



April 22, 2020

To Lodi Winegrowers,

I hope you and your family and friends are all staying safe and healthy. Like yourselves, the Lodi Winegrape Commission is deemed an essential service and we have continued to operate during current shelter-in-place orders. Staff has been given the option to work from home, although most have been working from the office while observing appropriate distancing guidelines. The office remains open according to normal business hours of Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm. Please feel free to give us a call with any thoughts, questions, or concerns.

Following statewide orders, we closed the Lodi Wine Visitor Center to the public mid-March. Unfortunately, this meant that we had to lay off our part-time staff that serves the public. The Visitor Center is still available for curbside pickups, online orders, and club shipments – all of which are being managed by full-time staff. We are utilizing this time to “refresh” the Wine Visitor Center, aligning programming, marketing, staff orientation, and aesthetics to the new Lodi Wine branding launched in January.

COVID-19 has also forced us to shift and postpone many of the activities and events that were planned through June 2020. We have continued to meet virtually with our Commission committees and continue to accomplish our strategic goals and serve our Lodi winegrowing community. In many cases, we are pivoting and adapting programs, creating flexible templates which will meet our future needs – whatever they may be. I encourage you to read the following pages as we highlight some of those ongoing activities. We are anxious to get back to “normal” operations but recognize it could be sometime before we are able to host large gatherings of growers, wine trade, and consumers.

The ultimate question is what affect this shutdown and economic disruption will have on the wine and grape market. Quite honestly, nobody knows for certain, and there is a great deal of speculation surrounding the subject. Currently, it appears that short-term wine consumption and sales have increased. We have seen tremendous channel-shifting as on-premise sales have shifted to off-premise dominated by grocery store chains. These trends will likely benefit the larger wine companies and trusted brands better positioned in chain stores. This should also help our current over-supply situation, and play to the benefit of Lodi growers as the large wine companies buy a significant portion



of their grapes in our region. The long-term effects are less clear, but past recessionary periods have seen a shift to value that also tend to benefit the large producers.

The past month has been challenging and disruptive for all on a personal and professional level. We are all anxious for this time to pass. We miss spending time with our growers and look forward to the day when we can all come together and share a glass of delicious Lodi wine.

Please feel free to reach out!

Stuart Spencer

Executive Director

Lodi Winegrape Commission



## MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

### Lodi Masterclass Seminar Series, February & March(ish)

In March, we wrapped up the third seminar of our highly successful Lodi Masterclass educational series in Denver, Colorado with respected wine writer and educator Elaine Chukan Brown. Aimed at trade and media, the series focuses in on Lodi's winegrowers and the evolution of many of Lodi's most distinct wines from vineyard to glass.

Prior to hosting the first seminar Elaine visited Lodi over multiple trips, spending a good deal of time listening intently to the stories and observing the work of many of our growers and vintners. Our Denver seminar was preceded by well-attended seminars in Washington D.C. and Houston, Texas. We hope to be in San Francisco for our fourth seminar soon. Educational seminars like these provide incredible value to our region, legitimizing it amongst a core wine audience. We are already talking about hosting this series in new cities in coming years.



*Educator and writer, Elaine Brown, leading Lodi Wine Masterclass at Goodnight Charlie's, Houston, Texas, on February 12.*

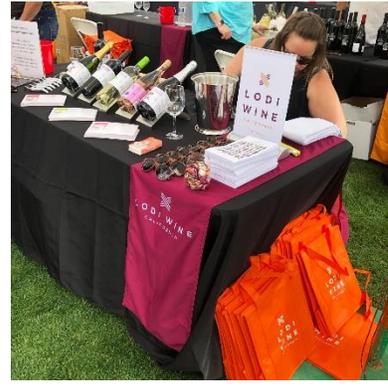
### New Lodi Wine, Growers, and Commission Branding

Since launching our new Lodi Wine, Growers, and Commission brand at this year's annual meeting in January, staff has not slowed down. They continue to work toward the development of supporting collateral such as illustrated story advertisements, wine trail signage, educational brochures, and more, as well as continuing edits to and development of both [lodiwine.com](http://lodiwine.com) and [lodigrowers.com](http://lodigrowers.com).

