



NAPA VALLEY

Green at a Glance

Sustainable

Sustainable winegrowing practices in California focus on the long-term sustainability of the wine community. The mission of sustainable winegrowing is to identify and promote practices that are sensitive to the environment (Environmentally Sound), responsive to the needs and interest of society (Socially Equitable) and are also economically feasible to implement and maintain (Economically Feasible). There are no government laws specifically monitoring or certifying sustainable practices, but every major California winegrowing region has established sustainable winegrowing alliances or groups to aid and educate wineries and growers to the benefits of sustainability in an ongoing stewardship of the land. Sustainability promotes soil health, decreased or alternative pesticide inputs, optimization of ecological stability and productivity as well as overall increased vineyard quality and longevity. It is estimated that over 1,000 wineries are sustainably farming 30% of California's vineyard acreage today.

Organically Grown

2% of California's 475,000 acres of wine grapes are certified as being farmed organically. To be certified organic, grapes must be grown without synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and fungicides for at least 3 years. Wines labeled "made with organic grapes" (or something similar), must contain at least 70% certified organic ingredients and follow government guidelines for processing the wine. As an example, only 100 parts per million of added or naturally occurring sulfites may be used in organically made wines. Nearly every winery adds sulfites at bottling to help eliminate spoilage and create a stable product.

Organic Wine

Wines labeled "organic" must contain at least 95% certified organic ingredients and cannot contain added sulfites. There only a handful of California wineries producing organic wines.

Biodynamic

Biodynamic and organic viticulture have a lot in common, but biodynamic goes beyond the elimination of chemical fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides to include the use of various "preparations." Examples of preparation would be horn silica, nettle and valerian in the vineyard. Biodynamic farming also incorporates the belief of cosmic forces related to the moon and planets and includes a calendar specifying when various vineyard tasks are to be performed. There are just over a dozen California vineyards and wineries certified, or in the process of being certified biodynamic.