



## **NOVEMBER 2014**

Hello Bootleg Society Members!

As the sun sets on the 2014 growing season, it provides us with a moment to reflect on what went well, what went wrong, and what we would like to do a little different. These points of introspection are essential to improving the quality of our wines, and continuing to keep our winery relevant in today's world. And it's also what keeps winemaking interesting, fun, and rewarding. It's easy to get stuck in a rut, going through the motions of growing the grapes and making the wine, but taking the time to reflect on what you are actually doing is central to insuring our family business thrives for the next generation. A few thoughts on 2014 -

- Celebrating our 41<sup>st</sup> vintage as winegrowers it's never more apparent that the wine business is a long-term endeavor. The decisions and actions of today may not bear fruit for many, many years.
- Seasonality – we are not making wines by a formula. We are making hand-crafted wines from single vineyards that will express the variation of each growing season. And over the course of the past five years we've experienced incredible variation, but we think that variation is part of what makes wine special.
- Fine winemaking requires intuition and an intimate understanding of your vineyards. This is only gained by spending time, season after season, walking the vineyard, and making adjustments in your farming to suit your goals. And it's why we prefer working with the same vineyards year after year.
- There are no real secrets in winemaking. It simply comes down to execution which requires having a great team of people with a singular goal of making the best wines. We were fortunate to have Joel, our assistant winemaker, Max, our harvest cellar hand, and Todd our vineyard manager on board this season. Their combined efforts and attention to detail will produce some fabulous wines from 2014.

With the 2014 wines snugly put to bed, we can now look back on a trio of wines from 2012 and 2013 for this month's wine club selections. We are pleased to offer our 2013 Mohr-Fry Ranch Old Vine Zinfandel, our 2012 Souzao, and our 2012 Tempranillo. There is more information on the wines on the following page. We would also like to bring to your attention a few future events that we hope you can attend:

**Holiday Open House - December 6 -7, 2014**  
**Wine Club Pickup Party - February 21, 2015**  
**Wine Club Pickup Party - May 9, 2015**

Cheers!  
Stuart Spencer

# NOVEMBER 2014 WINE CLUB

## 2013 Mohr-Fry Ranch Old Vine Zinfandel – Lodi

The year was 1996. Our vineyard had died of phylloxera. We were in a lawsuit with our former landlord, and had moved our winery to Lodi. We had no grapes, so my dad came up with a deal that if a Lodi grower brought us two tons of grapes, we would make the wine, and give them 25 cases to market their vineyard. Some good stuff and not so good stuff showed up, but one day Jerry Fry showed up with 7 tons of beautiful Old Vine Zinfandel. My dad was totally stressed. We didn't have the money to pay for the grapes, and we weren't even sure if we could sell the wine. Jerry Fry told him not to worry about it, that we could figure it out later. We ended up bottling the 1996 Mohr-Fry Ranch Old Vine Zinfandel as a vineyard designation. It won a bunch of awards and sold out in a few months. We paid Jerry for the grapes, and thus began a great partnership that exists to this day. No contracts, no legal documents, just a handshake deal, and commitment to make great Lodi Zinfandel. **\$18/bottle, 3647 Cases**



## 2012 Souzao – St.Amant Vineyard, Amador



Souzao is a relatively obscure Portuguese grape variety we've been growing in our vineyards since 1980. It's principally been used as a small but significant component in our port wines where it contributes intense color and great acidity to the blends. In 2010 we had a few extra tons and decided to make a couple barrels as a table wine. That vintage was named the "Best Other Red" at the California State Fair and quickly sold out. The 2012 vintage is quite similar to the 2010. It was barrel aged for 16 months in neutral American Oak to let the true fruit character show through. It smells like a bowl of blackberries and has the flavor to match. It has high natural acidity, similar to Barbera, but with a grapier fruit-driven character. This wine was recently selected for Williams-Sonoma's Explorer Collection Wine Club where it was paired with a Sweet & Sour Pork Loin with Figs. **\$18/bottle, 77 cases**

## 2012 Tempranillo – St.Amant Vineyard, Amador

Our 2012 Tempranillo represents a return to normalcy if ever such a thing existed in winemaking. After three successive weird vintages in 2009, 2010, and 2011, 2012 delivered an idyllic growing season. The beauty of a year like 2012 is that the wines virtually make themselves. Little tweaking, blending, sorting, etc. is required to get the wines to express their best. These are the years that make winemakers look good, and fortunately, our 2012 Tempranillo delivers. The wine has deep dark fruit flavors, is well structured with mouth-coating tannins, but still retains a lively freshness that makes for a delicious drinking wine. **\$18/bottle, 593 cases**

