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**DUTCHER CROSSING WINERY PLANTS  
CHATEAUNEUF DU PAPE-STYLE VINEYARD IN DRY CREEK VALLEY  
*Southern Rhones Favored by Proprietor and Winemaker***

**HEALDSBURG, CA, September 2, 2009** — Dutcher Crossing Winery has just planted a Chateauneuf du Pape-style vineyard in the northern end of Dry Creek Valley in Sonoma County. “My winemaker, Kerry Damskey, and I love Southern Rhone wines,” said proprietor Debra Mathy. “We decided to plant a vineyard block dedicated to the top five varieties of the Chateauneuf du Pape region of France.” A land of blends, most of the Southern Rhone wines are dominated by Grenache and Mourvedre. “Our 5-acre planting includes a field blend of 50 percent Grenache, 25 percent Mourvedre, 10 percent Syrah, another 10 percent Cinsault and 5 percent Counoise,” said Mathy. The vines are Tablas Creek clone selections from the Rhone region.

Winemaker Kerry Damskey likens the Southern Rhone to Sonoma County. “The scenery in Chateauneuf du Pape is stunningly beautiful. It’s a lot like Sonoma County, with wide open landscapes and a warm climate,” he explained. Not shy when it comes to his preferences, Damskey believes that Chateauneuf du Pape is the greatest blended wine—a wine lovers’ wine. “Big, fleshy and opulent, with lush fruit, the wines are very California-like and very food friendly,” he stated.

“Debra and I want our terroir-driven Southern Rhone blend to taste unique—rich, full, lots of spice with subtle barrel influence,” continued Damskey. “We don’t want it to be dominated by Syrah. The large percentage of Grenache will give the blend fragrance and brightness. Mourvedre will impart earthy dark tannins; Syrah will provide color, spice and structure, and Cinsault will enhance the aroma. Counoise is known to add a peppery note and good acidity.”

Many Rhone varieties have proven track records in Sonoma County and Dry Creek Valley. Syrah is the most prominent Rhone variety planted in California with almost 20,000 acres statewide, according to the California Grape Acreage Report. In 2008, Sonoma County had almost 1,900 acres of Syrah planted (with more than 300 in Dry Creek Valley), whereas only 80 acres of Grenache were planted and seven of Cinsault. “Rhone wines are still emerging in California,” said Damskey. “Our Southern-Rhone wine will be a forerunner in this category.”

Situated on a beautiful site surrounded by estate vineyards (including the newly planted block), the charm and quaintness of Dutcher Crossing's architectural style reflect the older barn looks reminiscent of the early 1900s farming community in the valley. A large open breezeway and tasting room welcome wine lovers to a panoramic view of the vineyards and hillside beauty of Dry Creek Valley. The trellised picnic area, set amidst natural gardens, offers an ideal place to relax and sip the winery selections. Dutcher Crossing specializes in limited production, vineyard-designate wines from select Dry Creek, Russian River and Alexander Valley vineyards.

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