

# Independent Grape Growers

Volume 8, Issue 1

President-Richard Sauret

Editor-Allene F. Elder

January/February 2010

## IGGPRA Mission Statement:

1. Grower education and marketing strategy.
2. The sustainable growth, harvest and profitable sale of high quality wine grapes.
3. Enhancing the economic health of our growers by differentiating the premium quality of our grapes from other grape growing regions.
4. Continuing to provide agriculture that is sustainable environmentally, economically and socially and to advocate at all levels of government where involvement is essential to our growers.



## Board & Committee Chairs

Margaret Burrell-Hall and Tom Hinkle were elected to IGGPRA's Board for a 2 year term in 2009.

Elizabeth Torp has been our Social Chair for two years. This is a difficult position and it takes a lot of organization and planning to have an event run smoothly. We can't thank her enough for all the work she does for this organization.

Herman Salazar took off running from the day he joined us. It was a natural thing for him to step up to the plate and become our Membership Chair. Everyone that sits on the board, chairs a committee and even your editor are volunteers.

Most of you know the other board members that were elected for another 2 year term last year in 2009: Clarence Elder, Seminars; Allene Elder, Editor (charter members) and Milt Laird, Treasurer.

All IGGPRA members are encouraged to run for the board.

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Rich Ellis, Allene Elder

Web Master – Alex Badasci (805) 237-1117  
Email: alex@studiocreek.com

*January 2010*

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	Sacramento Wine Grape Symposium					

January Tasks:

- Pruning
- Irrigation
- Preemergent Weed Control

*February 2010*

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	IGGPRA SOCIAL		27
28						

February Tasks:

- Pruning
- Nitrogen Fertilization
- Prepare for Frost Protection
- Weed Control

*Valentines Day*

**SOCIAL CHAIR** – Elizabeth Torp

It's a brand new year, full of hope and promise. We saw the old one out in style. It looked to me as if everyone had a good time at the Christmas Social.

The room was beautiful, the food was delicious and the dancing spirited. Francesco and Carol sure have a wonderful facility. Many thanks to all who donated prizes for the raffle.

I'm looking forward to Italian Night Feb. 20 at Pear Valley Winery. See you there.

**CAVEAT:** Articles presented in this newsletter should not be construed as a recommendation by the author, IGGPRA Editor, or IGGPRA; but rather as a source of information!

## 2010 IGGPRA CALENDAR

All dates/seminars are subject to change.

Suggestions for seminars are welcome. Contact ANY board member to offer your suggestions!

Jan 27 & 28	Sacramento Wine & Grape Symposium	
Sat Feb 6	Grafting Button Quail Vineyards	9 am
Fri Feb 19	Rules & Regs-Chris Browning & Mark Battany, Viticulture, Soil Farm Advisor-UC Davis	9 am-noon
Sat Feb 20	Social—Italian Night Pear Valley Vineyard	6pm-10pm
Mar	seminar	tbd
Sat April, 17	Mexican night at Pear Valley	6pm-10pm
April	seminar	tbd
Sat June 19,	Ribs and Turkey Breast at Rio Seco	6pm-10pm
June/July	seminar	tbd
Sat Aug.21,	Tri-tip and Chicken at Silver Horse ( to be confirmed )	6pm-10pm
Aug	seminar	tbd
Sept	“putting your vineyard to bed”	tbd
Oct 24, Sunday	Oktoberfest at Robert Hall ( to be confirmed)	6pm-10pm
Dec 19	Christmas Social *	6pm-10pm

\* all social information provided by social chair & seminar information provided by the seminar chair!



AG Waiver Renewal Fee is due now.  
Renew your Private Applicators Certificate.  
Don't forget to renew your IGGPRA membership!

