STARFIELD
VINEYARDS

Sustainability Is Our Core Value

We understand that Starfield is possible only if the vineyard is sustainable for future generations.
As stewards of the land, we apply sustainability to every decision we make.

Our focus starts with maintaining a healthy ecosystem. We encourage biodiversity by:

• Leaving buffers of native forest throughout the vineyard – which retain water, reduce runoff, and create habitat for raptors, owls & insectivorous birds
• Creating bioswales along the vineyard margins and in canyons throughout the property -- which are planted with hundreds of trees and shrubs that slow and filter rainwater before it leaves the property
• Developing two ponds and a lake to further capture and clarify runoff – and provide habitat for water lilies, bog beans, water birch, red twig dogwoods, Sierra tree frogs, Sacramento perch, Black & Saye's phoebes, Western Pond turtles, Tree swallows, and dragon and damselflys, among many other pond inhabitants.
• Certifying the vineyard for Fish Friendly Farming

We work the vineyard largely by hand. Our crews:

• Touch each vine at least 6-7 times per season -- pruning, shoot thinning, suckering, leafing, cluster thinning, harvesting and bin sorting to ensure only the highest quality fruit reaches the winery

We conserve the soil by:

• Growing cover crops of native grass and clover between vine rows -- reducing erosion, increasing organic matter and improving water penetration
• Mowing the cover crops instead of plowing them under -- fostering native plant diversity and developing natural microflora in the soil, facilitating mineral uptake in the vines.

We practice water conservation by:

• Monitoring soil moisture depletion with neutron probes – which measure osmotic pressure in the root zone, providing a weekly guide to reducing water usage
• Visually observing grapevine internode length in every block every week to gauge vine stress – assuring we schedule irrigation only when internode length shortens sufficiently
• Delaying vineyard irrigation until mid-summer to take full advantage of 35-40" of annual rainfall
• Allowing our ponds to act as natural percolation basins in winter – to replenish local groundwater basins and help sustain our surrounding forests

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We manage pests using an integrated system which includes natural predators and minimizes risks to birds, bees, water and people. We do that by:

• Having a PCA monitor pests every seven days during the growing season -- which avoids large outbreaks, and minimizes the need for treatment
• Applying only the minimal chemicals, primarily sulfur, to control grapevine disease
• Providing permanent nesting structures for birds – including 60 bluebird houses for native western bluebirds & tree swallows -- giving us hundreds of bluebirds and tree swallows in the vineyard, each consuming 12% of their body weight a day in insects
• Leaving forest corridors for great northern owls, peregrine falcons, red tailed hawks and coyotes – which help reduce damage from rabbits and rodents
• Testing and roguing the vineyard annually for harmful viruses and diseases, and removing any diseased vines before they can infect other vines and reduce wine quality or shorten the life of the vineyard.

We focus on sustainable human resources by:

• Increasing our staff skills through ongoing training
• Providing our staff with a living wage
• Offering our full-time staff health benefits
• Ensuring the safety of our staff and guests in the vineyard

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