

Sustainable / Organic / Biodynamic Practices in the Santa Cruz Mountains



"A mountain vineyard is the most beautiful sight on earth!" - Martin Ray

The Viticulture Association of the Santa Cruz Mountains supports sustainable winegrape growing and has worked to promote sustainable practices in our region's vineyards. We have brought the programs of the Sustainable Winegrape Growers Alliance to the region, including the self-assessment workshop, Energy Efficiency, and Ecosystem Management workshops. As well, our meeting programs stress best vineyard and sustainable practices, including cover crops, erosion control, canopy management, etc.

Since the first self-assessment workshops here in early 2004, we have seen an increase in the adoption of sustainable practices in the vineyards in the Santa Cruz Mountains, and a growing number of vineyards growing organically

Organic Vineyards & Practices:

Silver Mountain. Estate vineyard certified organic by the CCOF: Chardonnay (Mt. Eden clone) and some Merlot). www.silvermtn.com

Kathryn Kennedy – Certified organic by the CCOF and sustainable; practices include minimal pesticides, no herbicides, cover crop management, organic mildew control, composting, biodiesel vehicles, integrated pest management, recycling, etc. Details can be found on the website www.kathrynkennedywinery.com.

Ahlgren Vineyard – Organically-farmed; and sustainable. www.ahlgrenvineyard.com

Alfaro Vineyards – Preparing for CCOF certification on 2 acres (out of 14); sustainable practices include wildlife corridor, cover crops and sustainable canopy management systems, etc. www.martinalfaro.com

Big Basin Vineyards – This Syrah vineyard is organically-farmed and sustainable; includes solar system. www.bigbasinvineyards.com

Ridge Vineyards: Ridge is committed to sustainable practices and is transitioning to organic farming on 56 out of the 120 acres of vineyard on Monte Bello Ridge above Cupertino. Every operation is evaluated based on how it effects the environment, community, and grape and wine quality. Practices include soil management, composting, integrated pest management, raptor roosts and owl boxes for natural control of gophers, etc. www.ridgewine.com Code of Sustainability available on request.

For more information: www.vascm.org

Sustainable Practices in Vineyards:

Bargetto's Regan Vineyard – 40 acres planted to 12 different varieties and clones; supports sustainable practices, with solar, biodiesel, erosion control, biological gopher control, etc. www.bargetto.com/sustainablewinegrowing.shtml

Cooper-Garrod - sustainable practices include solar, composting, wildlife management, etc. Bill Cooper is on the Board of the state Sustainable Winegrape Growers Alliance. www.cgv.com

Wines of Vine Hill – Cumbre Estate Vineyard - 7.5 acres farmed with sustainable, organic and some biodynamic methods. Sustainable practices include biodiesel, wildlife management, erosion control, cover crop management, integrated pest management, composting, recycling. www.winesofvinehill.com

Terra Serena Vineyard – sustainable practices include erosion control, solar power, and an organic approach.

Windy Oaks – biodynamic and sustainable practices. www.windyoaksestate.com

Lester Family Vineyards: Sustainable practices include cover crops, no till, no herbicides, emphasis on canopy management and proactive viticulture management to keep the vines healthy and more resistant to problems. Organic and IPM minimum spray program.

Biagini Vineyards: Biodynamic and organic practices. No till, no herbicides, proactive viticulture management.

Saveria Vineyards: Sustainable practices include cover crops, no till, no herbicides, emphasis on canopy management and proactive viticulture management. Organic and IPM minimum spray program.