If the weather permits on Saturday, February 6  
Grafting Seminar at Button Quails Vineyard  
Salud Ayula—Instructor –starts at 9am

## IGGPRA Social

### Italian Night at Pear Valley

Sat., Feb. 20, 2010

Time: 6 to 10 pm

**Pear Valley Winery,**  
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Pear Valley Winery  
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IGGPRA Provides  
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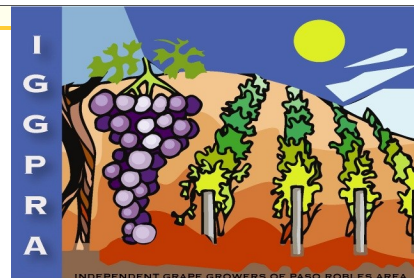
Last Name A to R - Italian Main Dish  
S to Z - Dessert

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Please ask for Dale Evenson.

All you have to do is submit your name to go on the ballot. The membership votes you in! That is how it is done if the membership wants you on the board they vote for you. Try it you might like it.

On page 8 there is a write up regarding some suggested ideas coming from a newly formed advisory committee. We have to address the future and we cannot stand still. If we want to stay viable in the atmosphere and economy at the present time, we must study all ways and possibilities to make IGGPRA the organization it needs to be for our members.

**Board Member – Margaret Burrell-Hall**



Margaret is co-owner of Robert Hall Winery. She graduated from UCLA with graduate and teaching credentials. In 1994, Robert and Margaret planted their 300 + acre vineyard and soon after started building their winery.

Their vineyards are certified for SIP (sustainability in practice) with the Central Coast Vineyard Team. Along with participating in our AVA's educational programs she has traveled with California Wine Institute to promote our wine grape growing region and our wines.

Margaret contributes experience, market exposure and dedication to our great wines and vineyards. We appreciate her advice and information that she shares at our board meetings.

**Board Member – Tom Hinkle**



Tom and wife, Carol are the owners of Rio Seco Winery and Vineyards. His background is in education he earned his Bachelor of Science degree from Cal Poly Pomona, a teaching credential from the University of Redlands and a Masters from Azusa Pacific College.

In 1972 they came to the Central Coast he was teaching at Cal Poly. In 1976 they bought a 64 acre parcel in Paso Robles where they planted 30 acres with seven varietals and in 2007 10 acres of olives.

Their Rio Seco Winery is the 34th licensed and bonded winery in the County. Because he is both a grower and vintner, Tom believes he can bring an unique perspective and representation to IGGPRA by being liaison for both interests.

**Membership Chair, Herman W. Salazar**



Herman began employment with the State of California, Department of Youth Authority, as a Counselor at the Paso Robles School for Boys in 1967. The State closed the PRSB in 1972 and he was transferred to YA in Sacramento until retirement in 1995. Herman enjoyed the serene country atmosphere and lifestyle of San Luis Obispo and they were thrilled to return upon Herman's retirement.

In 1999 he and his family (wife, Charlene and daughter, Christina) returned to SLO County, residing in Nipomo for five years where he was active with the Rotary International and involved in numerous community activities.

In 2005, wanderlust brought him and his wife to Independence Ranch in San Miguel where they continued as active volunteers with senior citizens and animal rescue. Herman developed a love for his evolving Zinfandel vineyard. For the last three years, he has learned aspects of the winemaking process and enjoys the interaction with fellow IGGPRA members. The unofficial, yet significant, name of his vineyard is "The Sal Capone Winery". Hey Herman, "Who is Capone?"

### **Social Chair, Elizabeth Torp**

A long and winding road has brought Elizabeth and Mitch Torp to the Central Coast. They met in Utah, moved to Oregon, then to California. In Visalia, Mitch worked for a company that built irrigation pump stations. He started his own business, TGP West, Inc. in 1994, moved to Paso Robles in 1997 - and the rest is history. Today TGP West pump stations keep water flowing for vineyards in three counties.

Elizabeth has worked in the jewelry trade. She has been a waitress, a professional cook and taught adult literacy. She started helping out in the office, knowing nothing about business or computers. Now, her skills have grown along with the company and she runs the office. She says, "Being the Social Chair allows me to interact with people instead of paper and I am having a ball."

