



# 2026 Entry Handbook



The Central Coast Wine Competition (CCWC) is the largest wine evaluation event that recognizes wines produced exclusively from vinifera grown on the Central Coast regions of California. This event promotes the excellent quality and diversity of commercial wineries and grape growers while recognizing the fastest growing wine regions in California.

Lead Organization - California Mid-State Fair  
Chief Judge Tim McDonald, Napa, CA

## **GENERAL RULES**

1. To qualify for entry in the 2026 Central Coast Wine Competition, 75% of the grapes used to produce the wines must have been harvested within the eligible grape growing regions.
2. **ELIGIBLE GRAPE GROWING REGIONS:** The Central Coast AVA includes from north to south: Alameda, Contra Costa (including all of Contra Costa County), Santa Clara, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Benito, San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties. This competition also includes wines made from grapes grown in Ventura County.
3. All entries must be registered through the official online registration: <https://cmsfw.fairwire.com/> and must reach the Fair office on or before the entry closing.
4. After an entry is registered through our official online registration, the entry fee will not be refunded.
5. The judge's decision is final and determines all awards.
6. The same wine (although marketed under different labels) may not be entered in more than one category. However, a winery may submit multiple entries in the same category.
7. An official entry consists of (4) 750 ml bottles or (6) 375 ml bottles. Competition reserves the right to request additional bottle(s) of award-winning wines for display purposes.
8. Any wine delivered by mail, freight, or express must be prepaid. No entry will be accepted for which carrier charges have not been prepaid. All entries become the property of the competition.
9. The CCWC, management and staff are not responsible for errors in entries. No winery shall be entitled to an award for which has been disallowed on the basis of the producer's error.
10. Please identify in large legible letters, the name of the winery on the outside of each case. The outside of the case is also to be labeled CCWC. No wines will be accepted for which carrier charges have not been prepaid. Attach Packing List to outside of case highlighting specific entries inside.
11. Wineries/ Entries found in violation of rules or ethical practices will forfeit awards and other privileges deemed appropriate by the Central Coast Wine Competition Management and the Chief Judge.
12. Wines entered must be available for commercial sale.
13. **Classes:** All wines will be divided into their respective classes and tasted by one panel of judges. Classes exceeding the capacity of one panel to taste will be divided into multiple classes. Certain classes may be sub-divided according to residual sugar content (e.g., Rieslings, Sparkling Wines, Roses, etc.). As needed, larger classes will be separated by suggested retail pricing or other criteria at the discretion of the Show to help the wines best compete against like wines in the judging and scoring process.
14. In order to sell or pour wine at the California Mid-State Fair you **MUST** have a minimum of one (1) bottle entered in the Central Coast Wine Competition and the entry must be judged. The 2026 submission only validates your participation for the 2026 Fair event. Must enter annually to qualify.
15. The Gold medal wine tasting is an event where winning wineries of the CCWC are invited to feature their winning wines for a consumer wine tasting in Mission Square Plaza. This precedes the annual Wine Industry Awards.
16. Display will be at the California Mid-State Fair and the Monterey County Fair. Display space is limited.
17. This competition will adhere to the State Rules of the California Department of Food & Agriculture Fairs & Expositions Branch. [State Rules for California Fairs](#)

EARLY BIRD ONLINE REGISTRATION TILL SUNDAY, MAY 17

ENTRY FEE: \$70 PER WINE

LAST CALL ONLINE REGISTRATION ENDS TUESDAY, MAY 26

ENTRY FEE: \$85 PER WINE

Enter on-line at <https://cmsfw.fairwire.com/> Entry fees are non-refundable.

**PHYSICAL WINE ENTRIES RECEIVED: WEDNESDAY, MAY 27 – WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3**

Questions: [exhibits@midstatefair.com](mailto:exhibits@midstatefair.com)

