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Bild: Mercurey News

Wir dürfen uns glücklich schätzen, dass unsere Keller so nicht aussehen.

Sehr geehrte Kunden, liebe Weinfreunde,

noch vor wenigen Wochen besuchten wir unsere Weingüter und Freunde im Napa Valley. Alle waren in Vorfreude auf die beginnende Lese. Für den Weinjahrgang 2017 standen die Zeichen auf großartig.

Dann kam das Feuer. Bilder sehen Sie in den Zeitungen und im Netz. Wir sind in Kontakt mit unseren Weingütern. Aber Nachrichten kommen natürlich so gut wie keine. Das ist nur zu verständlich. Es herrscht Zerstörung und Chaos. Gestern sandte mir eine Freundin aus San Francisco diverse Nachrichten der örtlichen Presse. Ein historisches Gebäude der Stag's Leap Winery wurde Opfer der Flammen. Santa Rosa in Sonoma und der Stag's leap District in Napa sind besonders betroffen.

Auf meine besorgte mail hin erhielt ich die unten stehenden Rückmeldungen. Michael Silcacci, Headwinemaker auf Opus One, sandte ein mahnendes statement auf Instagram.



Bild: Winesearcher

...Thank you, one and all, for your concern. You have seen coverage and television and news sources about the destruction and devastation in Napa and Sonoma Valleys. I am here to testify it is real. Blankets of smoke and fear cover the Napa Valley. Containment will surely come, but when? Like the winds in Napa, our thoughts and feelings of good will shifted from Texas, the South, Puerto Rico, and Mexico to our community. Once the devastation is over, we will assess the damage, roll up our sleeves, and rebuild our community. We will also step back and take a global perspective. We need to nurture and support each other, no matter on'e race, color, creed, political leanings. The world is in desperate need of compassionate and consensus-building leadership. Let's hope it comes soon.

Michael Silacci

Headwinemaker, Opus One

Thank you, Michael, for your kind note. The general outpouring of concern and encouragement has been overwhelming and is deeply appreciated.

Numerous wildfires continue to surround and threaten our little Valley. To this point, we have been more fortunate than many. However, evacuation orders have recently been expanding and we face much uncertainty. Communication has been challenging with power outages and spotty cell coverage.

Our hearts go out to all those who have lost their homes, businesses and wineries. The impact of these fires will long be felt in our communities.

We hope to have better news soon. Thank you for your support. We're feeling the love.

Best regards,

DON WEAVER, DIRECTOR
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Dear Michael,

As the days slowly wind down, I feel we can find some words to express our gratitude for all the message of concern we've received. The winery is well, we had a few small fires nearby all day, which kept us concerned and making evacuation plans. Our region is well away from the other fires, and it seemed logical to focus on the devastating fires in Santa Rosa and Napa. Our strong volunteer Lakeville Patrol contained the fire and we can now focus our attention on supporting our friends in other areas.

We trust that we will all come together as the strong community we are and re-build our region and continue to teach our children the value of community. Our entire team is safe, some have been evacuated, some have their jobs in peril, and we will be here for them and for all our neighbors. My heart goes out to my many friends in the industry who have lost it all. Please keep them in your hearts and mind as you continue through your day.

Most warmly,

Ana Keller

Keller Estate

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T: (707) 765-2117

E: info@kellerestate.com

Dear Michael,

We thank you for your strong support! I can assure you it means a lot to all of us. This is a hellish time!

My very best,

Robin

Robin Daniel Lail

Lail vineyards

707-968-9900

Thank you Michael

The fire is everywhere, so close to our place, pray for all the victims

Claire LURTON

Chateau FERRIERE, Margaux

Chateau HAUT BAGES LIBERAL, Pauillac

ACAIBO, Sonoma

Michael,

Thank you for your message, we at Dominus are ok but surrounded by smoke. So many have been devastated and our thoughts are with them.

Best,

Tod

Dominus Estate

Massive California Wine-Country Fires Worsen, Sending More Residents Fleeing

Calistoga and Geyserville are evacuated as flames spread and dangerous winds are forecast; now at least 23 dead and seven wineries destroyed



Photo by: Getty Images

Paradise Ridge Winery is one of at least seven wineries destroyed so far.

[Kim Marcus](#), [MaryAnn Worobiec](#)

Posted: October 12, 2017

Residents of Northern California wine country were wondering if they would lose everything Wednesday as several large wildfires continued to spread throughout Napa, Sonoma and Mendocino Counties, advancing on new towns, including Calistoga and Geyserville, which are under mandatory evacuation orders.

The death toll from the fires that started Oct. 8 and 9 has risen to 23, and more than 170,000 acres, up from 124,000 on Tuesday, had burned throughout the state since Sunday night, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Prevention (Cal Fire).

The biggest was the Atlas fire in the eastern hills of Napa County, which had topped 42,000 acres Wednesday morning and was listed as only 3 percent contained. Parts were spreading into neighboring Solano County, home to the Suisun Valley and Green Valley American Viticultural Areas. Sonoma had multiple blazes, while Mendocino's Redwood fire had grown to 30,000 acres.

Though a Tuesday respite from high winds that fanned the flames allowed firefighters to make progress, "we're not out of the woods yet," said Ken Pimlott, director of CalFire, in a midday Office of Emergency Services

news conference in Sacramento attended by other state and federal emergency officials and California Gov. Jerry Brown. "And we're not going to be out of the woods for a great number of days to come."

