

PROCLAMATION

OF THE

MENDOCINO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

IN RECOGNITION OF

Testa Vineyards' 100th Year Anniversary

WHEREAS, Testa Vineyards was first established in Calpella, in 1912 by Gaetano and Maria Testa, who both immigrated from Gallarate, Italy, to follow Gaetano's dream of owning vineyard land that he would never be able to own in his homeland; and

WHEREAS, accompanied with his two brothers, Gaetano Testa arrived in San Francisco on the day of the 1906 earthquake where they quickly found work to rebuild the City. Due to Gaetano's experience of being a train conductor in Italy, he soon became a ferry boat captain; and

WHEREAS, after working only a few years in San Francisco, Gaetano Testa decided to take a train trip north which led to his first view of the Calpella area and it reminded him of his homeland's beautiful trees and rolling hills. He instantly knew this was the area to buy land for his vineyard to fulfill his lifetime dream. He then sent for his wife, Maria, and son, Victor, who joined him from Italy to work side-by-side using Belgian horses and dynamite sticks to clear the land in preparation for planting their first vines; and

WHEREAS, the Testa family grew with two more children, Rose Marie and Charles, and at Gaetano's urging, the Testas were soon joined in the region by other Italian families (Graziano, Venturi, Dogali, Pacini, Antoni, Rovera, Comino, Heafy, Viarengo, and Poma) who possessed the same dream of owning their own vineyard land. These families led to the Calpella area being known in later years as "Little Italy"; and

WHEREAS, Victor Testa with his wife Mary (Deghi) and brother Charles Testa with his wife Lina (Landini) continued farming the land, followed by Victor's son James and his wife Kay (Freeman) Testa. Today, James' daughter Maria and her husband Rusty Martinson carry on the family dream by producing a wide array of premium varietal grapes. In 2010 they added a winery that was the "first legal crush" on the historic family ranch, branding their wines "Simply Black and White" to reflect the old days and style of wine making where the grapes of the time were labeled black or white; and

WHEREAS, all Testa children throughout each generation worked alongside their parents, continuing today with the Martinson's four children, 10 nieces and nephews being the 5th generation of the family to continue the tradition at Testa Vineyards; keeping the dream of Gaetano and Maria alive for another generation to come.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors recognizes the remarkable local and historic legacy of the Testa Family in maintaining the heritage of a family ranch that has not gone without challenges through the years to keep it thriving and wholeheartedly salutes their contribution for a century of farming in Mendocino County.

Dated: July 10, 2012

John McCowen, Chair