**Blends:** Minimum two varieties with one variety not to exceed 74.9%

**Division 2000 - Wine**

**Classes**

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 1. Vintage Sparkling-Methode<br>Champenoise, Charmat or<br>Other Process      | 22. Pinot Noir Rosé                              | 49. Zinfandel Based Blends                               |
| 2. Non-Vintage Sparkling-<br>Methode Champenoise,<br>Charmat or Other Process | 23. Sangiovese Rosé                              | 50. Any Other Red Blends                                 |
| 3. Riesling - Dry   | 24. Tempranillo Rosé                             | 51. Any Other Red Varietals                              |
| 4. Riesling - Off Dry   | 25. Grenache Rosé                                | 52. Other Rhone Style Blends                             |
| 5. Pinot Gris/Grigio  | 26. Mourvedre Rosé                               | 53. Syrah Based Blends                                   |
| 6. Albarino   | 27. Zinfandel Rosé (inc White<br>Zin)            | 54. Syrah - 2025 and 2024                                |
| 7. Sauvignon Blanc  | 28. Syrah Rosé                                   | 55. Syrah – 2023 and 2022                                |
| 8. Grenache Blanc   | 29. Cabernet Sauvignon Rosé                      | 56. Syrah - Prior to '22 and<br>Non-Vintage              |
| 9. Gewurztraminer   | 30. Other Varietal Rosé                          | 57. Bordeaux Blends (Meritage)                           |
| 10. Viognier  | 31. Any Rosé Blends                              | 58. Cabernet Franc                                       |
| 11. Roussanne   | 32. Pinot Noir - 2025 and 2024                   | 59. Cabernet Sauvignon - 2025<br>and 2024                |
| 12. Marsanne  | 33. Pinot Noir – 2023 and 2022                   | 60. Cabernet Sauvignon – 2023<br>and 2022                |
| 13. Other White Rhones  | 34. Pinot Noir - Prior to '22<br>and Non-Vintage | 61. Cabernet Sauvignon - Prior<br>to '22 and Non-Vintage |
| 14. White Blends (Other than<br>Rhones)                                       | 35. Other Italian Style                          | 62. Cabernet Based Blends                                |
| 15. White Rhone Blends  | 36. Sangiovese                                   | 63. Petit Verdot   |
| 16. No Oak Chardonnay   | 37. Sangiovese Based Blends                      | 64. Petit Sirah – 2025 and 2024                          |
| 17. Chardonnay - 2025 and<br>2024   | 38. Tempranillo                                  | 65. Petit Sirah – 2023 and 2022                          |
| 18. Chardonnay – 2023 and<br>2022   | 39. Grenache                                     | 66. Petit Sirah - Prior to '22<br>and Non-Vintage        |
| 19. Chardonnay - Prior to '22<br>and Non-Vintage                              | 40. Grenache Based Blends                        | 67. Tannat   |
| 20. Other White Wines-<br>dry(.7% RS or less)                                 | 41. Merlot                                       | 68. Sweet Reds and Sweet Red<br>Blends                   |
| 21. Other White Wines-off dry<br>to sweet (.7% RS or more)                    | 42. Barbera                                      | 69. Dessert Whites                                       |
|   | 43. Pinot Meunier                                | 70. Dessert Reds   |
|   | 44. Mourvedre                                    | 71. Fortified Desserts                                   |
|   | 45. Primitivo                                    |  |
|   | 46. Zinfandel - 2025 and 2024                    |  |
|   | 47. Zinfandel – 2023 and 2022                    |  |
|   | 48. Zinfandel - Prior to '22 and<br>Non-Vintage  |  |

For more information about the 2026 CCWC judges, please visit <https://centralcoastwinecomp.com/judge-bios/>

## MEDALS (AWARDS)

The judges shall award all medals. Wines will be considered for Gold, Silver and Bronze medals in their respective classes as well as “Best of Class”, Best White, Red, Dessert, Sparkling, Rosé and “Best of Show.” “Best of Class” awards will be awarded to one wine from among the gold medal winners in each class to wines of exceptional merit. The decisions set forth by the Judges will be final. Additional awards may be given to outstanding entries from Monterey and San Luis Obispo for Fair display purposes. All Double Gold medal wines will be scored on a point system. Winners will receive both a point score and medal.

**Best of Show** is awarded to one wine recognized to possess special characteristics of the highest quality.

**Best Dessert, Rosé, Red, Sparkling and White Wines** are awarded from the Best of Class winners.

**Best of Class** is awarded to wines that exhibit the highest quality in their respective categories. Best of Class wines will receive a “descriptive on the merits of the wine” from the judging panel to be used by the fair and producer for publicity purposes.

**Gold Medal** is awarded to a wine that demonstrates its type and/or varietal character, balance, structure, and complexities to the highest standards.

**Silver Medal** is awarded to a wine reflecting the correct distribution of balance and character of its type or variety; a wine deemed to be well crafted and of excellent quality.

**Bronze Medal** is awarded to a wine that is true to its type or variety; a wine deemed to be well crafted and of good quality.

**Sweepstakes Award** is awarded to the winery with the highest placing wines in the competition. To be eligible a winery must enter a minimum of five wines. The winery will receive a special award as the "Winery of the year" for CCWC.

2011 – Hearst Ranch Winery  
2021 – J. Lohr Vineyards & Wines  
2013 - Eberle Winery  
2014 – Hope Family Wines  
2015 – Cass Winery  
2016 – Robert Hall Winery  
2017 – Halter Ranch  
2018 – Cass Winery  
2019 – Halter Ranch

2020 – Cass Winery  
2021 – Pear Valley  
2022 – Pear Valley  
2023 – Peachy Canyon Winery  
2024 – Eberle Winery  
2025 – LeVigne Winery  
2026 - Could be You!

## Food & Beverage Packaging Competition

The Food & Packaging competition is a competition based on the following categories: Most Evocative of the Central Coast, Modern Classic, Untraditional Modern Design, Artistic Brand Series

Entry in this competition is automatic by entry into the Central Coast Wine Competition and requires no additional fee or entry information.



## Central Coast Wine Competition Entry Checklist

- Complete the online registration. <https://cmsfw.fairwire.com/>
- ☐ Be sure to provide individuals name, title, and phone number to be contacted in case there are any questions, errors, or shipping problems.
  - ☐ Early Bird Online Entry Registration Due by Sunday, May 17 \$70 per Entry
  - ☐ Last Call Online Entry Registration Due by Tuesday, May 26 \$85 per Entry  
Entry fees are non-refundable.
  - ☐ Physical Entries will be accepted between Wednesday, May 27 and Wednesday, June 3  
NO Saturday or Sunday Delivery

Judging – June 9 – 11, 2026

### Deliveries/Shipping: No Saturday or Sunday Delivery

CCWC – Paso Robles Event Center  
2198 Riverside Ave  
Paso Robles, CA 93446

**Be sure to include (4) 750ml or (6) 375ml bottles of each wine entry.**  
**Make sure to attach Packing List to outside of case highlighting the specific entries inside.**

For questions, please contact:  
California Mid-State Fair  
[exhibits@midstatefair.com](mailto:exhibits@midstatefair.com)



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