



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What does CCSW-Certified mean?

CCSW-Certified is an acronym for Certified California Sustainable Winegrowing, a certification program developed by the California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance (CSWA) that provides verification that a winery or vineyard adopts and implements sustainable winegrowing practices according to the industry's code of best practices and commits to a "process of continuous improvement" in these practices.



CCSW-Certified wineries and vineyards must:

- Evaluate their operations on a scale of 1 to 4 in 227 criteria in the *Code of Sustainable Winegrowing Practices Self-Assessment Workbook* annually.
- Meet 58 prerequisites from the 227 *Code* criteria to be eligible for the program.
- Verify the accuracy of their evaluations and practices during a third-party audit.
- Identify key areas in which they can improve the sustainability of their practices.
- Create and implement annual action plans and demonstrate improvements over time.

2. How does an organization demonstrate continuous improvement?

There are several ways to demonstrate improvement. For example:

- Achievement of action plan objectives, such as reducing energy use by 10%.
- Achievement of higher category scores for *Code* workbook criteria.
- Improvement of performance within a category score, and
- Implementation of new equipment, technology or practices that maintain or improve performance with reduced environmental or social impact and/or at lower cost.

Improvements can be shown to an auditor during a site visit, noted in the SWP online system by uploading documentation or photos, or through direct communications.

3. What are the goals of the certification program?

CSWA's goals for the certification program are to enhance transparency, encourage statewide participation and advance the entire California wine industry toward best practices in environmental stewardship, natural resources conservation and socially equitable business practices.

4. How do sustainable practices benefit consumers and California?

Wine consumers can have the satisfaction of knowing they are supporting vineyards and wineries that are socially and environmentally responsible in conserving water, energy and land, protecting air and water quality, and enhancing relations with employees and communities. California's wine industry is also serving as a model for other wine regions and agricultural sectors.

Consumers who live in and visit California benefit from supporting businesses that create open space and rural beauty. Enhanced wine quality is another benefit of the industry's adoption of best practices – such as drip irrigation, canopy management, knowledge of wine quality and viticultural improvements – from the *Code*.

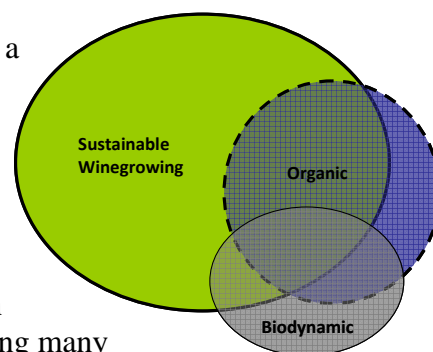
Sustainable winegrowing has been practiced by California vintners and growers for decades, and conserves the state's limited natural resources, enhances environmental quality, and contributes economically and socially to the state. California's booming population has increased competition for land, water, energy and other resources. By adopting sustainable practices, winegrowers are demonstrating their responsible use of these resources and their performance as a good neighbor. California wine will always be tied to the land as a signature industry of the state.

5. Why did CSWA develop a “process-based” certification program?

CSWA developed process-based certification to meet the most important principles of the Sustainable Winegrowing Program (SWP), which include the process of continuous improvement. This approach provides the flexibility to address the most critical regional and organizational issues across diverse regions of California for both wineries and vineyards. After meeting 58 prerequisite criteria, companies use their own evaluations to determine what areas need to be improved, focus their resources on practices that will make the most difference for their sustainability goals, and continually improve year after year to retain certification. Other types of programs, such as practice-based or performance certification programs, have thresholds that must be met in order to obtain certification, which ensures that certain practices are or are not being used or a certain level of performance.

6. How does sustainable winegrowing certification relate to organic and biodynamic certification?

Sustainable winegrowing can be viewed as an umbrella concept, or as a larger circle in a series of concentric circles, where there is overlap with organic and biodynamic principles and practices, yet each have characteristics that make them unique. The comprehensive SWP promotes 227 best practices for the environment and communities from grapes to glass. In addition to earth-friendly methods for vineyards and surrounding ecosystems, sustainability includes energy efficiency, protection of air and water quality, enhanced relations with employees and neighbors, environmentally preferred purchasing, among many others. CCSW-Certified also addresses this broader set of issues.



7. How does the California Sustainable Winegrowing Program and CCSW-Certified compare with other countries' sustainable winegrowing programs?

The SWP is one of the most comprehensive and effective industry-wide sustainability programs in the world. It has extremely high adoption rates in terms of vineyard acres and wine production with over 68% of winegrape acreage and 62% of wine case production participating in the self-assessment. The SWP is also unique in measuring and publicly reporting performance for our entire industry. CCSW-Certified follows suit. The international wine community has worked cooperatively to develop a standardized set of sustainability principles for the wine community. Each country has developed sustainability programs that meet the objectives of the principles and fit the unique circumstances of their industry. California's program is well suited to the size and diversity of our industry, our values of innovation and continuous improvement, and our goal to be leaders in sustainable practices adoption.

8. Is there now a new category of wine called “sustainable wine”?

At present, there is no legal term or official category for “sustainable wine.” CCSW-Certified provides third-party verification of a winery and/or vineyard's adherence to a process of continuous improvement in the adoption of sustainable practices. While these positive practices ultimately produce quality winegrapes and wine, the program is focused on the winery and

vineyard operations, which isn't the same as certifying the product. Companies are referred to as a "CCSW-Certified winery" or "CCSW-Certified vineyard," accompanied by the name of the winery or vineyard operation that has been certified. In the interest of clearly and accurately presenting the program, CCSW-Certified does not attempt to create a definition for sustainable wine nor does it allow the use of a CCSW-Certified logo or claim on the bottle.

9. What is CSWA's long term plan for certification?

While process-based certification is the approach that will be used at the launch of the program, CSWA is initiating a project to develop industry-wide metrics to measure and track sustainability performance. CSWA will develop performance metrics for water and energy efficiency, greenhouse gas intensity, and several others to be determined in order to baseline the industry's significant impacts and set targets for improvement. Once the metrics are in place, they will tie into the certification program and certified participants will need to consider industry-wide targets when creating action plans. The metrics will also focus on industry efforts around best management practice development and sustainability tool creation. As the certification program evolves to include performance metrics, CSWA may then move towards allowing the use of a logo on the bottle.

10. How do I find CCSW-Certified wineries and vineyards?

CSWA maintains a list of all the CCSW-Certified wineries and vineyards on its web site at www.sustainablewinegrowing.org/certifiedparticipants.php. Individual certified participants may also list their certification status on their web sites and secondary marketing materials.