904. Great-grandfather José Azevedo and his wife Marianna cleared the land, using timber to produce charcoal, and raised beef and dairy cattle. The dairy operated until 1950, and over time, parts of the land were converted to prunes and eventually, grapes. In 1919, the family founded Azevedo Winery, which was briefly shut down during Prohibition but resumed after its repeal in 1934. Today, the family farms 18 acres of winegrapes at Azevedo A-Bar Ranch, with all grapes sold to third parties. While pieces of the ranch were sold off in the 1960s and 1980s, the property has remained in family hands for over 120 years. Today, John Azevedo oversees the family's vineyards in partnership with his mother Patricia. Their legacy continues as John and his wife Alicia welcomed the fifth generation, daughter Micaela, in December of 2023.



The Bacigalupi & Gaddini Family

Bacigalupi Vineyards

The Gaddini family's history began in 1879 when John Gaddini and Elizabeth Passalacqua married and had three children. In 1883, they acquired a ranch near Healdsburg, where they operated a winery, vineyards, and farm. In 1909, they built Laurel Springs Winery, which still stands today. Their daughter Olive Gaddini married Albert Bacigalupi, connecting the families in Sonoma County's rich history. Their son Charles and his wife Helen purchased 121 acres on Westside Road in 1956 and planted some of the first Pinot Noir in the Russian River Valley. Bacigalupi fruit gained international recognition when a 1973 Chardonnay made with their grapes won the 1976 Paris Tasting, elevating American wine on the global stage. Today, the family farms 150 acres of premium grapes and raises beef cattle, with four generations involved in the business. They supply grapes to 25 wineries and produce a limited amount of estate wines. Helen's son, John Bacigalupi, and his wife Pam now manage the winery and vineyard with their twin daughters, Nicole and Katey. A fourth generation, through Nicole's and Katey's children, ensures the family's legacy continues.





The Bastoni Family

Bastoni Vineyards

In March 1905, Pasquale and Luigi Bastoni arrived in Santa Rosa, California, from northern Italy, beginning the family's legacy in the U.S. They purchased 160 acres of land in northeast Santa Rosa, which was later passed down to Pasquale's son. The original vineyards, planted with Zinfandel on St. George rootstock, included a field blend of Alicante Bouschet, Petite Sirah, Carignan, and Palomino, but over time dwindled to 13 acres. Three generations later, Martha Bastoni Messina and her husband Russ replanted the vineyards with a focus on Zinfandel and Alicante Bouschet. The family repurchased land over the years, expanding to 37 acres today. Bastoni Vineyards, located in the historic Fountaingrove District, features a 1921 house, a traditional bread oven, and remnants of old farm structures. Certified Fish Friendly Farming since 2002, the vineyard is also known for its holiday tradition: a spectacular light display synchronized to music, enjoyed by the local community each December.



The Bisordi Family

Bisordi Ranch & Vineyards

The Bisordi family began farming in the Russian River Valley in 1898, when Eugenio Bisordi settled in Fulton, California. An Italian immigrant who traveled to America in search of a better future, he established the ranch with two teams of horses and farmed tomatoes, prunes, hops, and winegrapes. Henry and Barbara Bisordi, the next generation to farm Bisordi Ranch, later farmed winegrapes, prunes, pears, apples, and walnuts, operating a commercial farming business for orchards and vineyard management. The family has continuously farmed in Sonoma County and currently farms 20 acres in Russian River Valley, focusing on sustainable farming practices for their walnuts, chestnuts, olives, eggs, zinfandel and chardonnay winegrapes. They are proud to have the sixth generation, Hailey Jane Gallegos, involved in the operation.





The Bundschu Family

Bundschu Company

In 1857, Bavarian-born Jacob Gundlach owned a successful brewery in San Francisco and looked to follow his father's footsteps into winemaking. He purchased a 400-acre parcel of land in Sonoma and christened it Rhinefarm. The next year, Jacob traveled to his homeland and brought back European rootstock, along with his childhood sweetheart and new bride, Eva. Charles Bundschu joined the business in 1868, and married Jacob's daughter Francisca in 1875. The next 30 years saw phenomenal growth for their wines. The 1906 earthquake and Prohibition caused setbacks, but the family rebuilt and replanted, and in 1973 Jim Bundschu resurrected the winery. In 2016, the family launched Abbot's Passage, a brand honoring the Bundschu women. Today, the sixth generation (Jeff, Katie, Rob, and their spouses) continue the legacy, earning recognition for sustainable farming and being named one of Wine Enthusiast's top 100 wines of the world in 2023.



