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CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2012 SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY WINE INDUSTRY AWARD WINNERS

A Commitment to the Local Wine Community Shared by Three Industry Leaders

PASO ROBLES, CA (July 17, 2012) – San Luis Obispo County’s most revered wine industry honors were announced today by the Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance in partnership with the San Luis Obispo Vintners Association and past award recipients. The 2012 San Luis Obispo County Wine Industry Awards go to – Wine Industry Person of the Year, Brian Talley, Talley Farms / Talley Vineyards; Winemaker of the Year, Mike Sinor, Ancient Peaks Winery and Sinor-LaVallee; and Wine Grape Grower of the Year, John Crossland, Vineyard Professional Services. The award recipients will officially receive their honors at an awards ceremony created specifically for the San Luis Obispo County Wine Industry Awards during the California Mid-State Fair on Friday, July 20 from 4:30 – 6 p.m. Each recipient was nominated and voted on by their peers for their leadership in California’s third largest wine region, San Luis Obispo County.

“These awards showcase the best and brightest of our industry,” said Jennifer Porter, Executive Director of the Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance. “By recognizing Mike, John and Brian, we celebrate a passion and commitment to San Luis Obispo County.”

The wine and wine grape community contributes \$1.1M to the local economy through charitable contributions each year. As the largest value-added agriculture product in San Luis Obispo County, the industry employs more than 8,000, attracts more than 1.2 million wine tourists annually whose expenditures total \$113 million, and has an overall economic impact of \$1.8B to the County economy.

The winners of the 2012 Wine Industry Awards will be recognized at ‘A Toast to San Luis Obispo County’s Wine Industry Award Winners’ on Friday, July 20. This event is open to the public with admission to the California Mid-State Fair. The event will also feature award winning wines from the Central Coast Wine Competition. Visit www.midstatefair.com for more information.

Wine Industry Person of the Year – Brian Talley, Talley Farms / Talley Vineyards

Brian is part of the third generation to work in his family’s farming operation and upon graduation from University of California at Berkeley he returned to the Central Coast and the family farm. In 1991 he became the General Manager of Talley Vineyards and has lead the winery to become recognized as one of California’s best sources of estate bottled Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, gaining the acclaim of numerous critics worldwide. Brian was one of the original founders of the event, World of Pinot Noir, which has become a marquee tourism draw to the region and has been a contributor to the wine industry and local community by serving on the boards of the Edna Valley Arroyo Grande Valley Vintners Association and the San Luis Obispo Chamber of Commerce. Talley has been a recipient of the Winegrower of the Year award from the Central Coast Winegrowers Association and Wine Advocate Wine Personality of the Year by Robert Parker. He and his wife, Johnine, established the Fund for Vineyard and Farm Workers, which provides grants to organizations that assist agricultural workers throughout San Luis Obispo County, thus further exemplifying his commitment to farming in

San Luis Obispo County. Today, Brian serves as President of Talley Farms and Talley Vineyards and continues to live and work on his family farm and vineyards with his wife Johnine and daughters Elizabeth and Olivia.

Winemaker of the Year — Mike Sinor, Ancient Peaks Winery / Sinor-LaValle Winery

Mike gained an early appreciation for the San Luis Obispo County wine region by attending California Polytechnic State University and worked at local wineries to pay his way through college. After he spent several years working in out of area wineries, he returned to San Luis Obispo County in 2000 to become the winemaker at Domaine Alfred in Edna Valley. Mike's dedication to the Pinot Noir wine grape variety led him to be a founding Board Member of the event, World of Pinot Noir. He is currently the Director of Winemaking for Ancient Peaks Winery and his wines have gained critical acclaim bringing focus to the Paso Robles wine appellation. Mike is also the Consulting Winemaker for Center of Effort Winery and Owner/Winemaker for Sinor-LaVallee Winery with his wife Cheri and is the current Chairman for the San Luis Obispo Vintners Association.

Winegrape Grower of the Year – John Crossland, Vineyard Professional Services, Inc.

John began his viticulture career over thirty years ago after earning his Bachelors Degree in Plant Science from California State University, Fresno. After spending a decade as a viticulturalist in the Central Coast, John moved to the North Coast, gaining valuable experience and knowledge that he would ultimately bring back to the Central Coast and San Luis Obispo County. In 1997 John established Vineyard Professional Services, which provides top quality vineyard services and today manages over 2,000 acres in the Paso Robles appellation. John has made strides to better the industry by serving on a number of organizations, including past Board Chairman and Director of the California Association of Winegrape Growers and current Board Member of the Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance. As a member of the Central Coast Vineyard Team, he has been a contributing architect to the Code of Sustainable Winegrowing Practices, thus further exemplifying his commitment to the efforts of sustainable farming in San Luis Obispo County.

Images and bios of the awardees are available upon request by contacting Chris Taranto, Marketing Director at the Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance – ctaranto@pasowine.com.

The Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance represents wineries, growers and businesses in Paso Robles Wine Country. Centrally located between San Francisco and Los Angeles, along California's Central Coast, Paso Robles Wine Country is California's fastest growing wine region. It encompasses more than 26,000 vineyard acres and 200 wineries. For more information, visit www.pasowine.com.

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