



(<http://www.tastecaliforniatravel.com/>)

- [Home \(/\)](#)
- [Directory \(/new-directory-2\)](#)
- [Read](#)
- [Drink \(/drink\)](#)
- [Eat \(/food\)](#)
- [Visit \(/visit\)](#)
- [Contact Us \(/contact-us\)](#)

Napa Growers Call 2018 "Picture-Perfect"

font size | [Print \(/drink/wine/item/2183-napa?tmpl=component&print=1\)](#) | [Email \(/component/mailto/?tmpl=component&template=tasteca01&link=732e531ffe02fdaa0eb65e5ad3f1ecffb6a7f9af\)](#)

Rate this item (0 votes)



(/media/k2/items/cache/71a42ae7863301ba46b5e226eaecf171_XL.jpg)

From left: Napa Valley Grapegrowers Executive Director, Jennifer Putnam; Pete Richmond of Silverado Farming, Kelly Macleod of Hudson Vineyards and Sam Kaplan of Arkestone Vineyards

This website uses cookies to ensure you get the best experience. [Learn more about it. \(/privacy-policy\)](#)
By Dan Clarke

Angwin, Napa County, October 24, 2018 | **Growers delivered a sanguine picture of Napa's 2018 vintage yesterday.**

The occasion was the annual harvest press conference of the Napa Valley Grapegrowers and the location was Arkenstone Estate near the community of Angwin on Howell Mountain. Jennifer Putnam, Executive Director of the trade organization, moderated a grower panel featuring Sam Kaplan, Winemaker and Vineyard Manager of the hosting Arkenstone, Kelly Macleod of Hudson Vineyards and Pete Richmond, whose Silverado Farming Company manages over 600 vineyard acres for several high-end Napa County wineries.

By and large, growers are a more candid lot than the promoters of the wines their efforts produce. They reveal real life vineyard challenges not covered in the “warm days, cool nights” language of a wine bottle’s back label. During their October 23rd presentation, however, all three growers described this year’s conditions as ideal and suggested that 2018 would likely please winemakers, as well as growers.

Recovery from 2017 Fires

Reflecting on the fires that devastated parts of Sonoma and Napa Counties a little more than a year earlier, the panelists offered personal observations on current conditions. Arkenstone’s Howell Mountain location high above the valley floor was spared any damage from the fire, reported Kaplan. Macleod said that perhaps only 100 vines from among all those on the 200 acres of Hudson vineyards were burned. Richmond farms for clients in diverse parts of the Napa Valley, but seemed pleasantly surprised at not seeing much in the way of long-lasting damage to most vineyards. Drip hoses and wooden stakes were destroyed in some vineyards, he explained, but less damage seemed to be done to living things. He observed that nature is resilient and that some fire-damaged vines and oak trees adjacent the vineyards not only haven’t died, but seem to be repairing themselves.

A Rosy Picture Overall

With the harvest all but over, Napa growers seem in very good shape. The crop may be a bit larger than usual, but fruit has ripened evenly and has gone to the wineries on manageable schedules.

Kelly Macleod called the conditions of 2018 “a winemaker’s dream.”

“We just finished picking here on Howell Mountain and the quality seems fantastic, said Sam Kaplan. “The whites are fermenting now and are showing great fruit expression,” said Sam Kaplan. “The pHs have been a bit lower than the last couple of years, so the acids have been really bright. The sugars are a little lower and the acids are higher—this really puts it into my wheelhouse as a winemaker.”

Saying this year’s salubrious conditions were “because of the forces of nature” (rather than to vineyard management practices), Pete Richmond described the growing year as “about as picture-perfect as you would hope for. The fruit is in fantastic shape.” He added that his most vivid memories of prior seasons were from the ones that gave him particular difficulty, rather than those that went smoothly. In a somewhat oblique compliment to this year’s growing season, he predicted that because of the benign conditions of 2018, the vintage may become one he’ll be less likely to remember.

Published in [Wine \(/drink/wine\)](#)

Tagged under [#North Coast \(/drink/wine/itemlist/tag/North%20Coast\)](#) [#Napa County \(/drink/wine/itemlist/tag/Napa%20County\)](#) [#Napa Valley \(/drink/wine/itemlist/tag/Napa%20Valley\)](#)

Related items

- [Napa Truffle Festival \(/food/chefs-and-restaurants/item/2179-napa-truffle-fest\)](#)
- [Phii Miceison Pops Cork for Charity \(/visit/goif/item/2178-korbei\)](#)
- [Olea Hotel reopens in Glen Ellen \(/visit/drives-and-destinations/item/2167-renovated-olea-hotel-reopens-in-glen-ellen\)](#)
- [California Celebrates Wine Month \(/visit/drives-and-destinations/item/2159-california-celebrates\)](#)
- [Winesong Draws Fans to Mendocino \(/visit/drives-and-destinations/item/2156-winesong\)](#)

More in this category: [« 2018 Harvest in Santa Lucia Highlands \(/drink/wine/item/2181-slh\)](#)

[back to top \(/drink/wine/item/2183-napa#startOfPageId2183\)](#)

[Home \(/homeb\)](#) [About Us \(/about\)](#) [Terms and Conditions \(/terms\)](#) [Login \(/login\)](#) [Privacy policy \(/privacy-policy\)](#)

Copyright © 2005 - 2018. Taste California Travel. All rights reserved. | Phoenix Website Design (<http://www.citruskiwi.com>) by
CitrusKiwi

This website uses cookies to ensure you get the best experience. [Learn more about it. \(/privacy-policy\)](#)

I ACCEPT