The Denner Family

Denner Ranches Inc.

Denner Ranches began in 1890 when Russell Lindsey Denner, from Devonshire, England, settled in Sonoma County, planting wine grapes on his 488-acre ranch. Over time, the ranch diversified, raising horses for the U.S. Cavalry, hogs, potatoes, hops, beef and dairy cattle, corn silage and hay. After Russell's death, his son, Russell Alexander Denner, continued the family tradition, and his grandsons, Russell Dreyer and Stanley Wheaton Denner, modernized the ranch with tractors and advanced equipment. In 1994, Russell Wasson and Kathleen Denner co-managed the property, adding 42 acres of Chardonnay grapes and adopting sustainable practices like using reclaimed water for irrigation. Russell and his wife Joanne, who managed the ranch's finances, restored the family's 1915 home, symbolizing their deep ties to the land. In 2023, Denner Ranches entered a conservation easement to preserve its agricultural heritage. Today, the ranch is managed by Russell Wasson and his son, Brian Alexander Denner, who lives on the ranch with his wife, Mary Calla, and their children, continuing the family's legacy of sustainable agriculture.





The Dutton Family

Dutton Ranch Corporation

The Dutton family has been working the land in Sonoma County since the 1880s, growing everything from hops, prunes, string beans, pears, walnuts, hay, apples, and grapes. Dutton Ranch was founded in 1964 when newlyweds Gail and Warren Dutton moved to a home, now the Ranch's main office, on beautiful farmland just outside Graton, California. Together, they grew apples and wine grapes, expanding their business over time. Warren, a fourth-generation Sonoma County farmer, passed down his passion for agriculture to his sons, Steve and Joe, who now own and operate Dutton Ranch with their mother, Gail. The ranch remains a family business, with Steve and Joe instilling their love of farming in the sixth generation: Steve's twins Jake and Jordan work at Dutton Ranch, and Joe's daughters Kylie and Kyndall work at Joe and wife Tracy's winery, Dutton Estate; their third daughter Karmen recently graduated with her master's degree and will work for a few years outside the family business. Today, the fourth, fifth, and sixth generations farm approximately 1,400 acres of sustainable wine grapes and organic apples across the Russian River Valley, Green Valley, and Sonoma Coast appellations. The grapes, grown in three of the nation's most renowned American Viticulture Areas (AVAs), are highly sought after by some of California's most respected wineries.



The Giusti Family

Giusti Ranch & Vineyards

Giusti Ranch & Vineyards was founded in 1875 and has farmed a multitude of agricultural products since then, such as olives, prunes, cherries, apples, and winegrapes. The Giusti family immigrated from San Pelligrinetto, Italy, 150 years ago, beginning their farming tradition here in Sonoma County. Today, the legacy continues and has grown from where it began with olives and grapes, transitioning over the years to prunes, cherries, and apples, and now is back to its roots with grapes and olives. The farm is located in the town of Forestville in western Sonoma County. In 2000, the family planted 9 of its remaining 22-acre Russian River Valley ranch to 3 clones of Pinot Noir. The family currently sells most of their grapes to the prestigious Kosta Browne Winery under the Giusti Ranch Vineyard designate. While the majority of the fruit from the Giusti Vineyard is sold, select rows are maintained for the family label, Via Giusti Wines.





The Kunde Family

Wildwood Vineyards
Arthur Kunde & Sons, Inc

Louis Kunde emigrated from a small village just outside of Dresden, Germany, in 1904 and acquired the 650-acre Wildwood Ranch with its renowned iron-rich, ancient red volcanic soils from James Shaw. The vineyards on this land were initially planted in 1879 by Captain John Drummond, using imported cuttings from Chateaux Margaux and Lafite Rothschild. Following Louis' death in 1922, his son, Arthur "Big Boy" Kunde, took over the winery and vineyards. Big Boy kept the winery operating during the challenging years of Prohibition but was ultimately forced to close the winery when his sons were drafted into service during World War II. During the 1960s and '70s, two of Big Boy's sons, Bob and Fred, significantly expanded the operation, adding the esteemed 1,200-acre Kinneybrook Ranch in 1977. Today, the ranch is managed by fourth and fifth generation Kunde family members. With over 20 varieties, a 1,000-foot elevation change, seven unique microclimates, and two AVAs, the Wildwood and Kinneybrook Ranches are truly one of a kind, with the Kunde family proudly serving as stewards of the land.