For those of you who attended the annual meeting in January, you know that a great deal of new brand collateral has already been completed and implemented including letterhead, trade show booth, wine map and guide, and apparel. Flags, banners, and promotional gifts were utilized by Lodi wineries at Rancho Mirage Food & Wine Festival (February 28 & 29) and Lodi Wine Night with Stockton Heat Hockey (February 29), creating cohesive and elevated branding for our region. A new, elegant mural and signage have been installed at the Visitor Center and further updates are underway. We can't wait to have you all in to enjoy the space soon!



Be on the lookout for specialty Lodi Wine Grower jackets, vests, and hats which will be available for purchase within the coming months. Lodi Wine Grower truck decals are plentiful and in stock and are available in the colors of black, gray, and white. If you need one, two or ten, please don't hesitate to email us at [lwwc@lodiwine.com](mailto:lwwc@lodiwine.com) or drop us a line at 209.367.4727.



*Top row: New Lodi wine branding makes a splash at Rancho Mirage Food & Wine Festival, February 29. Bottom row: New mural and signage at Lodi Wine Visitor Center.*

### Trade & Media Sample Mailings

We continue to keep Lodi top of mind with outreach to leading trade and media. In many cases, this outreach includes wine samples. In all cases, outreach includes "pitching" a unique story angle on our region with the goal of receiving press coverage. In time for Earth Day (April 22) a LODI RULES mailing was executed this past week which focused on the use of beneficial insects for a home garden or yard. Recipients were provided with all of the information and inspiration necessary to craft a compelling story, including a copy of "The Xerces Society Guide: Farming with Native Beneficial Insects," one bottle of Lodi wine made from grapes certified under LODI RULES, one LODI RULES hydroflask, yarrow seed coasters, and facts about the LODI RULES program as well as tips for utilizing common household items to build an insect hotel. We're hoping to see some great "hits" here!

In early March, we completed a broad mailing to trade and media announcing our new Lodi Wine brand. The goal here was twofold: 1) Boost awareness of our new brand image and messaging; and 2)



Bolster existing relationships with supportive trade and media. Utilizing our new Lodi Wine Growers brand, we are currently organizing a similar mailing intended to keep our growers top of mind with grape buyers this coming season. We anticipate a mailing date in May or early June.



*Custom mailing boxes announcing new Lodi Wine branding.*

### Lodi Appellation Communications Kit

In continuing to elevate our region and educate various audiences, we are creating a comprehensive communications kit or press kit. A crucial component of trade and media outreach, the kit will delve deeply into Lodi's history, terroir (geography, topography, elevation, growing season, soil, climate, rainfall), sub-appellations, grape varieties, old vines, and LODI RULES. The communications kit will also contain background and notable accomplishments of the Lodi Winegrape Commission along with our vision, mission, and core values. This communications kit will be available both as a professionally printed and bound booklet as well as a PDF which may be downloaded from [lodiwine.com](http://lodiwine.com) or sent digitally by email. We anticipate that this communications kit will be a helpful tool in conversations with consumers, media, buyers, and others.

### SommFoundation Lodi Immersion Tour, September 13-17

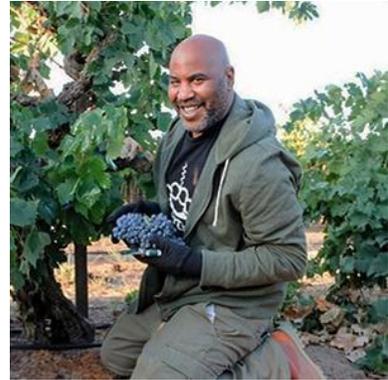
This September, we will host our second vineyard-driven Lodi tour in partnership with SommFoundation – the non-profit educational foundation of Guild of Sommeliers. Individuals holding qualifying certifications who are currently working in the wine industry will be strongly encouraged to apply. A total of eight will be selected to participate. If this year's tour is anything like 2019, you can bet that shoes will be dusty and hands dirty from vineyard visits and hand and mechanical harvesting activities led by many of our growers.

