FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Important Crush Report May be Impacted by Government Shutdown

SACRAMENTO, January 9, 2019 – The ongoing federal government shutdown, which began Dec. 22, may soon affect a key program of great importance to winegrape growers.

Thursday, Jan. 10 is the deadline for wineries to submit grape purchase data from the 2018 harvest to the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) Pacific Region office. NASS collects and compiles the data for publication in the Crush Report, which is published annually. The 2019 publication dates are Feb. 8 for the preliminary report and March 8 for the final report. Many purchase contracts between growers and wineries rely on reported prices to establish grape pricing in the following year.

Currently, NASS staff responsible for producing the report are on unpaid furlough until funding is restored. A continuation of the shutdown makes timely publication of the Crush Report highly uncertain.

“The Crush Report, which the industry pays for, provides essential financial information to California winegrape growers,” said Bill Berryhill, a Ceres-area grower and chair of the CAWG board of directors. “Lengthy delays in publishing the report threaten to complicate contract negotiations, interfere with lending activity and make it difficult for growers to budget for the year ahead.

“We need our elected leaders in Washington, D.C. to quickly resolve this budget impasse and get programs like the Crush Report back up and running.” Berryhill said.

NASS and many other USDA agencies that are critical to grape growers have been affected by the shutdown. Other agencies include Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Agricultural Research Service, Farm Service Agency, Foreign Agricultural Service, Risk Management Agency, National Institute of Food and Agriculture, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

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