The Leras Family

Leras Family Vineyards

The Leras family's connection to Sonoma County dates back to 1918, when Peter Leras, originally from Greece, purchased property in the region. Peter operated a farm on Woolsey Road in Santa Rosa, California, not far from where the family continues to farm today. This rich generational legacy is carried on by Leras Family Vineyards, sustainably farmed and managed by Nick Leras, a third-generation grape grower in the Russian River Valley. The family currently cultivates 60 acres of winegrapes, producing Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, and Pinot Noir. In recognition of his commitment to sustainable farming, Nick Leras was honored with the Sustainable Farmer Award at the 2022 Sonoma County Harvest Fair.





The Martinelli Family

Martinelli Winery & Vineyard

The Martinelli family has been farming grapes and making wine in Sonoma County since the 1880s, when Giuseppe Martinelli immigrated from Italy and started his winery. After eloping with Luisa Vellutini, they planted Zinfandel and Muscat Alexandria on a steep 60-degree slope, which became the Jackass Hill vineyard, still the steepest non-terraced vineyard in California. In the 1980s, Giuseppe's grandson, Lee Martinelli Sr., and his wife Carolyn started their own winery in the Russian River Valley. Today, three generations of Martinellis work together in the family business: Lee Sr., his children George, Lee Jr. and Julianna, and granddaughter Tessa; Lee and Carolyn's other daughter Regina has played different roles in the family business as well. Today, Martinelli Winery specializes in estate-grown Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Zinfandel, and Syrah. With 475 acres across the Russian River Valley and Fort Ross-Seaview AVAs, the family sells most of its grapes to other vintners, keeping a small portion for their own wines. Winemaker Courtney Wagoner and consulting winemaker Erin Green craft wines that highlight the unique character of the vineyards.



The Mauritsen Family

Mauritsen Farms

The Mauritsen family has been growing grapes in Dry Creek Valley since 1868, beginning with S.P. Hallengren, who planted vines in 1884 and shipped wine back to Sweden. By the 1960s, the family's Rockpile ranch had expanded to 4,000 acres, though much of it was submerged after the creation of Lake Sonoma. For 30 years the family farmed in Alexander Valley and Dry Creek Valley, providing top-quality fruit to regional winemakers. In the 1990s, sixth generation Mauritsen, Clay, approached his father Tom about expanding the family's operations into winemaking; Clay released the first Mauritsen Zinfandel in 1998, and continues to oversee the winery. Soon after the winery launched, the family returned to the Rockpile region, planting 34 acres of vineyards in eight distinct blocks that soon attracted attention for their unique terroir. Today, fifth generation farmer Tom and his sons Bob, Blake, and Cameron continue to work the land, with the family's vineyards now totaling 310 acres across the Dry Creek, Alexander Valley, and Rockpile appellations. With six generations of grape growing, the Mauritsen family is known for exceptional wines and prized harvests.





The Munselle Family

Munselle Vineyards

Almost 150 years ago, the Osborn family arrived in the Alexander Valley with a vision of producing fine wines from the rich soils and ideal growing climate. Shadrach Osborn was the proprietor of Alexander Valley's first winery, Lone Pine Cellars, while Broder Frellson served as the manager and winemaker for the second winery, simply called Red Winery. As generations passed, the family shifted away from winemaking to focus on cultivating the land. Their agricultural pursuits ranged from farming grapes to hops, prunes, dairy cattle, prunes again, and eventually returning to winegrapes in 1972. Since then, for over five decades, the family has specialized in and produced premium winegrapes, contributing to numerous award-winning wines for wineries throughout Sonoma County. Today, Bret and Kristen Munselle, in partnership with parents Bill and Reta Munselle, farm 700 acres in Alexander Valley, and in 2006, they launched the limited production wine label, Munselle Vineyards, with their inaugural vintages of Wasson Ranch Cabernet Sauvignon and Coin Flip Ranch Chardonnay. Farming remains the backbone of their daily lives, and Bret and Kristen's four daughters are now the sixth generation to grow up in the heart of Alexander Valley.



