



RODNEY STRONG WINE ESTATES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Christopher O’Gorman

chrisog@rodneystrong.com

(707) 433-0998

Tom Klein of Rodney Strong Wine Estates Honored with Wine Enthusiast’s American Wine Legend Wine Star Award

HEALDSBURG, Calif., Oct. 10, 2024 – [Rodney Strong Wine Estates](#) is proud to announce that its visionary leader, Tom Klein, has been awarded the prestigious *Wine Enthusiast* Magazine “American Wine Legend” 2024 Wine Star Award. This accolade recognizes Klein's decades-long dedication to elevating Sonoma County wines, his commitment to sustainable vineyard and winery practices, his unwavering passion for crafting exceptional wines, and his commitment to charitable causes in Sonoma and beyond. The *Wine Enthusiast* American Wine Legend Wine Star Award is bestowed upon individuals who have made significant contributions to the American wine industry and have helped shape its future.

Klein's journey with Rodney Strong Vineyards, which began in 1989, is a testament to his commitment to excellence and innovation. Under his stewardship, the winery has not only flourished but has also become a beacon of quality and sustainability in the wine community. Since the *Wine Enthusiast* Wine Star Awards began in 2002, Klein is only the sixth recipient of the American Wine Legend Award to be honored.

Rodney Strong Wine Estates Senior Vice President of Winemaking and Winegrowing Justin Seidenfeld says of Klein, “People say the best leaders inspire us to do things we never thought possible, and that is the perfect way to describe Tom. His leadership and support allowed our winemaking and viticulture to thrive, and now we are producing wines that inspire with each and every glass.”

Under Klein’s direction, Rodney Strong Vineyards was also named *Wine Enthusiast’s* 2013 American Winery of the Year. In 2007 the wines from Russian River Valley pinot noir pioneer Davis Bynum joined the portfolio and in 2018 Klein launched ROWEN Wine Company, focusing on ultra-luxury wines grown on the remote, high-elevation Cooley Ranch in the northern reaches of Sonoma County.

In addition to crafting exceptional wines, Klein has emphasized the importance of sustainable, regeneratively farmed viticulture. Rodney Strong Vineyards was the first Carbon Neutral winery in Sonoma County and Klein has continually championed practices that protect the environment while enhancing the quality of the wines. From solar energy (the Rodney Strong Winery is equipped with 4,200 state-of-the-art solar panels, one of the largest arrays of any winery in California), to innovative water conservation efforts, Klein's forward-thinking approach ensures that the winery remains a leader in sustainability.

Klein has been a vocal leader in support of California wine having lobbied the United States Congress on behalf of Sonoma County and serving as past president of the California Wine Institute.



RODNEY STRONG WINE ESTATES

An active and passionate philanthropist, Klein is a longtime advocate of nonprofits, including healthcare, the arts, farm worker housing, and especially organizations that support children's literacy and education in the Sonoma County community.

As Rodney Strong Wine Estates continues to thrive, Klein remains focused on the future. The winery is currently exploring new grape varieties, innovative vineyard planting projects, and expanding its commitment to sustainable practices. Klein's vision for the winery includes not only producing exceptional wines but also inspiring the next generation of wine drinkers to make wine a part of their lives.

"We're excited about what lies ahead," Klein notes. "We want to push boundaries, explore new possibilities, and continue to foster a culture of excellence and sustainability. It is a privilege to accept this Wine Star Award, which not only acknowledges my efforts, but also serves as a testament to our extraordinary team at Rodney Strong Wine Estates and all their hard work over the years."

###

About Rodney Strong Wine Estates

Rodney Strong Wine Estates (RSWE) is a family-owned wine company that includes Rodney Strong Vineyards, Davis Bynum Wines, and ROWEN Wine Company. RSWE sustainably farms 12 estate vineyards across almost 1,200 acres and produces wines from Sonoma County's finest appellations. The winery was founded in 1959 by Sonoma County pioneer Rod Strong as the 13th bonded winery in the county. For over 35 years, RSWE has flourished under the leadership of the Klein family, 4th generation California farmers. The Klein family is committed to protecting and preserving the environment in both the vineyards and at the winery through sustainable and innovative practices. RSWE is a family of passionate people committed to crafting premium wines, meaningful experiences, and sustainable leadership in Sonoma County. Learn more at www.RodneyStrong.com

###