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Wente Vineyards Announces 2019 Sustainability Report Card Ahead of Earth Day

Fifth generation family winegrowers lead the way in innovative ethical practices and sustainability programming

LIVERMORE VALLEY, CA – April 18, 2019 – In honor of Earth Day on April 22, 2019 [Wente Vineyards](#) is proud to share an updated series of green initiatives and programming, all of which reflect the wineries longstanding (136 years and counting!) and ongoing commitment to sustainable winegrowing.

As of 2019, Wente Vineyards, America’s oldest, continuously operated family winery, is among only 2% of California wineries to have achieved the Certified California Sustainable Winegrowing (CCSW or “CERTIFIED SUSTAINABLE”) designation for both its vineyard and winery. Any winegrowing operation hoping to attain the CCSW designation must meet a stringent set of criteria in order to preserve and protect their land, water, and air, but also demonstrate ethical leadership with how they treat their employees and local communities. Wente Vineyards was one of 18 pilot wineries to achieve CCSW status in 2010, and beginning with the 2017 vintage, the winery will include the official CCSW CERTIFIED SUSTAINABLE logo (pictured right) on all packaging, in order to better communicate its practices to consumers and help create more demand for true sustainable wines.



The Wente family’s philosophy on sustainable practices dates back to 1883, when Carl H. Wente arrived in Livermore Valley and realized the only way to guarantee the next harvest (and the next ten after that) was to treat the land and the people who tend to it as responsibly as possible. Today, fifth generation winegrowers Karl & Niki Wente have wholeheartedly taken the baton, and recently upgraded the winery, vineyard and tasting rooms to meet (and exceed) their family’s CCSW-inspired goals. Recent additions to the sustainability ‘menu’ at Wente Vineyards include:

WATER USE EFFICIENCY

- BlueMorph UV light system replaces a typically chemical/water-heavy rinse cycle during winery sanitation with a hot water wash followed by UV sanitation, saving roughly 150,000 gallons of water per year.
- All water used in the production facility is re-used to drip irrigate the vineyards (and only when truly needed).
- More than 10 million gallons of water used in the production facility are recycled/re-used to irrigate the vineyards or used for dust control, and an on-property water treatment pond contributes to the reclamation of all production water used in the winery's facilities.

SOIL & NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT

- Roughly one third of the grape tonnage that is processed is spread back into the vineyards as part of soil management process. The grape pomace is repurposed for beneficial uses such as composting, which is incorporated in the vineyards to increase the level of organic matter, improving soil health and water retention.
- Cover crops prevent soil erosion during winter rains and provide a nourishing habitat for beneficial insects. Wente Vineyards' cover crops are recycled into an organic fertilizer and soil enhancer used to create living soils, which renew themselves. Creative farming practices encourage bio-diversity in the vineyards, greatly minimizing the need for pest intervention.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

- STARS Filtration Unit (Selective Tartrate Removal System), reduces energy load during the winery's cold stabilization process which saves both energy and money (and vastly improves conditions for workers who no longer have to work in frigid temperatures!).
- Incandescent and halogen light fixtures have been replaced with natural skylights and supplemental LED lights to improve energy efficiency.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

- In 2018, 77% of Wente Vineyards' consumables waste was diverted from landfill and instead recycled by local partners.

BENEFICIAL PESTS & BIODIVERSITY

- Wente Family Estates cultivates native grasses and other beneficial flowering species that help maintain an ecological balance where pests are therefore naturally controlled. The Wente family also manages

1,600 acres of sustainable open range land not planted to vineyard, with 100 head of cattle providing grass management and soil fertilization.

- Aero falconry is employed in partnership with a Master Falconer, making the vineyards a natural no-fly zone for starlings. Electronic squawk boxes are used as backup.
- Owl boxes and raptor perches naturally control the vineyards' destructive starlings, gophers and ground squirrels.
- On-site weather stations use UC Davis-developed mildew pressure models to pinpoint exactly where to spray, if at all. Environmentally friendly stilet oil (a combination of natural oils such as clove, black pepper and cinnamon) is used to smother mildew and control pests.

