

## PROTECTING NATURAL RESOURCES.

As farmers, we believe if you take care of the earth, the earth will take care of you. As winemakers, our goal is to ensure the purest expression of “place” as we move from grapes to glass. So, our definition of sustainability is pretty direct: We make our wines in a way that nurtures the earth and brings the special characteristics of Sonoma County into every bottle of Frei Brothers Reserve.

- **50/50 Giveback Program: If you plant an acre, give an acre.**

For every acre of land we plant to vines, we set aside one acre as natural wildlife habitat. The view from Frei Ranch is made up of more than beautiful vineyards; it's open space and wildlife, too. So far, we've preserved 838 acres of plantable land. And we're still at it. It's nice to know that even though half of our land isn't used to actually make anything, all of it makes a difference.

- **Redwood Row: Going out on a limb to expand our winery**

When we expanded our winery a few years ago, we chose to transplant a row of 21 mature redwood trees rather than cut them down. Every one of those trees is thriving today. It wasn't easy, but it was worth it. Our winery is now better equipped to craft our award-winning wines, and we still have those 21 historic trees. In fact, they inspired us to add more. In 2013 we planted an additional 13 redwood trees; Redwood Row is growing right along with us!

- **Russian River Valley Wetlands: Trading vines for win-win-win wetlands**

We actively work to preserve the Laguna de Santa Rosa, a large tributary with a rich ecosystem that is a critical part of the acclaimed Russian River Valley region. We have helped to redevelop the wetlands, and actually pulled out 15 acres of Chardonnay vines to expand the tributary. So far, our project has restored 25 acres to a seasonal wetland and upland bird habitat. Today, local visitors and even international scientists visit the vineyard for educational tours. The wetlands has become a true “win-win-win” for the grapes, the land and the community.

- **From bottles to capsules: New ways to uncork sustainability**

In 2012, we matched our packaging to our philosophy. We switched our labels to paper stock that includes post-consumer recycled fibers, and we print them using a carbon-neutral process and 100 percent renewable electricity. Our bottles are now made with 15% less glass than conventional bottles, saving half a million pounds of glass annually. We changed our corks to a type that uses all the bark that is harvested from the tree. What's more, we continue to “think outside the bottle” with new shipping containers printed with soy inks and made with recycled products.

## NOT EVERY DECISION IS A BIG ONE, BUT EVERY DECISION MATTERS

Preserving wetlands and moving trees is a big deal, but like any business, for every big decision we make, we make a few dozen little ones. Like these...

- **Recycled Railroad Posts.** Frei Brothers Reserve uses recycled rail steel for the T-posts that hold up the vine trellises; it's high-grade steel that has been used for years and can continue to serve a purpose in our vineyard for years to come.
- **Compostable Vine Ties.** Another sustainable item we use in the vineyard is twisty ties. Similar to what holds a loaf of bread in its wrapper, we use these ties to fasten the canes, or the arms of the vine, to the trellis when pruning. Instead of going the plastic route, we found a supplier that offers biodegradable ties.
- **Chipping Old Vines for Compost.** When grape vines reach the end of their lifespan, some wineries pull the vines and burn them. We can't see polluting the air like that. Instead, we chip our old vines and use them as compost for the new vines – the chips make for great organic material and deliver nutrients right back into the soil!
- **Bird Boxes and Perches.** Pest control is top-of-mind for many vintners. We went back to basics here, too, and installed bird boxes and raptor perches throughout our vineyards. Owls nest in the bird boxes while other birds of prey such as hawks and eagles will perch around the vineyard and help to control the rodent population.

Because of all of these efforts and many others we have taken, Frei Brothers Reserve has achieved Certified California Sustainable Winegrowing by the California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance, which means the winery is also active in helping to drive sustainability across the wine industry

