



FAMILY OWNED.  
ESTATE GROWN.  
CERTIFIED SUSTAINABLE.

### **Key Facts about Wente Vineyards' Sustainability Initiatives and Programs**

*“[Winemakers] are conservative about conservation. When you are in the wine business you learn that it takes time and patience to produce the best results. We don’t rush into every fad that comes along, but we don’t hesitate to adopt a practice which has been carefully thought out, even if it may take a generation to accomplish the desired results.”*

*-Herman Wente, Second Generation Winegrower*

### **HISTORICAL AND FAMILY FACTS**

Since 1883, five generations of the Wente family have planted, grown and harvested grapes from their estate vineyards in the Livermore Valley, starting with their initial purchase of 48 acres of land.

In 1990, a decade before “sustainability” became a buzz word and before the formalization of a sustainable winegrowing program, Wente Family Estates developed its own program, *Farming for the Future*<sup>™</sup> (FFT). The program encompasses 3,000 acres of estate vineyards in the Livermore Valley and Arroyo Seco appellations and focuses on: **1) Water and energy conservation 2) Reuse and recycling 3) Cover crops and composting 4) Beneficial pests and biodiversity.**

### **The Wente family has upheld THREE KEY COMMITMENTS:**

1. Protect the estate vineyards so they can be passed from generation to generation.
2. Provide social and financial support to the Livermore Valley and Arroyo Seco communities.
3. Maintain sustainable farming and winemaking practices.

### **The Tri-Valley Conservancy (TVC):**

- The Wente family was instrumental in developing the plan for the TVC, whose mission statement is to: *“Permanently protect the fertile soils, rangelands, open space and*

*biological resources of the land and to support a viable agricultural economy in the Tri-Valley area which is the home of Wente Vineyards.”*

### **Certified California Sustainable Winegrowing (CCSW) designation:**

- Wente Family Estates was awarded the CCSW designation in 2010 with respect to vineyard, winery and company practices. They were one of 18 pilot wineries to achieve this status and one of the only to certify every part of their business. WFE achieved CCSW designation in consecutive years through today.

**Sustainability practices include the way individuals preserve and protect the land, water, and air and how they responsibly interact with employees and local communities.**

The **KEY FOCUS AREAS FOR SUSTAINABILITY** at Wente Family Estates include:

- **Energy and Water Conservation, Reuse and Recycling:** Drip irrigation is employed to conserve water in the vineyards. More than 10 million gallons of water used in the production facility is 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. More than 50,000 lbs of cardboard, 50,000 lbs of glass bottles and 9,000 lbs of plastics are recycled annually.
- **Cover Crops and Composting:** Cover crops prevent soil erosion during winter rains and provide a nourishing habitat for beneficial insects. Approximately 9,000 tons of grape pomace is repurposed for other beneficial uses such as composting, which is incorporated in the vineyards to increase the level of organic matter, improving soil health and water and retention. For more than 10 years, recycled, organic hydrolyzed fertilizer has been distributed through a drip irrigation system, eliminating the need for application by tractor.
- **Beneficial Pests and Biodiversity:** Wente Family Estates cultivates native grasses and other beneficial flowering species that help maintain an ecological balance where pests are therefore naturally controlled.
- **Contribution to the Local Community and Economy:** On-site weather stations provide temperature and humidity data enabling better assessments of when/where to spray and what material to use that is environmentally sound, limiting tractor use in the vineyards, less soil compaction and diesel combustion.
- **Recipient of the Integrated Pest Management Innovators Award in 2000 by the California Environmental Protection Agency.**

### SUSTAINABILITY: THE WINERY

- **Small Lot Wines:** Work is done by hand; minimal use of equipment and lower energy consumption.
- **Recycling:** Over 50,000 lbs of cardboard are recycled each year; over 50,000 lbs of glass bottles are collected and recycled (from tasting rooms, restaurants, catering and concerts); over 9,000 lbs of plastic used from shrink wrap and label spools are recycled.
- **Packing Material/Printing:** Wente Family Estates only uses cardboard from recycled products and only work with green-friendly soy based ink printing vendors.
- **Leftover lees:** from fermentation contain alcohol and methanol, which are recycled and used for biodiesel fuel.
- **Temperature/capacity sensors:** installed in the bottling room, saving heating energy and over 500 gallons of water per day.
- **PG&E energy consumption:** Reduced by 40% by upgrading virtual server capacity and eliminating 15 physical computer servers, as well as continued replacement of chillers, boilers and other electrical equipment with high efficiency systems.
- **Cork ReHarvest:** All of Wente Vineyards tasting rooms are designated drop-off spots for Cork ReHarvest, a program focused on collecting and recycling used corks, which are then recycled into flooring tiles, building insulation, automotive gaskets, craft materials, soil condition and sports equipment.

### SUSTAINABILITY: THE ESTATE

- **Olive Trees:** Wente Vineyards uses organic olive trees to produce award winning, certified extra virgin olive oil.
- **Rangeland:** 1,600 acres of sustainable open rangeland not planted to vineyard, with 100 cattle providing grass management and soil fertilization.
- **Native Oak Tree Project:** Native acorns gathered on the estate are planted on major oak lands to grow seedlings, which are protected from grazing animals until established.
- **The Course at Wente Vineyards:** An Audubon Certified Golf Course (first certified in 2010, and again in 2011 and 2012). Audubon's mission is to conserve and restore natural ecosystems (focusing on birds and other wildlife) and promote environmental stewardship and sustainability.

- **Birds and Butterflies:** Wente Family Estates has placed bluebird boxes and owl nest boxes at The Course, as bluebirds are beneficial for eating insects and owls help control squirrels, gophers, etc. Drought-tolerant plants on The Course help save water and attract hummingbirds and butterflies.

#### SUSTAINABILITY: THE RESTAURANT AT WENTE VINEYARDS

- The Restaurant uses locally sourced organically farmed and sustainably raised produce, fish, game and meat to supply its kitchen; the company's successful catering business also upholds this philosophy.
- **Recycle:** Ash from the wood BBQ fire is mixed with compost to bring down its acidity.
- **Fuel:** Kitchen waste is converted to biodiesel fuel by recycling oils from their restaurant, grill and catering.
- **The Garden:** Fourth Generation Winegrower and CEO, Carolyn Wente, created The Garden at Wente Vineyards in 1986. Today, Wente Vineyards' Master Gardener, Diane Dovholuk, tends to The Restaurant's organic vegetable and herb garden. She uses a composting system, which reduces waste and helps strengthen the soil.

#### SUSTAINABILITY: THE COMMUNITY & INDUSTRY

- Fourth Generation Winegrower, Phil Wente, was essential to the *South Livermore Valley Area Plan*, which became the blueprint for the South Livermore agricultural development. Farming protocol in the area has changed as a result of the family's efforts.
- Fourth Generation Winegrowers, Phil & Eric Wente, contributed significantly to the California Wine Institute's *Code of Sustainable Winegrowing Practices*, which promotes farming and winemaking practices that are sensitive to the environment and today are the foundation for a statewide certification program called Certified California Sustainable Winegrowing (CCSW).