

# WINEROAD

SONOMA Co

## SUSTAINABILITY

In January 2014, Sonoma County Winegrowers announced their commitment to becoming the nation's first 100% sustainable wine region through a three-phased program to be completed within the next five years and numerous Wine Road vintners are on the front lines helping to reach this ambitious goal. Sustainability is no longer a hopeful option for the region, it's a priority and its practices are quickly becoming part of long-term business strategies among the 200 Northern Sonoma County wineries and lodgings from the Russian River, Dry Creek and Alexander Valley AVAs. Wine Road members are enthusiastically embracing greener principles, from biodynamics and organics to dry farming and solar energy.



Many wine growers and winemakers along the Wine Road have readily embraced dry farming practices as their primary source of sustainability. Dry farming, which relies entirely on rainfall, not only conserves water, making a vineyard's growing practice more sustainable, but produces more concentrated grapes, intensifying the flavors, structure, and body of the resulting wines .

Several member wineries also practice sustainability through organic farming techniques, starting with non-chemical fertilizers and pest-management practices. Taking organics one step further, a handful of Wine Road wineries grow biodynamically—an integrated cultivation approach that treats the entire vineyard as a living system, with organic guidelines for fertilization and insect/predator management, as well as rules for planting, harvesting, and production.

Moreover, nearly half of the 50-plus wineries awarded Sonoma County Green Business certification are members of Wine Road. This designation is given to businesses that meet certain requirements, including conservation of resources, pollution prevention, and waste reduction.

What does all of this mean? Socially responsible Wine Road wineries and lodgings consider dedication to the environment a way of life not a fringe practice and embrace this modern business model, while continuing to produce some of the finest wines in the world.