On her day off, she works as a volunteer tutor at Pleasant Valley School.



## CERTIFIED CALIFORNIA SUSTAINABLE WINEGROWING PROGRAM

This program requires applicants to meet 58 prerequisite criteria to be eligible, assess winery or vineyard operations, create and implement an annual action plan and show improvement over time.

Certification will provide individual growers and wineries with the means of credibly sharing their progress in sustainability with customers, which offers an additional incentive to participate and implement best practices.

Members of the Wine Institute and the California Association of Winegrape Growers provided primary funding for the California Sustainable Winegrowing Program with additional support coming from American Farmland Trust, the U.S. Dept of Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA Risk Mgmt Agency, the California Dept of Pesticide Regulation, the California Dept of Food & Agriculture, PG&E and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

Suggested website to visit: [www.sustainablewinegrowing.org](http://www.sustainablewinegrowing.org). This site will give you all the information you will ever want to know! *Your editor A. Elder*

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## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

### GROWERS

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Hm 661-836-9576 ; Wk 661-327-3756; Cell 661-735-7576  
Vin add: 6464 Creston Rd., Paso Robles 93446  
**Pear Valley Vineyard; Tom & Kathleen Maas**  
4900 Union Rd , Paso Robles 93446  
Hm 805-467-3060; Wk 805-238-2861  
<http://www.pearvalley.com>

**Topen Vineyards ; Thomas K. & Penny Johnson**  
2855 San Fernando Rd , Atascadero, CA 93422  
Hm 805-461-0115 ; Wk 805-226-0400  
Cell 805-610-8511  
[penny@topenvineyards.calinet.com](mailto:penny@topenvineyards.calinet.com)  
Thomas Johnson- Optometrist  
641 Spring Street, PR 93446  
Bus. 805-226-0400 ; Cell 805-610-8511  
**Thomas A Nee & Ann Lee**  
37 Annapolis, Newbury, MA 01951  
Hm 978-462-8066 ; Cell 978-270-2236  
[tommynee@comcast.net](mailto:tommynee@comcast.net) (*Future vineyard owner*)

## Water briefing provides little encouragement

**Issue Date: January 20, 2010**

By Kate Campbell Assistant Editor

Hope was in shorter supply than water at a briefing on the state's water supply situation last week. More than 200 farmers and local leaders showed up at the Los Banos Fairgrounds to hear from state and federal officials about the impact of the continuing drought, low reservoir levels, regulatory inflexibility, crippling court decisions and dwindling options for those who grow irrigated crops—particularly on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley.

Most of all, farmers wanted to know how much irrigation water will be available to support crops during this year's growing season.

Officials warned farmers that the first water allocation estimate from the federal Central Valley Project, due next month, could be as low as the initial 5 percent estimate made by the State Water Project. But they also pointed to the hope that storms generated by the El Niño weather pattern in the Pacific Ocean would bring rain and snow to California in coming weeks.

The current water situation includes reservoirs that are at less than half of average capacity

for this time of year, a rate of pumping from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta for water storage that has been throttled back to about 40 percent of operating capacity, a current snowpack for spring runoff that stands at about 70 percent of average, and the state Department of Fish and Game count of protected delta smelt that stands at the lowest level since studies began in 1967.

"The people in this room are angry and frustrated because they're seeing their livelihoods from irrigated agriculture vanish," said Tom Birmingham, general manager of the Fresno-based Westlands Water District. "We're experiencing unbelievable levels of unemployment and there's a need for social services well beyond the need of any other communities in California."

Farmers urged officials to build more reservoirs to store water during wet years, but it's the current crop year that worries them. Farmers and valley lawmakers said the federal Endangered Species Act should be relaxed, so more water can be stored and available during the summer.

