

contact: Art Noyes 281.924.4346 cell or 281.829.5221
photos available

SUPREME COURT RULING OPENS MARKETS FOR FAMILY OWNED WINERY IN SUGAR LAND

Texas pride no longer denied – soon available in all 50 states

IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Sugar Land, Texas...Dave Stacy's Circle S Vineyard isn't open on Mondays, but the phones were busier than ever as the news of the Supreme Court ruling spread across wine lovers' computer screens and televisions.

"We had a lot of excited customers congratulating us on the ruling against bans on out-of-state wine shipments," said Stacy who has been amused by the fact his wine has won medals in California, but California consumers could not order his award-winning wines. "Prior to this ruling, unless a California resident bought the wine here at Circle S and took it home, they could not enjoy the wines awarded gold medals by their own judges." Now all that could change.

However, change is not unilaterally guaranteed. Although Governor Perry has just recently made it legal for Texas wineries to sell and ship anywhere in Texas, other states have the prerogative to outlaw all shipping wine within their states--including their own wineries.

"The Supreme Court ruling simply creates a level playing field for small to medium size wineries," says Stacy. "In many areas of the country, only larger wineries get the attention from the distributors thus preventing consumers from enjoying premium quality hand-made wines." Now a state cannot give in-state wineries preferential treatment.

The impact is more than potential sales for small wineries. Marketing strategies are changing as fast as the state rulings. Virtual shopping carts are being added to winery web sites. Marketing strategies will now demand a global or at least statewide advertising planning. The potential growth for a small winery will have a major economic impact on their home state. And wine critics will continue to rule—doling out reviews that turn wine into gold.

Previously consumers have been able to enjoy the reviews and tasting notes written in major wine publications but have been unable to obtain the reviewed wines. "As a member of the industry, we are very excited about this ruling because we believe it will enable wine lovers to enjoy higher quality wines, a wider variety of wines and discover some true gems they have not yet been able to enjoy," said Stacy. Stacy is a member of the Texas Wine Growers Association and a strong advocate for the Texas wine industry.

In America, there are 3,700 wineries and wine is a \$21 billion business. In Texas, fourth-largest wine market in the country, there are 86 bonded wineries with an economic impact of more than \$170 million according to the Texas Wine & Grape Growers Association.

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WineAmerica.org says: The Supreme Court ruling provides another major milestone in the 20-year trend toward opening states to legal, regulated direct shipping. Twenty years ago, no states allowed direct shipments from out-of-state wineries to adult consumers. By late 2004, 26 states allowed such shipments, including four states that changed in 2003. North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia were opened through legislative changes, and Texas' ban on shipments was ruled unconstitutional by the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

"Inside the winery - where it really counts - the art of making fine wines is our singular mission," declares Stacy. While the winery has its own vineyards in Centerville, Texas and the Tuscany region of Italy, unlike most Texas wineries Stacy does not obligate himself to the harvest of any vineyard, not even his own. Growers and vineyards have good and bad years. When his own grapes do not meet his high standards, he sells them to other wineries so he can purchase and import the best from that year's harvest. "We want to be certain our wines are produced from the absolute finest grapes available."

Stacy's insistence on using only the finest grapes has resulted in Circle S. Vineyards producing 19 award-winning wines, including 7 gold medal winners. Varietals currently available are Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Pinot Noir, Sangiovese, Montepulciano, Chardonnay and Magia di Amore and Ilbello, the latter being Stacy's own signature blends.

Dave and Helen Stacy designed the winery to offer a relaxing and intimate place for people to feel comfortable. "Guests can stop in to learn about wine, meet friends, or just unwind at the end of the day." The winery features upstairs living rooms with comfortable sofas in elegant settings with soft lighting and fine art. The Stacy's officiate wine tastings, conduct tours and love discussing the wines and wine making process with visitors.

Tours of the winery are included with every wine tasting, whether for one person or groups. It is also available for private functions including weddings, parties, birthdays, corporate retreats, meetings and just about any special event. Catering is available.

For more information about Circle S Vineyards and to reserve a tour and wine tasting or upcoming artist party or vintner dinner, call (281)265-9463 or info@circlesvineyards.com.

www.circlesvineyards.com

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