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**DUTCHER CROSSING WINERY COMPLETES 2009 VINTAGE
IN DRY CREEK VALLEY**

Extended growing season, moderate temperatures with a split harvest

HEALDSBURG, CA, October 27, 2009 — Dutcher Crossing Winery in Dry Creek Valley has wrapped up its 2009 vintage, after a moderate growing season was disrupted in October by two rain storms and humidity. “Excluding the recent moisture, the weather this summer and fall has been remarkably moderate with a lack of extreme temperatures or heat spikes,” said Winemaker Kerry Damskey.

All of the Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Zinfandel, Pinot Noir and Syrah were picked before the October 13 rainfall, which totaled up to 6” in parts of Dry Creek Valley. “None of us expected a storm of this magnitude,” said Damskey. “The last time there was a storm that was remnants of a typhoon was in 1962. In addition, a lighter rain followed a few days later. This vintage will most likely be characterized as ‘before’ and ‘after’ the rain.”

The Sauvignon Blanc grapes were harvested from Preston Vineyards, which lies across Dry Creek from Dutcher Crossing. “We mostly ferment in stainless steel, but we have a small amount in barrel,” said Damskey. “For the first time, we fermented estate Viognier and Roussanne, which will be blended with the Sauvignon Blanc and a small amount of Semillon.”

Dutcher Crossing picked Chardonnay from the steep Costello Vineyard in Dry Creek Valley in mid-September. “It’s a good year for Chardonnay,” said Damskey. “There was an average to above average yield, which received a significant amount of hang time, as we had to wait a long time for the Chardonnay to fully mature.” The Stuhlmuller Vineyard in Alexander Valley was harvested on October 1 and Saralee Vineyard in Russian River was the last to be picked the second week in October.

Zinfandel, Dry Creek Valley’s signature grape, had a slightly larger than average crop in 2009. “It was a long growing season, and in my quest for perfect timing, I started and stopped picks of the Maple Vineyard five times,” Damskey explained. “I like to wait until the grapes dimple, and we ultimately picked the latter part of September.” Dutcher Crossing makes a Maple Vineyard Zinfandel and a very limited selection of Maple Vineyard Bill’s Block. “Bill’s Block is big but balanced and more on the jammy style, while the regular Maple Vineyard is a little more elegant,” described Damskey. The winery also makes a Bernier-Sibary Vineyard Zinfandel, a field blend of 75 percent dry farmed Zinfandel intermixed with Petite Sirah, Carignane and Mataro. Harvested and fermented together, the wine is complex and slightly leaner than the others. A Proprietor’s Reserve Zinfandel is made from estate grapes, creating a round, soft approachable wine.

A new wine in the Dutcher Crossing lineup is a Pinot Noir from Russian River Valley. "We will be releasing our first vintage at the end of October," said Proprietor Debra Mathy. The grapes come from Maboroshi Vineyard in the hills west of Sebastopol, on the way to Freestone. "The wine is a very flavorful Pinot Noir, concentrated yet elegant at the same time," said Damskey. "This year, we had some shot berries, as it was cool and windy during bloom, which takes place in May and June. As a result, the crop was down a bit. The wine is showing good fruit and acidity at this point."

"The quality of the wines in the cellar looks good, and they are easily going dry. We use native yeast, and sometimes that makes the fermentations more difficult. There is good acidity in the wines and nice, elegant true flavors," continued Damskey.

Dutcher Crossing sources Cabernet Sauvignon from Taylor Vineyard, a northern hillside vineyard in Dry Creek Valley, and Nevins Vineyard in Alexander Valley. They also grow estate grapes to make the Proprietor's Reserve Cabernet. "Our tanks were full when the rain was predicted," said Damskey, "and our Cabernet was impacted. We have completed picking and sorting all the remaining fruit, and we will just have to wait and see."

A winemaker with more than 30 years experience making wine in the North Coast, and many other regions and countries around the world, Damskey believes that wines made after the heavy rain in 2009 will be "winemaker wines." "We will be using all of our skills to make the best possible wines."

Dutcher Crossing Winery specializes in small lot production of vineyard-designated wines. Visit the website at <http://www.dutchercrossingwinery.com>. A list of wines follows:

Sauvignon Blanc Dry Creek Valley
Costello Vineyard Chardonnay
Saralee Vineyard Chardonnay
Stuhlmuller Vineyard Chardonnay
Maple Vineyard Zinfandel
Maple Vineyard Bill's Block Zinfandel
Bernier-Sibary Vineyard Zinfandel
Proprietor's Reserve Zinfandel
Taylor Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon
Nevins Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon
Proprietor's Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon
Maboroshi Vineyard Pinot Noir (soon to be released)

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