

Mexico Trade Mission

Wine Institute Takes California Lifestyle, Agriculture International

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's trade mission to Mexico in November 2006 presented another great occasion for the California wine industry to promote its wines in a significant market of opportunity.

Although Mexico ranks 10th in the list of export markets for California wine, it is a market with strong potential to develop a wine culture.

Joseph Rollo, director of the Wine Institute's International Program, was one of 70 business delegates who represented agricultural, tourism and environmental sectors on the two-day trade mission to Mexico.

John Kautz, chairman of Kautz Ironstone Vineyards in Lodi and a member of the California Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, represented both the agriculture and tourism sectors.

California Lifestyle

"We promote California wine internationally by featuring the state's lifestyle of which wine is so much a part," Rollo said. "The quality of our wines is highlighted through the tasting events that demonstrate the fun, casual lifestyle of California. The events of this trade mission fit perfectly into these themes, particularly the premiere of the IMAX movie 'Adventures in Wild California' in Mexico City.

"Our industry is also very involved in sustainable agriculture because the industry is comprised predominantly of families who are interested in passing on healthy vineyards and businesses to their families and future generations. Thus, participating and pouring wine at the environmental trade show in Monterrey was also a perfect fit."

Trade Show

The trade show in Monterrey included a cooking demonstration by local television star Chef LuLu Pedraza, who appeared on the stage with both California Food and



Photo Courtesy of Governor's Office

A.G. Kawamura, secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and John Kautz, chairman of Kautz Ironstone Vineyards and a member of the CalChamber Board, promote California wines at the Chedraui grocery store in Mexico City.

Agriculture Secretary A.G. Kawamura and the Governor. The pairing of California fresh produce and wine is another very positive combination that reflects the popular California cuisine.

The Governor and Secretary Kawamura visited the Chedraui grocery store in Mexico City with a large press contingent. A wine display sat among the agricultural product displays, and the Governor and secretary were photographed toasting each other with a California selection. Media representatives were present at the event, snapping photos that appeared in the local press.

Wine was specifically included in all mentions of California agricultural products in presentations at each

major event. Also, the secretary accompanied the agricultural delegation in a visit to the HEB market in Monterrey. Wine was displayed and available for tasting, and local press and photographers attended this event as well.

"The publicity for California wine is a great boost to our importers and retail buyers," Kautz said. "The Mexican wine consumer is more familiar with European and South American wines, and we need to build awareness for our wines in Mexico, where consumption is small but growing."

The wine industry has participated in three trade missions to date.