



## From Picking to Profits

It is always good to see a reminder that the American Dream is alive and well. Here's a story from the area in which I grew up:

The California wine industry was built on the hard labor of a largely Mexican seasonal work force. But the rise of the fine-wine business created a growing demand for year-round workers with special skills in Napa and other regions. Many former migrant workers settled in wine country. They sent their children to school and taught them how to tend the vines. Some saved money and bought land, and soon they began growing their own grapes.

Ceja Vineyards' first wines came out in 2001. The year before, the Robledo Family Winery, owned by Reynaldo Robledo Sr., a former migrant worker, offered its first bottles for sale. Also in 2000 Salvador Renteria, who came to the Napa Valley as a field worker in 1962, and his son, Oscar, offered their first bottle of Renteria Wines cabernet sauvignon.

Alex Sotelo, who arrived in the Napa Valley as a field worker in 1991 and is now the winemaker at the Robert Pecota Winery, soon will sell his own wines under the label Alex Sotelo Cellars.

Their tales are new versions of a familiar story, in which the children of immigrants, by working hard and celebrating the virtues of family, achieve the American dream of ownership.

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