In terms of connecting influencers in the wine industry to our people and products, there is no comparison for immersion tours like these. No phone call, email, or sample mailing is more powerful than an in-person conversation – especially when you have people like ours who are so passionate about what they do! Repeatedly, these trips have proven that when we get a writer, a buyer, or a consumer to visit Lodi, it's always a "win" as the relationships forged continue to pay it forward in articles written, wines and grapes purchased, and re-visits to the region. In fact, we are looking



forward to hosting a buyer's group in 2021 who will be visiting at the recommendation of one of last year's tour attendees.

If you missed this year's annual meeting, be sure to watch our video documenting what visiting sommeliers took away from their time in Lodi during last year's tour: <https://bit.ly/LodiSommTour19>. It's both inspiring and eye-opening!



*From left to right: Early morning hand harvest in Jessie's Grove Royal Tee Vineyard; sorting at Oak Farm Vineyards; prize Carignan cluster in Royal Tee Vineyard.*

## Save the Old Vines Campaign, November

We have some exciting programming in the works for November. In honor of National Zinfandel Day (November 18) and Lodi's history with the variety, we are planning for an entire month of promotions surrounding Old Vine Zinfandel including technical seminars, vineyard tours, and consumer-focused campaigns. We are exploring partnerships with organizations like Historical Vineyard Society (HVS) and Zinfandel Advocates & Producers (ZAP). Be on the lookout for ways in which you (and your old vine vineyard) can be involved!

## LODI RULES

### Certification Updates

The 2020 LODI RULES sustainable winegrowing certification year is off to a great start, with over 56,000 acres enrolled (almost a 10% increase from 2019 if all acres attain certification). For the first time, we have two enthusiastic applicants from the state of Washington. Growers and wineries continue to express interest in the program, with several new wineries signing up to use a LODI RULES or CALIFORNIA RULES seal on their labels. Interest from consumers and the press is growing too - Lodi growers' commitment to sustainability is definitely an attention grabber!

The deadline for growers to complete their online self-assessment has been extended to May 15th, 2020.



### LODI RULES Communications Kits

To help keep up with the demand for information about LODI RULES, we are creating three new communications kits. These are similar to press kits and are based on the user's sustainability knowledge level. We get all kinds of inquiries - from "how is sustainable different from organic?" to "what does a farmer have to do in order to be certified?" These kits will be available as a PDF soon on the consumer website, [lodirules.org](http://lodirules.org). Any certified growers needing the LODI RULES Winery Handbook & Branding Guidelines or a communications kit for your winegrape buyer may contact the Commission at [lwwc@lodiwine.com](mailto:lwwc@lodiwine.com) or 209.367.4727.

### LODI RULES Spanish Translation

A Spanish translation of the LODI RULES farming practices is almost complete - we've been working with Mr. Andres Valero, a LODI RULES fan who earned his graduate degree with a thesis project titled "Embedding Sustainability into the Wine Sector through the Application of Life Cycle Management Tools."

### Sustainable Vision Workshop

This year's Sustainable Vision Workshop, open to all growers, will be conducted by Kent Reeves online. For more information, email Dr. Stephanie Bolton at [stephanie@lodiwine.com](mailto:stephanie@lodiwine.com).

### VITICULTURE RESEARCH

Planning has begun for the \$1 million BIFS (Biologically Integrated Farming Systems) grant awarded by the CDFA to Dr. Kent Daane, the Lodi Winegrape Commission, the Vineyard Team, and others to study the effectiveness of region-wide management of the vine mealybug and leafroll virus. The title of the project is "Refinement and Implementation of an Areawide Program for Vineyard Pathogens and their Insect Vectors." This project builds upon the collaborative work done by Lodi's Mealybug Biocontrol Research Focus Group, Grapevine Virus Research Focus Group, and Western SARE grant project team - all supported by the Commission's Research, Education, & Communications Committee. It's looking like one new scientist on the project will be based in Lodi.



