

For Immediate Release

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Arista Winery's McWilliams Family acquires famed Martinelli Road Vineyard in Russian River Valley

Historic Property continues tradition of family stewardship

April 9, 2012 - Russian River Valley, CA – The McWilliams family, owners of Arista Winery on Westside Road in the Russian River Valley are pleased to announce the purchase of the historic 74-acre Martinelli Road Vineyard, adding to their 36 acres of estate vineyard ownership at the home winery. Well known for their elegant Pinot Noir portfolio along with limited production releases of Chardonnay, Gewurztraminer and Zinfandel, the McWilliams are thrilled to add the prized 125-year-old Zinfandel plantings as well as 20+ year Pinot Noir and 30+ year Chardonnay plantings from the property to their offerings. Planted to 5 acres of Zinfandel, 10 acres of Chardonnay and 3 acres of Pinot Noir, the vineyard site has been continuously farmed since the 1870's. The vineyard was originally planted by the Banfield family to Zinfandel with the majority of the existing vines being planted in the 1880's. The property was sold by the Banfields in 1903 and has been farmed by the same family until the McWilliams' purchase.

The McWilliams plan to immediately begin producing estate designated Zinfandel, Pinot Noir, and Chardonnay from the property. They will also continue selling Zinfandel to Mike Officer of Carlisle Winery as he has crafted a vineyard designate from the property since 2009. Arista's estate vineyard manager, Ulises Valdez, will oversee the management of the new property.

Of the acquisition, Arista Winery's co-owner Mark McWilliams said, "We are deeply honored to have had this rare opportunity to acquire a vineyard of such history and caliber. I vividly remember early in my wine career I had a job as a sugar sampler for a winery and this very vineyard was one of the ones I oversaw. I can remember thinking what an amazing property this was but it never crossed my mind that one day my family would have the opportunity to own and produce wine from this historic site. My parents, brother and I plan to continue the rich family heritage of this vineyard, sharing the story of the property and its excellent wines with fans old and new."

Ben McWilliams, co-owner who oversees the tasting room and estate management for Arista also commented about the continuity of working with Mike Officer, "Mike was the very first person to reach out to us after the completion of the acquisition. He's a friend and

someone we look forward to working closely with considering his deep knowledge of the historic Zinfandel vineyards in Sonoma County.”

Excited to work with the fruit from the property, Arista winemaker Leslie Sisneros comments, “You cannot replicate the nuance and complexity of these old vines, it is an incredible lesson in the beauty of Mother Nature and a privilege to work with such amazing fruit. It’s humbling to walk amongst these vines and consider the 125 years of farming history.”

The transaction also includes 60 acres of redwood forest, the 1930’s farmhouse and numerous barns, which the McWilliams plan to restore to their original condition.

Arista Winery was founded in 2002 by Al and Janis McWilliams, who bought the 36 acre property on Westside Road, creating with their sons Mark and Ben, a winery known for crafting world class Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, and Zinfandel. Their vision has always been to grow and produce the finest quality wines possible working with a team of highly skilled artisan growers, gardeners and chefs to use the estate as a place to hone and showcase their talents. Taking pride in their non-interventionist approach, the same philosophy will carry through to the new property. Currently, the winery produces wines both from the family’s Westside Road estate as well as small lot bottlings from growers in Sonoma County, Mendocino Ridge, the Anderson and Willamette Valleys. For more information on the winery and its offerings please visit <http://www.aristawinery.com/>

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