

Calif. wine country looking more like cannabis country

By Angela Hart, Sacramento Bee

The grapevines that line rolling hillsides and sweeping valleys in Northern California's wine country have become iconic – a symbol of the region's rustic charm that helped California earn its reputation as a world-class wine and food destination.

But winegrapes have new competition: weed.

California's legalization of recreational marijuana has led to the beginning of a major transformation of wine country. It's been just seven months, but already investors are snapping up property where wine was once produced. Vineyard operators are developing expertise in cannabis cultivation. New, specialty marijuana businesses are sprouting up in Sonoma and Mendocino counties. And farmers who have long made a good living by growing and harvesting wine grapes are expressing interest in diversifying with marijuana.

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