



A CELEBRATION OF LOCAL FOOD, WINE & BEER
September 30 - October 2

1350 Bennett Valley Road
Santa Rosa, CA 95404
P: (707) 545-4200 x202
F: (707) 573-9342
HarvestFair.org

Publicity@SonomaCountyFair.com

Contact:

Leasha LaBruzzi
publicity@sonomacountyfair.com
(707) 545-4200 ext. 202

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WINNER PHOTOS HERE: <http://ow.ly/kl1c304Mmwa>

New Champions Crowned at Sonoma County Harvest Fair World Championship Grape Stomp

Nine-time World Champion mother and son team decides to retire.

SANTA ROSA, CA – October 2, 2016 – For over four decades, Sonoma County Harvest Fair visitors have been cheering themselves hoarse as they watch teams squish grapes beneath their toes, turning their clothes and skin purple with the juice that has become the region’s most famous commodity. In spite of the fact that grape stomping was replaced by the wine press years ago, Harvest Fair contestants are not deterred from fully celebrating this storied tradition, vying for the title of World Champion and the \$1,500 prize.

Prior to this year’s Harvest Fair, nine-time World Champion mother and son team, Kopa Kaluahine and Michelle Kaluahine from Santa Rosa, kindly notified the Harvest Fair staff that all good things must come to an end.

“Thank you so much for your enthusiasm over the many years we have competed in the grape stomp. As you know all good things must come to an end – and so Kopa and I have decided to retire. Best wishes to the new champions and many thank yous to you and your staff for the fun times we have had together,” Michelle Kaluahine said in an email to Jane Engdahl, Special Events Coordinator and Grape Stomp Emcee.

Engdahl replied, “You have been a real pleasure to work with over the years, and I will miss you. I think we all will. I appreciate your graciousness and I have always felt that you and Kopa were everything we could ever hope for in our champions.”



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After three days of preliminary rounds, involving 144 contestants, a new team was crowned as the Grape Stomp World Champions. Angela Carvalho and Dee Dee Lombardi Brandt have competed in qualifying grape stomps five times and made it to the finals once before. With an impressive 17.45 pounds of juice stomped in the World Championship Grape Stomp Finals, they took home the trophies, the \$1500 prize and all the bragging rights and purple stained extremities that come with it.

"It was an exciting run of stomps this year, with so many new contestants, coming in from all over. Everyone was there to have fun," said Engdahl. " In addition to a strong local contingent, we had contestants from all over the world – Canada (Alberta), Australia, England, Tennessee, Texas, Georgia, Florida, Arizona, New York and Chicago, Illinois. The grapes were really juicy this year, so everyone got to cover themselves with lovely purple juice. I think they all started with visions of that famous 'I Love Lucy' grape stomping episode, and they discovered that it was actually a lot of work...but still a lot of fun."

For a full listing of 2016 World Championship Grape Stomp teams and results, visit HarvestFair.org. The Sonoma County Harvest Fair took place September 30 – October 2 and included a Grand Tasting of award winning wines and culinary creations, Farm to Table Seminars, Harvest Workshops, Chef Demonstrations, a local Marketplace, and much more in addition to the World Championship Grape Stomp. See photos and highlights on YouTube, Instagram, Facebook and Twitter.

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