

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **FOR: Beckstoffer Vineyards**

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### **BECKSTOFFER VINEYARDS ANNOUNCES 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

*“Napa’s Most Influential Grapegrower” Celebrates Milestone Anniversary*

(Rutherford, Calif.—January 28, 2020) – Few have made a larger impact on the evolution of Northern California’s wine industry than Andy Beckstoffer of Beckstoffer Vineyards, the company he founded in 1970 at age 30. For 50 years, Beckstoffer Vineyards has been at the forefront of putting Napa Valley and California wine on the global stage, forging major shifts in the way the industry values the land, the grapes and the farmers. Beckstoffer’s ever-growing portfolio of premium vineyard sites consistently produces the highest quality Cabernet Sauvignon grapes in Northern California. The company, now helmed by both Andy and his eldest son David, continues to play the role of industry leader, focusing on technology-driven, precision farming, with an unwavering focus on land conservation and agricultural sensitivity, as well as sustainability in the face of climate change.

### **Shaping the Napa Valley**

Andy Beckstoffer has played a pivotal, pioneering role in Napa Valley’s evolution into a world-class wine region. After three years working as the Director of Corporate Acquisition Strategies at Heublein Inc., where he advised the company on entering California’s premium wine segment, he moved his family to California and founded Beckstoffer Vineyards in 1970. Over the last 50 years, Beckstoffer Vineyards has invested in exceptional vineyard holdings throughout Napa, Mendocino and Lake Counties, totaling roughly 4,000 acres. This includes the company’s six Heritage Vineyards in Napa Valley, which produce some of the most sought-after grapes in all of California wine country, if not the world. Vineyard-designated wines featuring a Beckstoffer vineyard on their label repeatedly score 95+ points and above.

But beyond his impressive vineyard portfolio, one of Andy’s most notable industry contributions was the initiation of a new grape pricing structure in 1976, which created a major and lasting shift in how the California wine industry views the importance of wine growers and grape quality.

Preservation and sustainability efforts have been a continuous theme over Andy’s career. He was instrumental in the forming of The Napa Valley Grapegrowers Association in 1975, for which he was a Founding Director and its second President. The Grapegrowers’ mission was to sustain

grape growing in the Napa Valley, and in 1990, Andy also played a major role in Napa County's establishment of the Winery Definition Ordinance (WDO), which brought about key measures for preserving agriculture in Napa Valley and required that wines from new wineries and expansions of existing wineries must be produced from at least 75 percent of grapes from the Napa Valley. "Napa wineries should make Napa wines," declared Andy.

In 1994, he was the Founding Director and first President of the Rutherford Dust Society, which is dedicated to promoting the highest quality grape growing and winemaking standards in the Rutherford AVA. Under Andy's leadership, in 2002, the Rutherford Dust Society initiated the Rutherford Reach Restoration Project whose goal has been to restore the 4.5 miles Rutherford Reach of the Napa River in order to rehabilitate the local riparian and aquatic habitats. The project has received national acclaim. Today, Beckstoffer Vineyards focuses its preservation efforts on climate change, and in 2019 launched a multi-year research study dedicated to the survival of Cabernet Sauvignon as Napa Valley's prized grape.

### **Bringing Grape Growers to the Table**

When Andy Beckstoffer started his farming business in Napa Valley, grapes were a commodity. The best wines were credited to the talent of the winemaker, not the quality of the fruit, and thus the work of the grape grower was, in Andy's opinion, extremely undervalued (and underpaid).

But in 1976, all of that changed. Andy introduced an unorthodox pricing structure tying the price of grapes to the retail price of the bottle. The more expensive the bottle, the more in turn Andy charges for his premium fruit. This small step triggered a complete transformation within the Napa Valley wine industry with grapes now unequivocally viewed as the driving force of quality in the bottle.

In the 1980s and 1990s, this newfound respect for the land enabled Andy to successfully advocate for vineyard-designated wines as the best expression of wine produced from a single vineyard source. This led to an industry-wide movement that each vineyard site has a unique character, or terroir, that should be individually celebrated, rather than blended. This has completely transformed how Napa wines are marketed and sold, moving from the Bordeaux model of a winery having Reserve and "regular" bottlings to the vineyard designated approach that has made wines from Burgundy so sought-after.

