



Omaka Springs Estates 100% Certified Sustainable Vineyard

At Omaka Springs Estates we are dedicated to a proactive environmental management system that enables the production of high quality wine by employing environmentally responsible and economically viable processes in vineyards and winery.

What is Sustainability? A sustainable agriculture is one that, over the long term, enhances environmental quality and the resource base on which agriculture depends; provides for basic human food and fibre needs; is economically viable; and enhances the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole.

According to scientist Dr. Jamie Goode, there are two main reasons for adopting sustainable winegrowing, "Firstly, it is a moral imperative: we should not expect the next generation to pick up our tab. There is no justification for farming systems that degrade the quality of the soil, either by leaving agrochemical residues, exhausting nutrients, or allowing erosion. Equally importantly, though, and less commonly discussed is the possibility that better grape quality can be achieved through a more holistic and deeper understanding of the vineyard agro-ecosystem. That is, sustainable farming, when taken far enough, can result in more complex and interesting wines. And the world needs more of these."

The 3 Primary Goals of Sustainability:

- maintain environmental health
- maintain economic profitability
- maintain social & economic equity

A Natural Approach

Our 180 acres of vineyards and olive groves are brimming with life. The meandering streams, occasional ponds, and endless trees seem to attract all walks of nature. From the tiny round ladybirds to the brilliant Pukekos, from the small slippery earthworms to the roaming flocks of sheep, our vineyards benefit from a mighty collaborative force of nature. These mammals, birds, insects, plants, and micro-flora work in harmony to reduce the use of insecticides, contribute to healthy fruit and vines, maintain productive soil and minimise the impact on the environment.

In addition to the herd Arapawa Sheep kept by Omaka Springs, we work with our neighbouring farms to host over 500 local sheep each year on the estate. The sheep graze on the weeds and grass in the vineyards, eliminating the need for mechanical mowers and weeders; thereby reducing diesel consumption. Grazing sheep also offer the added benefit of contributing a low rate of natural fertilizer to the vineyard.



Saying Bye-Bye to By-Products

Reducing waste is a constant goal for the Omaka team. We believe this goal is easiest achieved by not producing waste in the first place; therefore, we work consciously to be considerate of the amount of by-product we generate in our activities and look for ways to lessen it at each step. In the winery, we reuse and recycle our shipping and packing materials and, in the vineyard, we reclaim our vineyard waste, returning the organic matter back to the soils to help maintain their health. Additionally, our winemaker utilizes the minimal amount of cleaning chemicals necessary to maintain proper sanitation, which not only avoids waste but also promotes good wines and safe and healthy work environment.



Arapawa sheep in the summertime, freshly shorn.

Concerned Conservation Efforts

Electricity and water conservation are dutifully practiced by the Omaka team and well-integrated into our daily activities. We have switched to energy efficient light bulbs wherever possible. We utilize rainwater recovery methods which help to reduce dependence on ground water while saving energy at the same time.



Who Determines Sustainable Certification Eligibility in New Zealand?

Sustainable Winegrowing New Zealand (SWNZ) was established in 1995 as an industry initiative directed through New Zealand Winegrowers and was commercially introduced in 1997 and adopted by growers from all the grape growing regions. The introduction of winery standards in 2002 has been a significant development, which further substantiates the industry commitment to sustainable production.



Carbon Balance Over the past five years Omaka Springs Estates has been working to minimise and off-set our carbon (CO₂) production. The team has enacted a scheme to reduce overall tractor emissions by lowering the amount of usage and making necessary usage times more efficient, thus eliminating needless carbon production and lowering diesel use. Also, we have continued the tradition of hand-harvesting which not only helps to reduce emissions and diesel use, but is also excellent for quality wine production.

We are dedicated to decreasing our carbon footprint in the shipping of our wines. When shipping, our preference is to work with carbon-conscious shipping companies and partake in consolidated shipments whenever available. This year we will be exploring lighter packaging options, such as thinner glass for our bottles in an effort to reduce the overall weight of our shipments.

Though we do retail our olive oil in 500ml glass bottles, much of our olive oil is sold in 2 litre recyclable containers. We offer discounts to our customers for using the same container for their next order. By encouraging our customers to buy larger quantities in re-fillable, recyclable containers we help them to lower their carbon footprint by making fewer trips to buy the oil as well as actively promote re-using and recycling.

When wine is exported to multiple countries it means there will surely be marketing trips to follow. The Omaka Springs team is committed to minimizing the amount of travel our team does.



Olives growing at Omaka



WINE ENTHUSIAST MAGAZINE'S
IMPORTER OF THE YEAR



Natural wetlands at Omaka Springs Estates

Social Responsibility

Although the work carried out by our team throughout the year - nurturing the vines, pruning, bud rubbing, leaf plucking, bunch thinning, harvesting, fermenting, racking, marketing, planning, accounting, etc. are all very important. What we do outside the bounds of the estate is also critical to our success. At Omaka Springs, community isn't just something we value, it's something we choose to be a part of. That is why we stand committed in our continued support and sponsorship of local schools, sports teams, and clubs. We strive to establish and maintain mutually beneficial agricultural relationships with our neighbours in the valley and beyond. Our commitment to education and cultural enrichment in the community is demonstrated by our offering of opportunity for university and overseas students to complete apprenticeships in our cellar and vineyard. In a more direct fashion, vineyard owner, Geoff Jensen has provided his services to the community as a Justice of the Peace for over 19 years.

Rather than taking many small trips throughout the year to meet our obligations, we take several, large, well-orchestrated trips. We also strive to utilize public/grouped transport and other low-CO₂ producing methods when available and feasible.

Our 2,000 olive trees are probably the single largest helping hand in our efforts to become carbon neutral. Aside from their natural beauty, delicious olives, prevention of soil erosion, water recycling, and the great habitat they provide, these trees are dedicated to carbon sequestration. A single mature tree can absorb carbon dioxide at a rate of 22 kilos/year and release enough oxygen back into the atmosphere to support 2 human beings! Beyond this feat, the trees also absorb other harmful pollutants from the air such as sulphur dioxide, ozone, nitrogen oxides, and particulates; all while leeching potentially occurring undesirables from the environment. Such hard workers!



Four varieties of our olives

For a copy of this handout or other downloadable POS to promote Omaka Springs Estates' commitment to a sustainable future please visit our website at www.omaka.co.nz