

# Does Wine Region Conjunctive Labeling Really Work? The Case of Sonoma County.

*Analyzing the impact of conjunctive labeling as part of a regional wine branding strategy.*

by Liz Thach, MW, Tom Atkin, Damien Wilson & Janeen Olsen, Sonoma State University  
December 05, 2017

## Abstract:

Research studies have proven that place-based / regional branding methods have a positive effect on brand equity and economic benefits for companies. However, very small or specific regions may be confusing to consumers, so conjunctive labeling – or the process of advertising both a larger region and the sub-region of origin for a product – is suggested as a remedy for this situation. This study analyzes the impact of conjunctive labeling by comparing two national samples of consumers, before and two years after, conjunctive wine labeling was introduced in Sonoma County. The results show a higher awareness for both Sonoma County and its sub appellations (AVAs) after conjunctive labeling was introduced than before. This demonstrates the potential benefit of associating sub-regional appellations with larger wine regions.

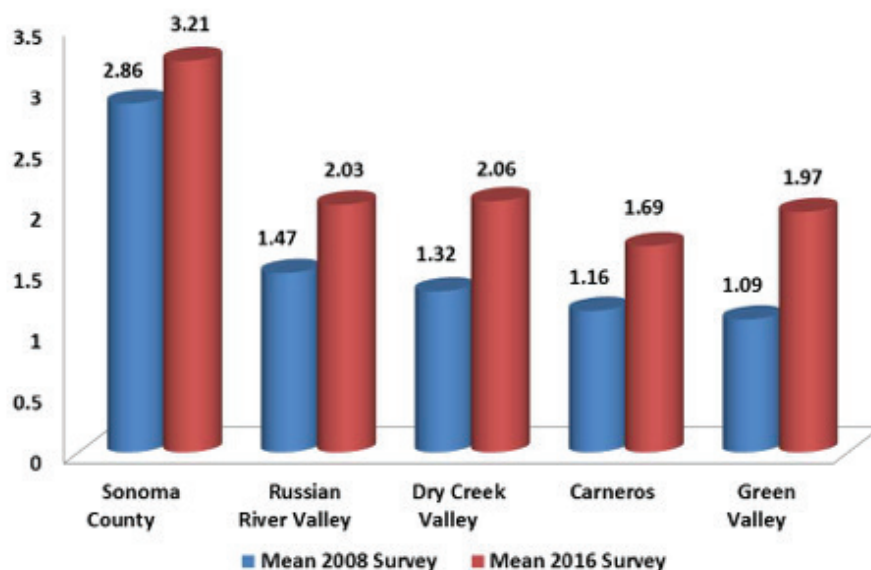
THE DIFFERENCE  
BETWEEN CONSUMER  
AWARENESS FOR  
SONOMA COUNTY  
CHANGED 12% WHERE  
AS GREEN VALLEY  
INCREASED 81%!

## Key Results:

### Much Greater Awareness of Sonoma County and Sub-AVAs

The comparison between the two consumer samples illustrate that there is a significantly higher level of awareness for Sonoma County as a region in the 2016 survey compared to the 2008 survey. This finding indicates that the conjunctive labeling law has had a positive impact on consumer's awareness of Sonoma County as a wine region. Even more surprising is that the four Sonoma County sub-regions listed in the survey showed an even greater increase in awareness in the 2016 study.

Question: Please rate your awareness of the following wine regions/appellations:  
1 = Poor; 2 = Somewhat, 3 = Good, 4 = Very Good, 5 = Great



*In conclusion*, this study set out to analyze whether regional branding and conjunctive wine labeling would help to improve wine regional awareness in the mind of consumers. The results show that there was a greater level of awareness at the regional level, and even more so for the smaller appellations of the county. Therefore, conjunctive labeling offers potential value as a marketing tool for use in other small regions, where positive connections can be made in the consumer's mind to a larger region from which it is associated.