

Winter Weather Fails to Deter Homebuyers

Bargain-Priced Properties Draw Multiple Offers, Sell Quickly

FIRST QUARTER 2011

SONOMA COUNTY

Sonoma County homes continued to sell at a steady pace during the first quarter of 2011 despite one of the wettest winters in recent memory, according to a report by the research division of The Wine Country Group by Better Homes and Gardens based on an analysis of MLS data.

Countywide, 966 existing, single-family detached homes changed hands in the first quarter, up 6 percent from the first quarter of 2010, when 913 homes were sold, but down 3 percent from 991 homes sold in the fourth quarter. Buyers were particularly attracted by favorable home prices. Countywide, the median price of a home sold in the first quarter was \$337,568, down 5 percent from \$354,619 in the fourth quarter and 9 percent below the comparable period a year ago, when it was \$371,162.

Thirteen of the 24 communities included in the report experienced year-over-year increases in the number of homes sold. Sales more than doubled from a year ago in Healdsburg and were 23 percent higher compared with a year ago in Rohnert Park and up 17 percent for the year in Windsor. Among less-populated communities, Bodega Bay (+45% from the fourth

quarter and +129% from the first quarter of 2010) and Dillon Bay in northern Marin County (+133% for both periods), experienced significant increases in sales activity. By contrast, sales were down 2 percent compared with both the previous quarter and prior year in the county's largest city, Santa Rosa, which recorded 413 home sales in the first quarter.

While sales remained robust, the countywide median sales price fell 5 percent from \$354,619 in the fourth quarter to \$337,568 in the first quarter, which was down 9 percent from \$371,162 in the first quarter of 2010. Locally, the median sales price slipped on both a quarterly and annualized basis in the majority of communities as buyers continued to focus on short sales and properties priced at \$300,000 or below.

Buyers can look forward to a steady stream of short sale and bank-owned properties on the market but will need to exercise patience as they compete against cash offers from investors. Everyone will be keeping a close eye on job growth and mortgage interest rates. Any significant movement in either could stimulate additional homebuying activity in the months to come.



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SONOMA COUNTY YEAR-TO-YEAR MARKET COMPARISON

City	Homes Sold Q1/11	Homes Sold Q1/10	% Change	Avg DOM* Q1/11	Avg DOM* Q1/10	Change (days)	Median Price Q1/11	Median Price Q1/10	% Change
Bodega	1	0	100	19	-	-	\$679,000	-	-
Bodega Bay	16	7	129	151	52	99	\$512,000	\$580,000	-12
Cazadero	5	7	-29	35	37	-2	\$259,900	\$165,000	58
Cloverdale	36	23	57	115	82	33	\$274,763	\$289,000	-5
Cotati	19	12	58	81	72	9	\$274,900	\$342,500	-20
Forestville	11	14	-21	123	39	84	\$210,000	\$247,500	-15
Fulton	0	2	-100	-	31	-	-	\$253,350	-
Geyserville	0	2	-100	-	40	-	-	\$129,000	-
Glen Ellen	3	5	-40	65	39	26	\$860,000	\$580,500	48
Graton	1	0	100	95	-	-	\$325,000	-	-
Guerneville	15	19	-21	99	104	-5	\$159,900	\$200,000	-20
Healdsburg	42	20	110	89	135	-46	\$475,500	\$499,500	-5
Jenner	1	0	100	15	-	-	\$320,000	-	-
Kenwood	2	2	0	50	86	-36	\$522,450	\$979,500	-47
Monte Rio	6	7	-14	54	85	-31	\$127,500	\$289,900	-56
Occidental	3	0	100	106	-	-	\$565,000	-	-
Penngrove	2	11	-82	92	124	-32	\$737,500	\$585,000	26
Petaluma	113	124	-9	94	58	36	\$387,500	\$445,000	-13
Rohnert Park	69	56	23	53	40	13	\$284,500	\$307,500	-7
Santa Rosa	413	420	-2	71	62	9	\$300,000	\$331,000	-9
Sebastopol	41	35	17	88	99	-11	\$467,000	\$513,000	-9
Sonoma	80	72	11	75	87	-12	\$400,000	\$437,250	-9
The Sea Ranch	12	11	9	204	204	0	\$465,000	\$760,000	-39
Windsor	75	64	17	80	52	28	\$327,400	\$349,000	-6
Dillon Beach (Marin Co)	7	3	133	88	171	-83	\$468,000	\$785,000	-40

* Days on market is the number of days a property was listed on the market until it went under contract at its final listing price. This may not reflect previous listings.

** The median home price for the entire county is the mean of median home prices of cities within Sonoma County.

Other notes: The Dillon Beach community in Marin County is served by the Bodega Bay office of The Wine Country Group by Better Homes and Gardens. It is included for informational purposes and is not factored into the Sonoma County totals. Annapolis and Valley Ford recorded no home sales in either Q1 2011 or Q1 2010 so are not included in the chart, although their results are included in the aggregate sales and median price data. Data are sourced from multiple listing services and are deemed reliable but not guaranteed. All percentages rounded to nearest whole number.

WINE COUNTRY GROUP

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