"More important is the short term now, because we have farmers on the brink of going

*(Continued on page 9)*

Proposed NEW things happening in IGGPRA *prepared by Wally Brohaugh, chair*

Current members of the Committee: Ken Bray, Wally Brohaugh, Dick Conger, Rich Ellis, Francesco and Carol Grande, Don Hofer, Joe Irick, Karl Luft, Kate Morgans, Jutta Thoerner, Steve and Janice Tollefson and, Lowell Zelinski.

At the November Board meeting, a request by the above mentioned members took a very proactive step and asked to create an Advisory Committee to look at how IGGPRA could better serve its members and have more member involvement. The Committee has now met several times, has grown to 12 members, and has developed some exciting ideas. Here are some of the ideas being presented to a specially called meeting of the Board on January 14:

- Contacting other grape grower associations--The Committee is now contacting other grape growing associations in California looking for what they are doing that we could or should be doing. This info can be used to help us develop positive changes for the membership.
- Expanding IGGPRA education seminars --We are proposing to expand the grower education program by increasing the number and type of training available. *Seminars* will be expanded to insure input is provided to all levels of growers to all methods of farming and education will be expanded to areas other than seminars such as the *newsletter, socials, the web site and small group settings*.
- Marketing Grapes --Another area of focus will be to look at how IGGPRA can assist its members in marketing their grapes and for a fair price. Initially this will be dealt with through educational offering.
- Other topics we are discussing-- organizational structure, By-laws, mission statement, financials, nominating procedures, Board size and term. The organization has grown to more than 300 members and it is the Advisory Committee's intention to work with various Board members to make the IGGPRA a recognized name in the wine industry.

There is more work remaining and if you would like to participate please contact one of the committee members. *Be a part of the IGGPRA's success!!*

## January 14, 2010-Special IGGPRA Board Meeting

Your IGGPRA board listened to the above mentioned ideas and agreed that they had merit. This organization needs to move forward. The board moved to allow this committee to form and see where their ideas take us.

*(Continued on page 9)*

(Continued from page 8) *Board Meeting*

Members of the advisory committee that attended the special IGGPRA Board Meeting were: Wally Brohaugh, Rich Ellis, Don Hofer, Joe Irick, Kate Morgans, and Jutta Thoerner.

All IGGPRA Board Members attended except for one member, Dale Evenson. Members, **your input is encouraged**. Tell us where you think this organization should focus attention for the com-

(Continued from page 7) *Water Briefing*

out of business," said Earl Perez, who buys CVP water to grow several crops on the west side of Stanislaus County.

Other farmers are fallowing land, with as much as a half million acres in the San Joaquin Valley going idle last year.

Farmer Laurian Bettencourt of Gustine tells officials during a briefing on the state water crisis in Los Banos that farmers need flexibility to move excess water from their own operations to those who need it, especially during severe shortages.

Gustine farmer Laurian Bettencourt told officials that he has excess water on his farm, but regulations prevent transfers between farmers in different water districts.

"I want to help my neighbor," Bettencourt said. "He's had to fallow 400 acres, but I can't move my water to him. That just seems wrong."

Some farmers with limited water alternatives are simply selling out, including one Mendota-area farmer who told Ag Alert® that he just got tired of fighting

The Los Banos briefing included an update regarding a National Academy of Sciences review of the science behind the biological opinions on salmon and delta smelt, which restrict water movement through the delta.

At the request of the U.S. departments of Interior and Commerce, the National Academy of Sciences agreed to conduct the review and issue a report by March 15 that focuses on the assumptions used to operate the state and federal water projects. The academy will convene at the University of California, Davis, Jan. 24-28 to gather information.

"We're seeing some progress with the National Academy of Sciences review of the underlying science of the biological opinions that have resulted in reduced levels of water going into storage, because we believe there are other factors affecting the ecology of the delta besides the water transfer pumps," said Rep. Dennis Cardoza, D-Merced, who hosted the briefing with Rep. Jim Costa, D-Fresno.

Among those attending were officials from the U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Department of Commerce, California Department of Water Resources and local water districts throughout the San Joaquin Valley.

