

NAPA GREEN CERTIFIED VINEYARD FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **What is the history of Napa Green Land?**
- **Why a new Napa Green Vineyard certification program?**
- **Who has contributed and review the new Napa Green Vineyard certification standards?**
- **What are the goals?**
- **What are the benefits?**
- **This looks challenging. Will Napa Green Vineyard certification be broadly achievable?**
- **Does it apply to the whole property?**
- **Will there still be a Napa Green Land program?**
- **How much will it cost?**
- **What is the definition of Sustainability?**

WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF NAPA GREEN LAND?

The Napa Green Land (NGL) program was originally developed by more than 30 local environmental, community and regulatory stakeholders in the early 2000s. Because the Napa River was known to have excessive sediment at that time, NGL was originally developed for participants to meet and exceed environmental compliance standards to prevent erosion and improve the overall health of the Napa River watershed.

Beginning in 2004, NGL functionally acted as an umbrella program that recognized growers who were third-party certified through a program called “Fish Friendly Farming” (FFF), customized for the Napa County regulatory context. In 2016, NGL recognition expanded to include LandSmart, an open-source program managed by the Napa County Resource Conservation District (RCD), designed with similar goals and best practices to facilitate compliance and watershed stewardship.

In 2017, the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Board adopted vineyard Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR), which applied to all Napa and Sonoma County vineyard watershed properties of five or more acres. Both of the pathways recognized by NGL - FFF and LandSmart - provided participating growers with certified farm plans that met the WDR requirements and facilitated this new level of regulatory compliance. Napa Green is no longer in direct partnership with the California Land Stewardship Institute’s FFF program but continues to recommend that growers work with LandSmart, FFF, or other qualified experts to ensure environmental compliance.

WHY A NEW NAPA GREEN VINEYARD CERTIFICATION PROGRAM?

Napa Valley has always been viewed as a leader in the world’s growing community, and Napa Green has always stood for going above and beyond regulatory requirements and committing to continuous improvement. Napa Green Vineyard is the recognition that the issues of our past are not necessarily those of our present or future. Because a certified farm plan is now a

regulatory requirement for most growers, NGL was being utilized to largely meet compliance requirements.

Napa Green became an independent nonprofit at the end of 2019. This gave Napa Green an opportunity to reevaluate program priorities and to create a new set of certification standards that address the most pressing issues facing the wine industry. We believe it is important for Napa Green to continue to evolve, inspiring and supporting our members in achieving ever higher levels of sustainability leadership.

Many retailers and international markets are closely reviewing sustainable winegrowing certifications to ensure they reflect their consumers' expectations and demands. Meaningful climate action and social equity measures are now essential to be considered for purchase or import decisions. As such, we must be proactive to not only meet, but to exceed these expectations, which will only continue to become more rigorous.

WHO HAS CONTRIBUTED AND REVIEWED THE NEW NAPA GREEN VINEYARD CERTIFICATION STANDARDS?

Napa Green has a Board of Directors, which has met eight times since it was formed at the start of 2020. In addition to the broad perspective and expertise this brings, Napa Green is grateful to be able to leverage a close partnership with the RCD. For more than four years the RCD staff has been working with Napa Green members and other growers to develop Carbon Farm Plans, conduct irrigation Distribution Uniformity assessments, and assist with forest management and fire preparedness and recovery. The RCD has been closely involved in the development and review of these elements of the new Napa Green Vineyard certification and will be an essential partner in implementing the standards.

To garner expert insight and feedback, Napa Green formed a Pesticide Working Group to inform the Prohibited & Restricted Pesticides List, as well as a Social Equity Working Group to inform and guide those standards. Altogether these groups have met 10 times. Key components of the program have been shared with the Farm Bureau, Napa County Agricultural Commissioner's Office, the Napa Valley Grapegrowers, vineyard management companies and other growers and pesticide experts.

The Conservation Burning & Burning Alternatives element has hugely benefited from the work of Raymond Baltar with the Sonoma Biochar Institute and Sonoma Ecology Center. In addition, relevant elements of these new standards have been shared with industry and community groups for feedback, including the Napa Valley Vintners' Environmental Stewardship Committee, Napa Climate NOW! and UpValley Family Centers.

Napa Green is conducting focused grower and vintner outreach to outline the new certification process, answer questions and make final adjustments to the program. These standards are a living document that will continue to be adapted based on the latest science and industry-specific needs.

WHAT ARE THE GOALS?

The Napa Valley wine industry is already recognized as a global leader in both wine quality and sustainable winegrowing. Napa Green Vineyard takes this to the next level and establishes rigorous standards for climate action and social equity. While our wine region cannot solve climate change or social inequities on its own, we have a powerful collective influence and our sustainability commitments and actions set a standard that is recognized by the global wine industry, beverage sector and beyond.

