



MENDOCINO COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE

NEWS RELEASE

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"RHYS ESTATE VINEYARDS EXPANDING VINEYARD OPERATIONS IN MENDOCINO COUNTY"

The Friends of Liberty, LLC recently announced the sale of a portion of the former Masonite property to the highly acclaimed Rhys Vineyards. Friends of Liberty, LLC's Principal Officer, Ross Liberty, has expanded his Factory Pipe business over the years, acquiring a portion of the available Masonite acreage that had existing buildings on it in 2012, which now houses Factory Pipe's main operation. Rhys Vineyards has purchased a portion of this acreage in Mendocino County as an addition to their diverse Estate portfolio. Mr. Liberty commented on the recent sale, stating *"I'm excited to have Rhys Vineyards as a new neighbor and for them to be a part of our community. The reputation of their wines will further raise the image and awareness of Mendocino County as a premier wine growing region, moreover, Rhys Vineyards will provide good living wage jobs with good benefits"*.

For over the last 15 years, Rhys Vineyards has developed seven estate vineyards, six in the Santa Cruz Mountains and one in Anderson Valley, each of which is capable of producing uniquely compelling, distinctive, soil driven wine. Their vineyards have been carefully selected to highlight the unique conditions found in these geologically diverse mountains. Each of their existing seven sites are located on a unique and completely different geology. Rhys Vineyard wines are described as "stunning and all distinctive", as well as "balanced and harmonious".

"As Rhys expands, we need more space and having a winemaking facility in Ukiah makes a lot of sense, since most of our current development is focused on Northern Mendocino County, Anderson Valley and Sonoma. We're looking forward to playing a significant role in the economic revival of Ukiah and the surrounding areas", said Javier Tapia CFO, Rhys Vineyards. Mr. Tapia adds, *"For me, it's a personal homecoming of sorts; as a young vigneron, Mendocino County is where I began my career in the United States in the late 90's"*.

Rhys Vineyards operates on the philosophy that real wine quality is produced in the vineyard not the winery. Driven by that belief, each of their seven vineyards is managed with a "spare no expense" viticultural approach that is based on organic and biodynamic farming methods. Their goal is to naturally balance their vines while cultivating a vibrant and biologically diverse ecosystem in and around each vineyard.

“Ross Liberty and Rhys Vineyards are to be congratulated for taking a significant step in returning 'the Masonite slab' to productive use. This sale validates the Board of Supervisors commitment to economic development”, stated Supervisor John McCowen, Chair of the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors. First District Supervisor Carre Brown further stated, “On behalf of Mendocino County, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my appreciation to The Friends of Liberty, LLC and Rhys Vineyards for setting this great example of collaboration that supports the local economy and working families in Mendocino County”.

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