



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Leading Winery M&A Advisory Firm Metis Expands
to the California Market with the Appointment of Seasoned Industry Veteran
Lance Spears as Managing Director**

WALLA WALLA, WA – [July 14, 2025] – Metis, the leading winery and vineyard mergers and acquisitions (M&A) advisory firm in the Pacific Northwest, today announced its expansion into the California wine market with the appointment of Lance Spears as Managing Director. With over 50 transactions closed and over 100 years of combined wine industry expertise, the team at Metis brings its proven, confidential advisory process to the nation's largest wine region.

"Our expansion to California reflects our commitment to serving the whole of the American wine industry," said Erik McLaughlin, Founder and CEO of Metis. "We've built a great team over the years and are very excited that Lance has joined us to lead our practice in California. Lance's deep knowledge of the wine market, substantial M&A experience, and established industry connections make him the ideal choice. I'm confident that his addition to the team positions Metis to provide the same level of success for clients in California as we have in Oregon and Washington."

Metis provides comprehensive advisory services including strategic assessments, sell-side advisory, buy-side advisory, and business recapitalizations. The firm's unique combination of operational industry experience with a disciplined M&A process has established it as one of the top M&A advisors to the wine industry.

"Since founding Metis, our focus has been on serving the wine industry. Along the way, we've been fortunate to build relationships with buyers and sellers throughout California, the Pacific Northwest, and Europe," added McLaughlin. "Extending services to California is the natural evolution of our practice. We look forward to earning the trust of more clients and counterparties and being of greater service to the industry at such a critical time."

Lance Spears brings over 20 years of industry experience and has held both President and CFO roles at various wine companies. With both MBA and CPA credentials, he spent the past 16 years providing independent fractional CFO and related consulting and advisory services to wineries and grape growers in California and Oregon, including offering strategic leadership in winery, brand, and vineyard sales to more than 30 family wine businesses.

Spears entered the wine industry in 2003 as Chief Financial Officer of a barrel cooperage and was promoted to President in 2005, where he successfully returned all U.S. facilities to profitability through strategic asset sales, key employee promotions, litigation resolution, facility modernization, and new financing negotiations. Prior to the wine industry, he held a VP Finance position at SWF Companies with multi-state responsibilities across finance, accounting, HR, and technology.

"I'm excited to bring Metis's proven advisory approach to California," said Spears. "Joining Metis helps me provide additional solutions to family wine businesses in today's challenging environment."

Spears received an MBA from the University of Tennessee in 2001, his B.S. in Accounting from the University of Arizona in 1990 and holds CPA licenses in California and Arizona. He is a long-time Napa Valley resident, where he lives with his wife of 32 years. They keep up with their two grown children and enjoy traveling together as a family

Prospective clients should contact Lance or Erik directly to schedule a confidential, complimentary consultation.

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About Metis:

Named for the Greek goddess of prudence and wise counsel, Metis is a leading mergers and acquisitions advisory firm focused on wineries and vineyards. Metis offers a disciplined, confidential process that produces consistent outcomes. The Metis team is comprised of leaders with over 100 years of combined ownership and management experience in the industry. This unique combination of operational and M&A advisory expertise offers clients more than transactional guidance, but the consultation needed to unlock the full value of their business.

To learn more about Metis, please visit www.metis-advisors.com.

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