Napa Green Vineyard members will work to be carbon neutral within two certification cycles (six years) and carbon negative (or climate positive) within nine years (three certification cycles). We will also send out annual Social Equity surveys, with a minimum threshold of required employee responses from each of our members.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

The Napa Green Vineyard standards focus on natural climate solutions and regenerative farming practices that:

- Store, or sequester, more carbon in soil,
- Increase soil health,
- Increase biodiversity,
- Increase water and nutrient retention and plant availability,
- Increase the quality and yield of grapes on the vine,
- Increase resilience to a changing climate, and ultimately,
- Increase profitability as growers are increasingly able to demand a price premium for sustainably grown grapes.

Conservation burning, when managed properly, reduces burn pile smoke pollution by 75-85%, and significantly reduces carbon emissions as up to 50% of the vine carbon load is stored in the biochar created by the burn. Conservation burns burn faster, make neighbors and the Air District happy, and in the end, you have a product that can be combined with compost to increase water and nutrient retention and availability.

The Social Equity standards emphasize opportunities including diversity as an enabler of growth (research has shown that companies that have greater workplace diversity outperform their competitors and achieve higher profits), and training and continuing education (the American Society of Training and Development completed a 3-year study that verified that those companies that invest in ongoing employee training report improved performance and higher profit margins). And these are just some of the benefits of this new program, with a powerful public relations story of climate action and social equity leadership – caring more deeply for nature and the community.

THIS LOOKS CHALLENGING. WILL NAPA GREEN VINEYARD CERTIFICATION BE BROADLY ACHIEVABLE?

The Napa Green Vineyard standards are rigorous and there will be ample program support to help you achieve certification. Participants will work closely with partners at the Napa County Resource Conservation District, as well as an in-house Climate & Soil Specialist, [Ben Mackie](#), who will provide on-the-ground implementation support. Growers will have a transition period of at least one year to implement new standards.

We believe in the strong reputation of the Napa County grower community, earned through its long history of environmental leadership. We anticipate the new Napa Green Vineyard program will be held as the gold standard for growers worldwide. The participants in this program will benefit from increased soil health and resilience, employee and community engagement, and continued recognition as industry leaders. Ultimately, these standards should enable growers to gain a price premium for their climate friendly, sustainably certified grapes.

WILL THERE STILL BE A NAPA GREEN LAND PROGRAM?

The Napa Green Certified Vineyard program will replace the Napa Green Land program. The Napa Green Land program will continue to be an important part of our history and the accomplishments will still be shared on our website and in other communications.

Depending on the time of year that growers enroll in the Vineyard program there will be a transition period of 1-2 years to implement the new standards. Current Napa Green Land members will have until the end of 2021 to opt into the next level Napa Green Vineyard program. Those who do not enroll will no longer be recognized as Napa Green certified *in the vineyard* at the end of 2021.

The new Napa Green Vineyard program is directly managed by the Napa Green nonprofit, which will work with a network of independent, third-party auditors to validate implementation of the Napa Green Vineyard standards.

DOES IT APPLY TO THE WHOLE PROPERTY?

Napa Green Vineyard is a “whole parcel” certification and expands on the previous reach of Napa Green Land by focusing on the health of the soil, what is happening in the atmosphere, and caring for our community. The new program evaluates the entire vineyard property for ways to store more carbon and simultaneously enhance biodiversity – in the soil, in the vines and other woody biomass, and in beneficial plants, insects, birds and other animals.

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

Please review the detailed information on Certification Program Costs in the [online vineyard portal](#). There are initial, one-time certification costs that will cover approximately 2/3 of Napa Green and Resource Conservation District time to develop Carbon Farm Plans, provide assistance with other elements like soil sampling and irrigation assessments, and facilitate the overall certification process. These fees are per property and vary based on the time required, ranging from \$700-1100. There is an initial 10% discount for current Napa Green members, as well as up to a 30% discount for certification of multiple properties.

In addition, there are costs for the third-party audit to validate on-the-ground practices. These auditors will either charge an hourly rate (\$80-120/hour) or have a base level cost determined by the size and complexity of the operation. A likely range for auditor time is 5-15 hours. In most cases, there will only be an audit cost every three years as part of recertification.

Once your operation is certified there will be annual Licensing Fees based on TOTAL certified acreage, which range from \$400-2800. These fees will go toward staff time for implementation support and training workshops, managing and reviewing desk audits, and recertification. There is a 5% discount for members comprehensively certified from Soil to Bottle.

WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABILITY?

Sustainability rests on three pillars: People, Planet and Prosperity. For Napa Green we describe it as caring for the health of nature, caring for the health of employees and community, and caring for the health and resilience of conscientious businesses. It is also about taking a longer view of caring for the world that will be left to future generations.