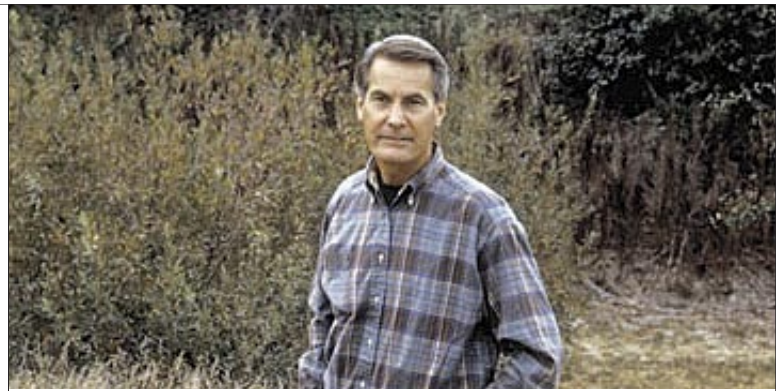


Sustainable Wine Grape Growing in California

Producers Thrive Using Sound Economic, Social, and Environmental Practices

Location: California's Central Valley and North and Central Coasts

Project Summary: California winegrowers use innovative partnerships to advance projects ranging from habitat restoration to "green building."



Habitat restoration and grape cultivation co-exist on 6,500 acres farmed by Lange Twins in Lodi.

Resource Challenge

Explosive population growth in many California communities is creating intense pressure and competition for natural resources. Demographic changes and development have led the wine industry to adopt innovative practices that use resources wisely and maintain harmonious relationships with their neighbors. Practices include placing lands in conservation easements, replanting eroded riparian areas and native oaks, encouraging migratory bird habitat, and providing for endangered species.

Community-based sustainability programs work closely with the wine industry. By participating in shared federal, state, and local partnerships, the California wine industry influences and advances environmental practices, not only for their industry, but for agriculture as a whole. The Sustainable Winegrowing Program helps growers and vintners improve their practices through voluntary self-assessment and benchmark reporting. More than 1,250 participants from 1,060 vineyards and wineries participate in a voluntary, statewide Sustainable Winegrowing Program. Lange Twins Vineyard, Fetzer Vineyards, and Kendall Jackson Winery are representative of statewide conservation efforts.

- *Lange Twins Vineyard* is one of many stakeholders on the Lower Mokelumne River, a 65,000-acre watershed supporting many species but facing degradation of riparian habitat.
- *Fetzer Vineyards* has been a leader in applying environmentally friendly, socially responsible practices for more than 15 years. Dedicated to sustainability, they are motivated by concerns about resource stewardship, health and well-being of employees and neighbors, and long-term business viability.

Innovation/Highlight

California's wine community has demonstrated that voluntary conservation programs can work as well as, or better than, regulations.

- *Kendall Jackson Winery* faced the prospect of not being able to use land for agriculture due to endangered tiger salamanders on the property. Under traditional regulation, there was no incentive to enhance habitat.

Examples of Key Partners

Private landowners, community members, Resource Conservation Districts, East Bay Municipal Utility District, USDI Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Environmental Defense, CALFED, regional winegrower associations, Agricultural Commissioners, University of California.

Results and Accomplishments

Lange Twins – Completed the first programmatic Safe Harbor Agreement (SHA) in the nation to protect the elderberry beetle and maintain landowner property rights in the context of riparian restoration. The SHA is watershed-wide, extending to adjacent landowners.

Fetzer – Implemented watershed conservation, including streambank protection, erosion prevention, stream water flow improvements, species conservation, and effective biological control by beneficial insects.

Kendall Jackson – Signed a cooperative agreement with the FWS to protect the endangered tiger salamander. Key points include: creating buffers around existing breeding pools, adding at least one new breeding pool, ensuring pools are filled for the requisite time and depth, and funding research to better understand compatibility between salamander habitat and viticulture.

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