COMMUNITY

- The award-winning Make Time™ initiative strengthens Wente Vineyards' long-standing pledge of creating a culture of balance for its employees. Updates inside the organization include:
 - Embodying Make Time Off (MTO): An additional paid time off offering to all of its nearly 700 employees to use on activities they enjoy with the people they care about.
 - Developing a Make Time Committee: A team of employees dedicated to ongoing nourishment of the Make Time culture, achieved through exploration and implementation of tools and skills offered to all employees and development of company events.
 - Instituting Make Time Mixers: Company-held social events, during business hours, to encourage coworker camaraderie and to refresh and recharge
- The Wente Foundation for Arts Education's mission is to provide support for arts education programs in the Livermore Valley and throughout Northern California. Under the leadership of its 5th generation President, Christine Wente, The Wente Foundation for Arts Education extends the Wente family's legacy of leadership in the wine industry to the world of philanthropy by meeting a financial need and creating opportunities for talented students.
 - The Livermore Valley Winegrowers Foundation and The Wente Foundation for Arts Education work together to present the Livermore Valley Wine Auction, which has raised over \$5 million for local organizations to raise funds to improve the quality of life for underserved local children.
 - Karl Wente created a small lot, limited edition wine, The Art of Giving, in support of the mission. With every bottle sold, 50% of the purchase price is donated directly to The Wente Foundation.

OTHER SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

- To communicate the importance of responsible farming to the consumer, the CCSW logo will be featured on all Wente Vineyards back labels from the 2017 vintage forward.
- All Wente Vineyard tasting rooms are designated drop-off spots for Cork ReHarvest, a program focused on collecting and recycling use and surplus corks from wineries.
- Wente Vineyards uses Century Olive Oil trees to produce Certified Sustainable oil, which come from an extensive tree-planting program, a testament to the Wente family's tradition of commitment to sustainable agriculture.

Today, with the help of the forward-looking fifth generation, and the foundations of the generations before them. The Wente family remains a leader in ethical practices, producing high quality grapes and wine, protecting the environment and enhancing the communities in which they live and work by implementing sustainable winegrowing practices that are environmentally sound, socially equitable and economically viable. In short, Wente Vineyards continues to push the envelope in redefining how sustainability is measured.

About Wente Vineyards

Founded in 1883, Wente Vineyards is the oldest continuously-operated, family-owned winery in the country, now owned and managed by the fourth and fifth generations of the Wente family. The winery draws from certified sustainable Estate vineyards in the Livermore Valley, San Francisco Bay and Arroyo Seco, Monterey appellations to create an outstanding portfolio of fine wines. Wente Vineyards is distributed in all 50 states and in over 70 countries worldwide. In 2010, it joined the top 2% of California wineries who meet all three tiers within the Certified California Sustainable Winegrowing codes & designation. In 2011, Wente Family Estates was named American Winery of the Year by Wine Enthusiast and a top 30 wine company by Wine Business Monthly. 2012 marked the 100th anniversary of the Wente family bringing Chardonnay cuttings to California from France. Today, the Wente clone of Chardonnay is the most widely planted in California.

Located just east of San Francisco in the historic Livermore Valley, Wente Vineyards is recognized as one of California's premier wine country destinations. In 2018, the winery took a leadership role in its longstanding mission to inspire employees and guests to make time for what *really* matters, as realized through Wente Vineyards' best practices, outstanding wines and wine country experiences. The property features wine tasting, world-class concerts, award-winning fine dining and championship golf. For more information, visit www.wentevineyards.com. For press inquiries and images, please contact Kimberly Noelle Charles or Rachel Chittick at Charles Communications Associates at press@charlescomm.com or 415.701.9463.

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