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**CONTACT:** John Segale  
916-600-1081

## **Sonoma County Grape Growers Foundation Establishes Housing Support Fund for Ag Workers Displaced by Fires**

**SANTA ROSA, Calif. (October 18, 2017)** – With firefighters gaining control of fires throughout Sonoma County, the Grape Growers Foundation (SCGGF) announced today it is partnering with the Sonoma County Farm Bureau to establish a housing recovery fund for ag workers and their families who were displaced from their homes by last week’s devastating fires.

The fund will serve to assist ag workers who lost their homes in the fires by helping to fund the re-establishment of new households.

“Obviously, the fires have impacted everyone who lives in Sonoma County in a variety of ways and for our ag workers, the impact was particularly severe. Knowing that a home provides a family with stability and comfort, we are committed to getting all of our displaced ag employees into temporary housing as quickly as possible,” said Karissa Kruse, president of Sonoma County Winegrowers, who is also serving as the executive director of the Sonoma County Grape Growers Foundation.

The fund has benefitted from initial investments from local grape growers and supporters including \$25,000 from the John Jordan Foundation and Jordan Vineyard & Winery and \$25,000 from American Ag Credit.

“Fortunately, the Grape Growers Foundation was established years ago to improve the lives of Sonoma County’s agricultural employees and their families while ensuring Sonoma County remains a place where agricultural workers will continue to live and work,” said Kruse. She added, “While the Foundation is taking a long-term focus on ag employee housing, we need a short term solution now due to the extent of this calamity.”

For anyone interested in contributing to the housing fund, visit: [www.scggf.org](http://www.scggf.org) to make a contribution. SCGGF is a 501(c)(3) organization.

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### **About the Grape Growers Foundation**

The Sonoma County Grape Growers Foundation (SCGGF) was first established in 2002 as a 501(c)(3) organization to help fund educational workshops in Spanish for agricultural employees. Relaunched in January of 2016, SCGGF is focused on improving the lives of Sonoma County’s agricultural employees and their families, while ensuring Sonoma County remains a place where agricultural workers will continue to live, work and thrive. SCGGF collaborates with various community-based organizations and government agencies to identify existing resources, leverage available support and create new programs to assist local agricultural employees and their families. This includes a focus on healthcare, affordable housing, childcare and education. The Foundation is managed by the Sonoma County Winegrowers with a 12-member board of directors comprised of agricultural leaders, vineyard owners, winery executives, and other Sonoma County community leaders.