

2 El Dorado County vintners to showcase wine in D.C.

By Chris Macias, Sacramento Bee

The nation's capital will soon get a taste of some wines from the Sacramento area. Two El Dorado County wineries, Crystal Basin Cellars and Holly's Hill, are among the vintners being featured at a sustainable seafood symposium set for June 7-10 at the Smithsonian.

Billed as "sustainable, biodynamic American Rhônes," the sold-out event features two dozen wineries from across the country. The bulk come from California, especially Paso Robles and the Central Coast, though El Dorado County's reputation continues to grow as a sweet spot for Rhône varietals, like a bit of southern France in the Sierra Foothills.



Grapes from El Dorado County vines will be showcased at a Washington, D.C., food symposium.

Photo/LTN file

While Holly's Hill specializes in syrah, Crystal Basin Cellars will pour its 2008 Roumanier (\$20), an equal-parts blend of roussanne, viognier and marsanne. Crystal Basin will also

feature its 2008 Mourvèdre (\$27), which nabbed a “best of class” award at the 2010 California State Fair Commercial Wine Competition.

There’s just one slight snag in this trip to Washington, D.C. Crystal Basin founder Mike Owen can’t make the trip.

When he’s not running the winery, Owen works as the chief fiscal officer of health services for El Dorado County. Budget meetings in early June will keep Owen close to home, so his wife, Melissa, a co-owner and tasting room manager, will make the trip on behalf of the winery.

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