The Puccioni Family

Puccioni Ranch & Vineyards

The Puccioni family hails from Coselli, near the city of Lucca, Italy. Their great-grandfather, Angelo, immigrated to the U.S. in 1889 and worked at the Italian Swiss Colony before purchasing Puccioni Ranch in 1904, where Zinfandel has been grown ever since. Angelo founded the Puccioni Winery in 1919 and ran it until 1935, while also continuing to sell grapes to Italian families in San Francisco for home winemaking. Angelo's son, Louis, was born on the property in 1906, and his daughter, Doreen, and son, Angelo, were raised there too. The family used a mule to plow until 1968, and their farming methods remain rooted in tradition. The vineyards are planted with old-clone Zinfandel, Petite Sirah, and Alicante Bouschet, with a large portion of the vines still head-trained, and many of the original vines still a part of the property. Today, the ranch is owned and farmed by the fourth generation, Glenn Proctor, Deneen Proctor, and Allison Puccioni. Their commitment to sustainable farming practices ensures the vineyard's future for the fifth generation growing up on the ranch and beyond.





The Rafanelli Family

Rafanelli Winery

Alberto & Letizia Rafanelli founded A. Rafanelli Winery in the early 1900s, when they settled in the Healdsburg area with their family after immigrating from Italy and started growing grapes and making wine. After Prohibition, Alberto and Letizia's son Americo was soon carrying on the tradition. He moved the winery to its current location in Dry Creek Valley in the early 1950s and began to focus on the cultivation of premium Zinfandel grapes. In the early 1970s, Americo offered his first commercial wine release with the iconic A. Rafanelli Winery label. Following in Americo's footsteps, his son David earned his degree in Viticulture from UC Davis and began working at Lambert Bridge Winery. When Americo passed away in 1986, David and his wife Patty took over the family's winery and began to seek out the best land to plant more varietals for their portfolio. Their eldest daughter Shelly graduated from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo in 1996 and worked side-by-side with her father until becoming the head winemaker in 2000. With the help of her husband Craig Fehlman, who manages their vineyards, along with her sister, Stacy, who oversees the daily operations at the winery, they carry on the family tradition.

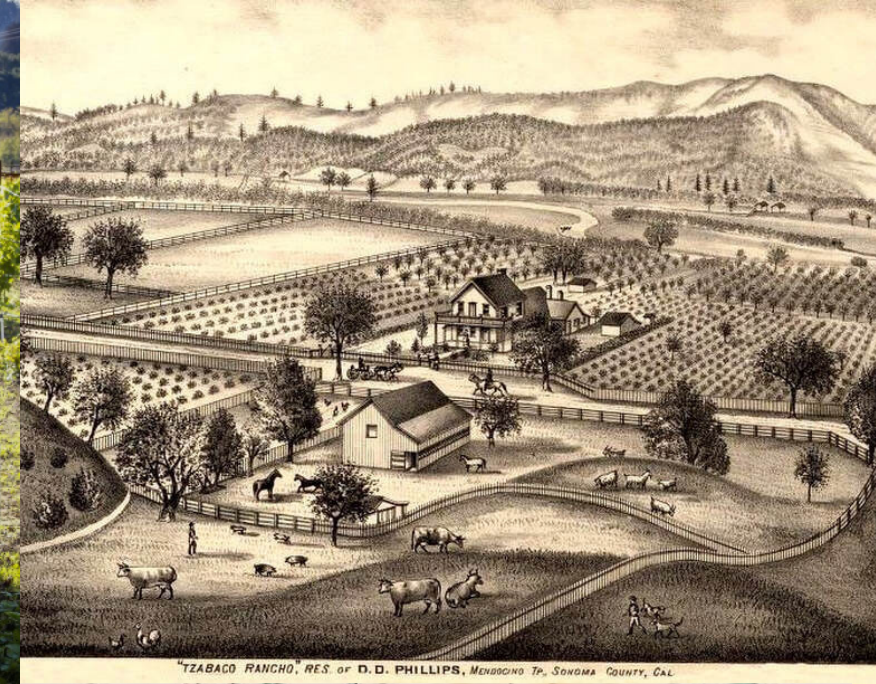


The Saini Family

Saini Farms, Inc.