"We are at very low containment on most of these," said Pimlott. "These fires are literally burning faster than firefighters can run."

Of the confirmed deaths, 13 occurred in Sonoma, six in Mendocino, two in Napa and two in Yuba County. Hundreds of people were missing, and 4,400 reported to be in evacuation shelters, according to the Office of Emergency Services.

A total of 3,500 homes and businesses were reported destroyed or damaged in the three northern counties. At least seven wineries have been significantly or totally damaged—five in Napa, including Signorello Estate and White Rock Vineyards; Sonoma's Paradise Ridge Vineyards and Mendocino's Frey Vineyards. Another 11 in Napa, including Stags' Leap Winery, have reported to the Napa Valley Vintners that they have some damage to the winery, other building or vineyards; Sonoma and Mendocino are still tallying damage reports.

The latest winery casualty to be confirmed in the Atlas fire is the small Patland Vineyards, founded by Henry and Olga Patland beginning with the 2007 vintage. They specialized in red wines made from their estate vineyard and nearby Stagecoach Vineyard.

Winemaker Jay Buoncristiani confirmed the news. "The Patlands' estate, perched at 1,500 feet above Soda Canyon Road, was wiped out by the fierce Atlas fire early on Sunday night," Buoncristiani told *Wine Spectator*. "I feel so badly for their loss. They are like family to me, but they are handling it amazingly well, and feel like I do: As long as lives are safe, the rest is replaceable, and things could have been far worse. In fact, Michael Patland saved his neighbor's life by waking him up and getting him out of his home, which was toasted within a short time after escaping."

As far as the Stagecoach Vineyard, no one can get close to assess the damage. Buoncristiani also can't get access to the Caves at Soda Canyon, where his wines are fermenting. "We have a lot in barrel already, but I also currently have at least seven fermentations that are running wild in the Caves, and I am so eager to get in there and check on their status and I'm prepared for the challenge to bring them home to dryness safely."

For more updates on how the region's wineries are faring, visit "[California Fires: Damage Updates from Wineries](#)."

Resources are now flooding into the region from throughout California and neighboring states to battle the blazes, Pimlott says. Eight thousand firefighters are now on the lines, along with 550 fire engines and 73 helicopters and 30 air tankers dropping fire retardant. An additional 170 fire engines from out of state are on their way to the region



Polaris Images

One of thousands of firefighters in the area watches smoke rise from the Tubbs fire.

That's a marked improvement in tactical support from Tuesday, when billowing smoke clouds limited the ability of aircraft to fly safely. "Today is a very different picture," said Pimlott, who noted that aircraft were up and flying this morning in "an aggressive aerial assault." In addition, 700 soldiers of the California National Guard are helping battle the fires.

On the ground, shifting winds and the spreading scope of the fires were the major concern. The 28,000-acre Tubbs fire, which had started near the northern Napa Valley town of Calistoga and quickly spread to the city of Santa Rosa to destroy entire neighborhoods, is now burning on the slopes of Mt. St. Helena. Calistoga, which lies at the base of the mountain, was under evacuation as a result.

Flames from the Nuns fire that had devastated parts of Sonoma's Glen Ellen area were now spreading up the hillsides around on Mt. Veeder, on Napa Valley's western side. Around 4 p.m. Tuesday, Carole Meredith heard a knock on the door. "Police went to every house to get people out," said the cofounder of Lagier Meredith, who lives at the winery. "This is a harrowing experience. Wish I could just fast-forward a few days and know whether our place survived," Meredith said, adding that her grapes were all in and her wine is safe in a facility on the valley floor. "Our property is both our home and our business, so it's everything."

A new fire sprung up in Sonoma County east of Boyes Hot Springs earlier today, while two other smaller ones, one near Kenwood and one east of Rohnert Park, became major concerns.

Where the fires go next and how quickly crews can bring them under control is largely due to one key factor: wind. Calistoga is in danger if the winds shift, as they were forecast to do later Wednesday. Sunday night's

firestorm was stoked by gusting and bone-dry northerly winds of almost 70 mph and, according to Pimlott, a "critically dry fuel bed," resulting from the previous five years of drought.

Since abating Monday morning, red-flag fire warnings were up once again for the region through Thursday afternoon as the northerly winds were expected to return, though they were not predicted to be as strong as on Sunday. The concern, said Pimlott, is that large fires on the eastern and western ridges of Napa County and to the north could merge into one giant fire.

Evacuations were also ordered for sections of the Sonoma County town of Geyserville, where the Pocket fire also grew in size Wednesday, and were extended in the Sonoma Valley and Bennett Valley regions south of Santa Rosa. Many roads were still closed in the region to allow fire crews access, including portions of the Silverado Trail and those in the Atlas Peak region of Calistoga, as well as Highway 12 in Sonoma Valley. That's making it hard for vintners and residents to find out whether their buildings are still standing.

Sonoma County Sheriff Rob Giordano says it could be a week or longer before residents are allowed back into evacuation areas. "Today's conditions are what we are waiting for now," Giordano said. "Evacuate to the south. If you can leave the county, even better."

With additional reporting by Aaron Romano, Augustus Weed and Dana Nigro

<http://www.winespectator.com/webfeature/show/id/Massive-Wildfires-Devastate-Parts-of-Napa-and-Sonoma+County>