Cardoza said the Bureau of Reclamation is being urged to improve the ability to transfer water by completing a long-term, multi-year water transfer program and an intertie canal project connecting

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9) *Water Briefing*

the CVP and state water systems, while providing more federal dollars for water conservation, and improving and expanding a number of dams and reservoirs to increase efficiency and storage capacity.

"Our farmers can no longer shoulder the entire burden for the delta's problems. It's important that we find other solutions. Doing more of the same (curtailing the water transfer pumps) is not the answer," Cardoza said.

David Nawi, a senior advisor to Interior Secretary Ken Salazar, said he has opened an office in Sacramento and will be focusing his attention full-time on the state's water crisis, which he said is an indication of the Obama administration's commitment to helping address the state's water crisis.

But the Interior Department decided not to proceed with an experimental plan known as the Two Gates Fish Protection Demonstration Project, which would have tested the benefit of installing two moveable gates to keep fish away from the delta pumps.

In a December letter to the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority, which has been working to gain approval for the project, the Interior Department said it would not approve the Two Gates project. The department cited what it called major, unanswered questions and cost estimates that escalated from \$29 million to \$60 million to \$80 million.

## **Farm Bureau says new energy policy will harm farmers**

**Issue Date: January 13, 2010**

By Christine Souza Assistant Editor

Actions announced by the Obama administration will slow the federal oil and gas leasing process considerably, and analysts say that means farmers and ranchers will face more expensive fuel and less stable prices.

The California Farm Bureau Federation criticized an announcement made last week by U.S. Interior Secretary Ken Salazar, who described new policies for onshore oil and gas leases on public lands that require a more thorough environmental review process and increased public participation and documentation.

"The announcement by Secretary Salazar seems counterproductive to our needs as a nation at this point," said CFBF First Vice President Kenny Watkins, who farms in San Joaquin County. "Our largest cost in agriculture is energy, whether it is fuel, fertilizer or electricity. Many of the products that we use on our farms are petroleum-based, so

oil has a huge impact on our bottom line."

CFBF National Affairs and Research Division Manager Jack King said the United States must pursue domestic sources of energy more aggressively.

"You would think that the new administration would recognize the need to do all it can to be helpful and not throw roadblocks in the path of efforts to develop energy," King said. "We can do it in an environmentally concerned manner, but let's not turn our back on domestic production."

In a letter sent to the Department of the Interior last year, CFBF urged the new administration to continue to pursue domestic energy production, especially after 2008, when the cost of fuel and fuel-based inputs reached an all-time high.

"In 2008, we experienced the devastating effect that skyrocketing energy prices had on profitability and competitiveness of our state's agriculture, a reality that truly hit home when diesel prices

*(Continued on page 11)*

*(Continued from page 10)*

topped \$4.50 per gallon," Farm Bureau wrote.

"We can't forget the lessons of 2008. We know all too well that surging energy prices can re-occur at any time, with little or no provocation, and it could happen with a vengeance."

Calling energy "critical to what we do," CFBF warned, "If we can't remain competitive and profitable, our country will be forced to rely on foreign sources for our food supply."

A spokesman for the Western States Petroleum Association reiterated the need to increase America's energy security.

"The fastest and best way to do this is to make better use of the domestic resources we have," association spokesman Tupper Hull said, "because every barrel of oil that we don't produce, we're going to have to import it from someplace that is likely not stable and/or not friendly to the U.S."

As the country suffered from high fuel prices, the Bush administration opened leases for offshore drilling in search of domestic energy sources. Salazar made it clear that his action is a rejection of those Bush-era policies.

Colusa County alfalfa hay grower Tom Ellis said he does not believe that Congress and the Obama administration are concerned about how high energy prices might affect the day-to-day operations of the nation's farms and ranches.

"They may give a little lip service to our problem, but I don't really think there is much concern," Ellis said.

He recalled how spikes and dips in the price for diesel fuel have impacted his business over the years.