The Saini family has been growing grapes in Sonoma County for over 100 years, with a legacy that began in 1908 when great-grandfather Michele Saini immigrated from Genova, Italy. Initially working as a garbage man in San Francisco, Michele purchased a ranch in Dry Creek Valley in 1917, partnering with his brother-in-law, John Cuneo, to form Cuneo & Saini. They grew crops including pears, apples, prunes, and wine grapes on the ranch, and in 1934 they expanded to Alexander Valley, building a reputation as top grape growers. The family continued the business through successive generations, with third generation John Saini taking over in 1985 and founding Saini Farms, Inc. In 2008, fourth generation Mike Saini launched Saini Vineyards, fulfilling his dream of making wine from the family's land. Today, the fifth generation is learning the family's craft and continuing the legacy of quality farming.





The Sanchietti Family

Sanchietti Ranch

The Sanchiettis have been part of the Sonoma County agricultural legacy since 1919 when Luigi and Filomina Sanchietti immigrated from Italy and settled on a property in the Santa Rosa Plains. The land was planted to vineyards when the couple purchased it, but Prohibition collapsed the market for wine grapes, so they planted prunes and walnuts and raised poultry for the egg market. In 1943, when wartime abundance left their son Gus with an excess of fruit on the property, he and other Sonoma County farmers stopped at a vacant lot on Market Street and Duboc Avenue in San Francisco and began selling their pears and apples. They returned to the same spot week after week, establishing what would eventually become the San Francisco Farmers' Market. His son Mel Sanchietti continued to farm the family property, where he and his wife Janeen continue to live today, and also started a custom farming business. In addition, he had a 35-year career with Korbel Winery as vice president of vineyard operations. Mel's daughters, Lori and Angie, work outside of the family business, while his son Mark attended Cal Poly where he studied agriculture business, wine and viticulture. Mark and his wife, Jenny, founded Sanchietti Farming in 2007, growing Pinot Noir and Chardonnay grapes in western Sonoma County, continuing the family's farming legacy.



The Schmidt Family

Tzabaco Rancho Vineyards

The Tzabaco story began in October of 1856 when Duvall Drake Phillips successfully and legally purchased 137¼ acres of the historic Piña's Tzabaco Rancho. He and his wife planted a variety of field crops, including fruit trees and 45 acres of Zinfandel. In 1901, his son, Oscar Phillips, acquired additional local property and moved into a house on the land. This house still stands today and was home to Brian and Janice Schmit. Each subsequent generation of the family has focused on farming crops and nurturing the soil, building a life around wine grapes, fruit orchards, vegetable gardens, and livestock. Today, the ranch is sustainably farmed by the sixth generation, Tom and Audrey Schmidt, who hope to pass on their legacy to the seventh generation. The family now farms 70 acres of winegrapes, continuing a tradition of stewardship and sustainable agriculture that spans over a century.





The Sebastiani Family

Sebastiani Vineyards & Winery

Sebastiani Winery was founded in 1904 by Samuele Sebastiani, an Italian immigrant and stonemason, who purchased land in Sonoma to produce wine for local communities and San Francisco restaurants. During Prohibition, Sebastiani remained operational, producing sacramental wines, one of the only wineries to do so during this time. Samuele was instrumental in supporting his community, creating jobs and building local infrastructure. After his death in 1944, his son August expanded the winery and introduced new varietals. In 1980, August's children—Sam, Don, and Mary Ann—took over. The family refocused on quality with Mary Ann helping to lead the company through its transition into one of Sonoma County's premier quality wine producers. The brand sold in 2001 to Constellation Brands, with Bill Foley eventually purchasing the winery in 2008. The Sebastiani family legacy continues with multiple ventures and four generations of Sebastianis who have helped to shape Sonoma Valley's wine industry.