*From left to right: The Xerces Society's Jessa Kay Cruz conducting Hedgerow Workshop with Lodi winegrape growers on March 10; Aaron Lange planting hedgerows with son, Declan; Dr. Stephanie Bolton with Julia Lange and Emma and Becca Starr.*



## EDUCATION & OUTREACH

### Grower Virus Workbook & Outreach Meeting

As part of a virus outreach grant awarded to the Commission by the American Vineyard Foundation and the CDFA PD/GWSS Board, Dr. Stephanie Bolton, the Grapevine Virus Research Focus Group, and several experts collaborated to create a grower virus workbook called *What Every Winegrower Should Know: Viruses*. You won't find any information about coronaviruses, but the lessons learned during this pandemic will help you better understand grapevine viruses. This book is loaded with local stories and photos and was written specifically for the Lodi farmer. Printed copies of the 138-page hardcover book have arrived and will be distributed at the May 19 Mealybug & Virus Outreach Meeting (or by another means if this meeting is postponed again). Electronic versions on flash drives will also be available. If our success continues, we hope to produce more books for you on select topics, such as marketing and rootstocks, in the future.

### Lodi IPM Network Breakfast Meetings

Our CD11 Lodi IPM Network Breakfast Meetings have been put on hold, but we have Mr. Stan Grant ready to give a great talk on Mineral Nutrient Management Methods (with 1.5 hours of Nitrogen Management Plan credits approved). Once we are allowed to host tailgate talks again, we have meetings planned on the topics of winegrape quality, rootstocks, irrigation, and more.

### The Modern Farmer Series

If you attended our Lodi Winegrape Commission Annual Meeting, you'll know that we have a new outreach program planned for you called The Modern Farmer Series, aimed at helping you sell your grapes and becoming a more profitable farmer. Dr. Stephanie Bolton is working on transitioning part of this new series on profitability to a format that allows for learning during this pandemic, in case we continue to shelter in place for a while longer. If you have any input or ideas on what is needed or would be helpful to you, please don't hesitate to let us know. Dr. Bolton can be reached at [stephanie@lodiwine.com](mailto:stephanie@lodiwine.com) or 336.692.4288 (cell).

## FARMER OPPORTUNITIES

Both the CDFA Healthy Soils program and the Xerces Society have great opportunities for farmers right now. The CDFA Healthy Soils program provides funding to farmers for a wide range of soil conservation practices. Applications for the Healthy Soils program are being accepted until June 26, 2020 or until funds are expended, whichever is earlier. To learn more about the Healthy Soils program, search the internet for "CDFA Healthy Soils." The Xerces Society is offering customized free plant kits to eligible farmers in an effort to enhance habitat for monarchs and pollinators - something we learned a lot about at our recent Hedgerow Workshop! Applications are being accepted now through May 8 (learn more by reading the blog post at [lodigrowers.com](http://lodigrowers.com)) and plant kits will be available in October 2020.



## WEATHER NETWORK

Our network of over 35 local weather stations continues to provide daily forecasting for growers. You can always find the current weather stats at [lodi.westernweathergroup.com](http://lodi.westernweathergroup.com). To sign up for daily weather forecasts (including a seasonal afternoon frost forecast) or if you have any questions, contact Mr. Matt Wanink at [matt@westernwx.com](mailto:matt@westernwx.com).

## LODI GROWERS WEBSITE ([lodigrowers.com](http://lodigrowers.com))

You can find an updated list of PPE vendors provided by the CDFA on our [lodigrowers.com](http://lodigrowers.com) homepage or by calling 209.367.4727. Our weekly viticulture blog, kept active and relevant by guest contributors such as Mr. Stan Grant, Mr. Randy Caparoso, and Mrs. Amy Wolfe, continues to be read by many of you and people all over the world. These blog articles are often picked up by wine industry news sources - helping to showcase Lodi's leadership in viticulture. New articles are posted every Monday and cover a wide range of topics. To sign up for the weekly viticulture blog email list, contact the Commission at [lwwc@lodiwine.com](mailto:lwwc@lodiwine.com) or 209.367.4727.

Our grower website is a good resource for meeting opportunities, which are currently webinars or online meetings. Check out the Local Opportunities page under the Education tab.