### **Napa's First Growth Vineyards — The Heritage Vineyards**

Beckstoffer's most famed vineyards are the company's six Napa Valley Heritage Vineyards, which have an unparalleled combination of history and an ability to grow exceptional fruit. These vineyards each have a unique and extraordinary terroir that has proven to produce the highest quality of Cabernet Sauvignon grapes year after year for generations, and in some cases, centuries.

In 1983, Beckstoffer Vineyards purchased its first heritage vineyard, Las Piedras in St. Helena. Later came To Kalon—arguably the most famous American vineyard—Georges III, Missouri Hopper, Dr. Crane and Bourn. Beckstoffer sells this fruit to a carefully selected group of

winemakers, who collectively produce more than 50 vineyard-designated wines that originate entirely from a Beckstoffer Heritage Vineyard. These wines are consistently awarded 95+ scores and other accolades, and thus having Beckstoffer Vineyards printed on one's label is utterly invaluable. "Beckstoffer" has become a highly valued, and well marketed, Napa brand in its own right. The wineries Beckstoffer Vineyards works with are able to grow and build widespread notoriety not just on their brand name or winemaker, but on the prized land they source from.

### **Beyond Napa**

Beckstoffer Vineyards has long been invested in two Northern California wine regions outside of Napa Valley, which Andy believes can also produce world-class Cabernet Sauvignon. He made his first vineyard purchase in Mendocino in 1974 and in the Red Hills of Lake County in 1997.

Over the past two decades, Beckstoffer Vineyards has been steadfastly committed to proving that the Red Hills can produce ultra-premium Cabernet rivaling the best that California has to offer. He recognizes the same potential in the Red Hills that Napa had in the 1960s and was instrumental in establishing the official Red Hills AVA in 2004 with a team of growers. Located in the northern Mayacamas Mountains on the southwest edge of Clear Lake, high elevation plantings, terrific sun exposure, low humidity and a temperate climate creates a perfect growing season in the Red Hills, resulting in bright, balanced wines with complex flavor.

As of 2020, Beckstoffer Vineyards owns more than 2,000 acres in the Red Hills of Lake County and over 1,300 acres in Mendocino.

### **The Future**

As the California wine industry braces itself for climate change, in 2019 Beckstoffer Vineyards proactively partnered with the University of California and Duarte Nursery to launch a groundbreaking research study titled "Climate-smart Solutions for Cabernet Sauvignon Production." Fearing that Cabernet Sauvignon may not be viable in the future, many growers and vintners are starting to experiment with alternative and less-profitable grape varieties, yet Beckstoffer is committed to not only preserving, but also improving the quality of the grape that put Northern California wine on the map.

The research trial is taking place at Beckstoffer's Amber Knolls Vineyard in the Red Hills of Lake County and features 3,600 vines, 10 cabernet sauvignon clones, and 10 rootstocks, yielding roughly 100 rootstock-clone combinations. Over a span of eight to ten years, the study will examine the best Cabernet Sauvignon combinations for withstanding climate change across California, focusing on drought tolerance, water-use efficiency, crop yield and grape quality.

## **ABOUT BECKSTOFFER VINEYARDS**

Named "Napa's most powerful grape grower" by both the *Wall Street Journal* and *Wine Spectator*, Beckstoffer Vineyards was founded in 1970. Beckstoffer Vineyards is firmly rooted in the soil of Northern California's wine country, with Andy Beckstoffer playing an integral role in the evolution of the wine grape industry since 1970. Joined at the family-owned business by his

son, David, in 1997, they share a common mission – to produce the highest quality grapes in Northern California that form the foundation for exceptional wines – and a combined passion for preservation of the land and viticulture expertise. Today, the company is arguably the largest producer of Cabernet Sauvignon grapes, value-wise, in the world.

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ARRANGE AN INTERVIEW WITH ANDY BECKSTOFFER, PLEASE CONTACT CHARLOTTE MILAN AT C. MILAN COMMUNICATIONS AT 415.412.9303 OR CHARLOTTE@CMILANCOMM.COM.**