

Sustainability: Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Being a good steward of land and resources is a key practice in Clos LaChance's farming and winemaking methods. Owner's Bill and Brenda Murphy strive to maintain a beautiful and healthy environment for themselves, employees, neighbors of the winery, and visitors. As a family-owned and operated business, the Murphy's are especially vested in the sustainability of the winery and vineyard, with the hopes of creating a legacy for their children and grandchildren.

Sustainability is an ever-evolving practice. A member of the Central Coast Vineyard Team, Clos LaChance has also actively participated in the Wine Institute Sustainability Self-Assessment Program, identifying strengths and opportunities for improvement. The winery is proud of current achievements to create an environmentally, economically and socially sound business, and will continue working towards more sustainable practices in the future.

Natural Biological Control: Clos LaChance encourages the control of ground squirrels and other rodents via natural predators. The grounds bordering the Estate Vineyard are home to a number of hawks, owls and even a pair of eagles. The winery has posted raptor roosts throughout the vineyard, encouraging the momentum of the natural food chain.

Building Healthy Soils: Clos LaChance uses a variety of cover crops, including legumes, barley and clover, protecting and enhancing the productivity of the soil. In addition, the vineyard is regularly fertilized with organic matter—increasing the soil stability, tilth and diversity of microbial life. Chicken manure and mushroom compost are utilized from local farms, reducing their outbound waste. Grape skins, stems and seeds are also returned to the vineyard after fermentation.

Recycling Natural Resources: All water used to process wines at Clos LaChance's 60,000 case production facility is recycled to a series of onsite reclamation ponds. The water is used as needed to irrigate the vineyard.

Enhancing Surrounding Wildlife Habitat: Despite precision irrigation, rain is a cause of natural run-off. In 2005, due to heavy rains, it became necessary for Clos LaChance to install drainage into several lower vineyard blocks. Across the road from these vineyard blocks is a protected Wetlands area. Working in tandem with environmental teams, the winery was able to direct the run-off to the natural wetlands with a pump and underground pipe. Water then percolates through the soil (acting as a natural filter) prior to being passed into the Wetlands. The enhanced wetlands are now home to a number of birds and animals including ducks, snowy egrets, herons and endangered Tiger Salamanders.

Education and Community Outreach: In 2006, Clos LaChance planted a demonstration vineyard on the property, featuring various varietals and trellising systems that are located throughout the Estate Vineyard. The winery conducts regular vineyard management and training sessions from the demonstration vineyard, providing customers, neighbors and employees with a snapshot of the winery's agricultural practices.

Building for the Future: Clos LaChance's owner Bill Murphy currently sits on the Sustainability Committee at the Wine Institute. He plans to take a leadership role in developing standards and approvals for US Wineries in regards to sustainability. The winery has a long term goal of running entirely via solar power. Winery owners evaluate options on an annual basis and are anxious to working solar panel installation into future business plans.

“We have a responsibility to sustain—if not enhance —our natural environment and our nation's economy for future generations.”

—Steve Johnson, US Environmental Protection Agency

Organic and Sustainable Farming

Sustainable, by definition, is more encompassing and “bigger picture” than Organic. It focuses on the impact of the entire business operation, environmentally, economically and socially. In many instances, sustainable farming goes above and beyond organic regulations, focusing on the long-term environmental impact rather than a specific set of farming practices for a particular product.

The three indicators of Sustainable Agriculture are:

1. Environmentally Sound
2. Economically Feasible
3. Socially Equitable



Protecting the natural landscape for the third generation.

A prime example—the application of fungicides. This common winegrowing practice inhibits the effect of mildew on the thin skins of young grape clusters. Sulfur is the Organic substance required for this process, but it is mined from the ground with all the negatives that typically apply to mining. Additionally, sulfur is applied by the pound per acre, while synthetic fungicides are applied by the ounce. Sulfur is applied 2-3 times as frequently as synthetic fungicides with all the extra tractor labor, soil compaction and fuel cost associated with that practice. In this case, it is clear that evaluating the big picture outside of the narrow view of Organic can lead to more environmental benefit in the long run.

A basic snapshot of this particular example:

	<u>Organic Approach</u>	<u>Sustainable Approach</u>
Product:	Wetable Sulfur	Procure
Acreage:	150 acres	150 acres
Man Hours/Application:	100	100
Gallons of Fuel/Application:	70	70
Application Frequency:	7-10 days	18-20 days
Average Annual Sprays (120 day season):	13	6
Annual Man Hours:	1,300	600
Annual Gallons of Fuel:	910	420

Annual Fuel Savings (not including emissions): =490 Gallons
 Annual Man Hour Savings: =700 hours



Neighboring wetlands from vineyard run-off.



Water reclamation storage.



Mushroom Farm where Clos LaChance sources organic compost to enhance the soils.