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PD Referendum Website Launched to Help Inform Winegrape Grower/Vintner Community

Sacramento, Calif., March 2, 2015 – Winegrape growers and vintners anxious to better understand why their “yes” votes are needed for the upcoming Pierce’s disease/glassy-winged sharpshooter (PD/GWSS) Referendum can now turn to a new comprehensive website: www.YESonPDref.org. Designed and launched by a coalition of the California Association of Winegrape Growers (CAWG), Family Winemakers of California and Wine Institute, the new site provides in-depth analysis of the PD Referendum and the critical work the assessment has supported since 2001.

Up-to-date information on a variety of aspects concerning the PD Referendum can be found on the site, including voting procedures, facts about PD and GWSS, statistics on expenditures, the latest news and links to other sites with information on the PD/GWSS threat.

With passage of the last referendum in 2010, the PD/GWSS Board was given the authority to designate other pests and diseases detrimental to winegrapes for research funding. Since then the Board has designated the European grapevine moth (EGVM), red blotch (GRBaV), vine mealybug (VMB) and brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB) as serious threats to winegrapes.

“Through the industry supported Pierce’s Disease Control Program, we helped stop the spread of PD and soon commercial nurseries will have access to a variety of PD-resistant winegrapes. None of which would be possible without the PD assessment,” said CAWG President John Aguirre. “The program is operating at the lowest assessment rate since its inception; yet it continues to deliver tremendous value.”

Ballots for the vote on the PD Referendum will be sent out the week of March 30. It’s important that every winegrape grower return their ballots. At least 40 percent of eligible growers must cast ballots to validate the referendum. Passage requires either: a “yes” vote by 65 percent of those voting who represent the majority of the assessment that was paid in 2014; or a “yes” vote by a majority of those voting who represent 65 percent or more of the assessment that was paid in 2014.

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About CAWG - CAWG represents the growers of more than 60 percent of the gross grape tonnage crushed for wine and concentrate in California. The statewide association is dedicated to enhancing the business of growing winegrapes through advocacy, research and education, and industry leadership.

About Family Winemakers of California - Family Winemakers was founded in 1990 to represent the small, family-owned winery before the California Legislature and state regulatory agencies. FWC is dedicated to advocating for the interests of its 425 members to freely produce, market and sell wine.

About Wine Institute – Wine Institute is a public policy advocacy association representing more than 1,000 wineries and affiliated businesses. It supports legislative and regulatory advocacy, international market development, media relations, scientific research and education programs that benefit the entire California wine industry.