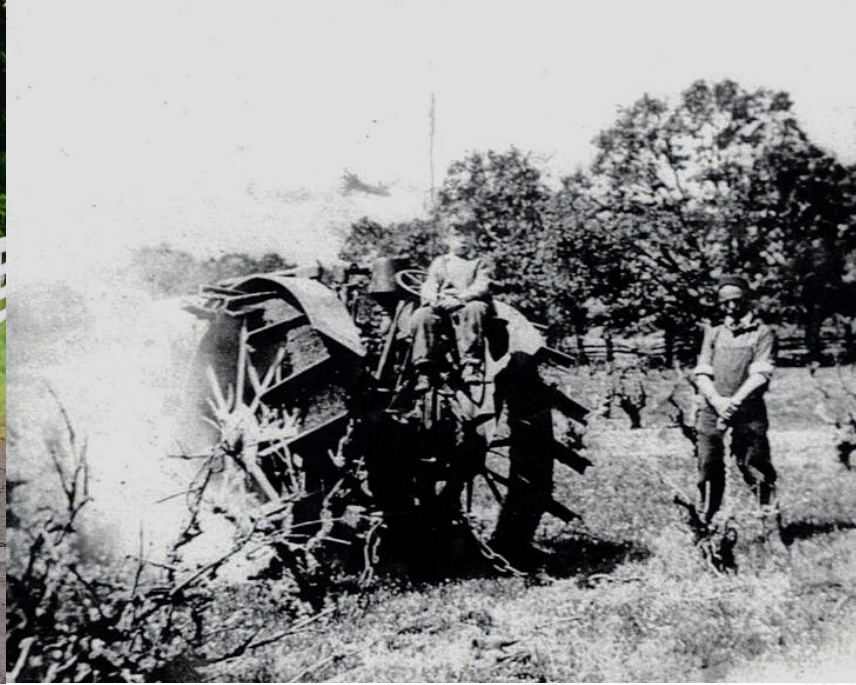


The Seghesio Family

Seghesio Family Vineyards

The Seghesio Family Vineyards story embodies the American dream, starting with Edoardo Seghesio, an Italian immigrant who arrived in Sonoma County in 1886. Edoardo, drawn to the area's winemaking potential, purchased 56 acres of land with his wife, Angela, and planted vineyards, with Zinfandel becoming a family specialty. The Seghesios expanded in 1910, planting what is now North America's oldest Sangiovese vines. Despite Prohibition, the family remained a vital supplier of grapes, and after Edoardo's death, Angela kept the winery running. In 1993, the family refocused on producing high-quality wines, leading Seghesio to become a top Zinfandel producer. Today, Seghesio farms 300 acres of sustainably farmed vineyards, preserving their legacy of exceptional Zinfandel and Italian varietals across five generations and over 125 vintages.





The Serres Family

Serres Ranch

The Serres family story began in 1872, when John P. Serres came to San Francisco, California, and later moved his family to Sonoma County. Between 1851 and 1857, the Serres land belonged to General Joseph Hooker (often referred to as "Fighting Joe") and was called Hooker's Ranch or Hooker Oaks. When Hooker took off to fight the Civil War, he sold his ranch to George Watriss, a famous hotelier from New York City who had opened the Astor House luxury hotel. Serres and Watriss knew each other for decades before Serres fully acquired the land. From 1924 to the present day, Serres Ranch has been owned and operated by family. The ranch originally operated as a dairy and row crop farm. The evolution toward grape growing began in the early 1980s after Jim Bundschu bought a piece of the ranch, planting grapes that John Serres helped manage. This led to a love of grape growing, and the family eventually purchasing the piece of the ranch back to continue the legacy of winegrowing. Sixth generation family members John, Buck, and Taylor Serres Murnig, along with their father John, continue to work on the 200-acre ranch. In addition to winegrapes, the family owns a general contracting company and farms blueberries and beef cattle. This year, Serres Ranch is celebrating its 100-year anniversary.



The Young Family

Robert Young Estate Vineyards

The Young family immigrated from Alsace-Lorraine, France, to New York in 1830. In 1851, brothers Michael, George, and Peter traveled to California, eventually settling in Alexander Valley in 1858, where they raised cattle and grew wheat. Peter later purchased the McPherson Ranch and planted the first prunes. After Peter's death in 1885, the ranch was divided among his three sons. In 1937, during the Great Depression, Robert Young, Peter's grandson, saved the family farm from foreclosure with help from a great-uncle. In 1963, Robert transitioned from prunes to grapes, planting the first Cabernet in Alexander Valley. Robert Young was also one of the first to plant French Dijon Chardonnay clones in Alexander Valley. After many years working with many different clones, he decided to create a hybrid clone, now known as Robert Young Clone 17. In 1997, Robert's children founded Robert Young Estate Winery, which is now run by the fifth and sixth generations, with three great-grandchildren (generation 7) involved. Today, the Young family is one of the oldest farming families in Alexander Valley.



*I firmly believe, from what I have seen, that this is
the chosen spot of all this earth as far as nature is concerned.*

Luther Burbank



