



CALIFORNIA'S SUSTAINABLE WINEGROWING PROGRAM

The Code of Sustainable Winegrowing Practices workbook was introduced in 2002 by members of Wine Institute and the California Association of Winegrape Growers (CAWG) to promote environmental stewardship and social responsibility in the California wine industry. The workbook is a self-assessment tool for California's vintners and growers, and provides practical information on how to conserve natural resources, protect the environment and enhance relationships with employees, neighbors and local communities. The organizations formed the California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance (CSWA), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, a year later to promote the benefits of sustainable winegrowing practices, enlist industry commitment and assist in implementation of the Sustainable Winegrowing Program.

More than 50 members of Wine Institute and CAWG developed the Sustainable Winegrowing Program (SWP) and the 490-page workbook over a two-year period. Environmentalists, regulators, university educators and social equity groups provided expertise to the program as well. The workbook includes 13 chapters of practical guidelines, including information on winegrape growing, soil management, pest management, ecosystems management, water and energy conservation, materials handling and human resources. The workbook's built-in scientific measurement system will help track the industry's progress in adopting the guidelines. Over 2,750 workbooks have been distributed since its introduction.

This collaborative effort has resulted in more than 110 workshops in 24 counties covering all of the major winegrowing regions of California. To date, more than 1,250 participants have assessed their vineyard and winery operations. Participants voluntarily contribute benchmark data that measures the level of implementation of sustainable practices in their vineyard and winery operations. CSWA reported on data representing 40% of wine production and 25% of the vineyards in California in its first *Sustainability Report* in October of 2004. The report described California's sustainable winegrowing strengths and opportunities for improvement and set new goals to increase adoption of environmentally friendly practices. Based on the report findings, CSWA is planning new sustainable winegrowing workshops targeted at the most challenging areas and will issue follow-up reports tracking the California wine community's progress in the years to come.

The program has been recognized for its innovation by a number of award programs. In October 2003, Wine Institute and CAWG received the Department of Pesticide Regulation's "IPM Innovator of the Year Award" for the program's work in the area of integrated pest management. More recently, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger gave the 2004 Governor's Environmental and Economic Leadership Award (GEELA), the state's top environmental award, to CSWA for the Sustainable Winegrowing Program. In 2004, the California Council for Environmental and Economic Balance awarded the SWP partner organizations the Governor Edmund G. "Pat" Brown Award.

For information on the SWP and upcoming workshops, or to download the Sustainability Report, please visit the CSWA Web site at www.sustainablewinegrowing.org, Wine Institute Web site at www.wineinstitute.org or the California Association of Winegrape Growers Web site at www.cawg.org.