"It used to be, years ago, they'd deliver 600 gallons to the field and the price tag was \$600. When it was \$2,400-\$2,600 for the same delivery a few years later, that was dramatic," Ellis said. "I almost hated to call and order fuel because it was so dramatically different. It is difficult to wring that out of your operation."

Since the first quarter of 2009, California has experienced fairly stable fuel prices, but now Hull said that the prices are starting to inch back up.

"Price volatility in California is exaggerated because we are so finely balanced on the supply and demand of both gasoline and diesel that we see a much higher level of volatility in prices," Hull said. "California is the third-largest gasoline consuming entity on earth. We are exceeded in our demand for transportation fuels only by the U.S. as a whole and by China."

With only 13 refineries producing fuel in California and no connecting pipelines from other refining centers of the U.S., domestic energy production is critical, Hull said.

According to the California Energy Commission, more than 48 percent of the crude oil used to make products in California refineries in 2008 came from foreign sources and more than 13 percent came from Alaska. Only 38 percent of 2008 crude supplies were produced in California. That proportion has been falling steadily from the mid-1980s, when imports made up only about 5 percent of California's crude oil supplies.

"We are still as dependent on foreign oil sources today as we've ever been," King said. "As soon as the economy recovers, we are going to see a significantly greater demand for energy and higher prices, so the need for domestic energy never went away."

"We mustn't forget the lessons of a few years ago," he said. "It is up to Congress and the Obama administration to remain true to the actions taken at the height of the price crisis. We must make them accountable."

(Christine Souza is an assistant editor of Ag Alert. She may be contacted at [csouza@cfbf.com](mailto:csouza@cfbf.com).)

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# IGGPRA NEWSLETTER

PO BOX 253

Creston, CA 93432



God Bless America

## GROWERS HELPING GROWERS

### *Wine & Dine*

#### Acorn squash soup

By Gwen Schoen

##### Ingredients

4 acorn squash  
3/4 cup water  
2 tbsp. butter  
1 medium onion, chopped  
2 cloves garlic, chopped (optional)  
1 1/2 tsp. minced fresh thyme  
1 1/2 tsp. minced fresh sage  
1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon  
1 (32-oz.) container chicken or vegetable broth  
1/4 to 1/2 cup heavy cream or half-and-half (optional)  
Sugar, salt and pepper, to taste  
Croutons, for garnish (optional)

##### Directions

Slice off just enough of the stem ends of each squash so the squash stands up straight. Then slice off the top third of each squash. Scoop out the seeds and fibers and discard. Place three tablespoons of water inside each

squash. Stand each squash open-end-up on a sheet of foil. Wrap tightly with the foil. Place the squash on a baking sheet and bake at 375 degrees about 45 minutes or until slightly tender when pierced with a fork. Remove the foil and tip the squash over to drain. When squash are cool enough to handle, scrape out the pulp, leaving a 1/4-inch shell, reserving the pulp. This can be done a day in advance. Store the shells and pulp in the refrigerator. Bring the squash and shells to room temperature before making the soup.

Working in small batches, purée the reserved squash in a blender or food processor until smooth, transferring each batch to a large bowl. Melt butter in a small skillet over medium heat. Add onion and garlic and sauté until tender, about 10 minutes. Place the sautéed onion and garlic, thyme, sage and cinnamon in the blender with half of the broth. Puree until smooth. Pour the onion mixture into a large pot. Add the puréed squash. Cook over

medium heat, stirring constantly until the mixture is well blended and heated through. Add enough of the remaining broth until the soup is the thickness you prefer. When heated thoroughly, add cream. Taste and add sugar, salt and pepper to taste.

Pour the soup into the acorn squash bowls and top with croutons before serving, if desired.

**Note:** This recipe is for acorn squash, but any type of winter squash would work. We freeze leftover pieces of cooked acorn, butternut, delicata and carnival squash until we have enough to make a large pot of soup using a mixture of all four varieties.

Serves 4



*Bon Appétite'*