



# NAPA GREEN CERTIFIED VINEYARDS

## Regenerating Carbon, Climate and Community

*“Wine producers can lead by showing the world what a low-carbon high life – a good life that is compatible with a sustainable environment – looks like.” – Dr. Kim Nicholas*

We are facing a climate crisis, and as Greta Thunberg reminds us, natural climate solutions are essential to turning things around. These solutions don't just benefit nature and benefit the climate – they can increase soil health, 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.

A 2018 study focused on natural climate solutions for the United States found that natural climate solutions have the potential to reduce net annual emissions in the U.S. by as much as 21%. This study ranked the potential of 21 natural climate solutions and found that reforestation, improved forest management, cover crops, biochar, hedgerows and other alley cropping, and nutrient management were among six of the top seven natural solutions with the greatest climate action potential.

In addition to the need for urgent climate action, 2020 also brought to the fore a national reckoning conversation about deeply ingrained social inequities and injustices in our society, and specifically within the wine industry. **We cannot have environmental or economic sustainability without social sustainability.**

The Napa County wine industry is in a unique position to gain global recognition as a leader rapidly scaling climate action in the agricultural sector, and making a renewed commitment in both words and action to social equity, justice and inclusion. **We recognize that our wine region cannot solve climate change or social inequities, but we have a powerful leadership platform. Our commitment to sustainability sets a standard that is recognized by the global wine industry, beverage sector, and beyond.**

As Miguel Garcia, Sustainable Agriculture Program Manager with the Napa County Resource Conservation District (RCD), observes, “There is no reason all of the vineyards in Napa County can't be carbon neutral or negative.” **Our goal is to assist growers in becoming carbon neutral within two certification cycles (six years) and carbon negative, or climate positive, within three cycles (nine years).** Napa Green Certified Vineyards will exemplify agriculture that is giving back to the land and communities.



## THIRD-PARTY AUDITS

A critical aspect of Napa Green certification is independent, third-party validation that members are meeting the certification requirements. With so many certifications and seals in the marketplace customers have become understandably weary of what these certifications mean and the substance behind the claims. Auditors provide the validation that our members are truly walking the talk, and dedicated to continual improvement.

## SCOPE 1 & 2 GREENHOUSE GAS (GHG) INVENTORY

“You can’t manage what you don’t measure.” The Napa Green Vineyard program includes an online Resource Calculator where data must be entered on electricity, fuel, fertilizer, irrigation and frost water use. Emissions conversion factors will generate an annual Scope 1 & 2 vineyard GHG inventory.

This inventory will be paired with Carbon Farm Plan implementation and soil test results to determine the vineyard carbon footprint year over year. The [USDA and CDFA COMET-Planner](#) will be used to estimate carbon sequestration, and soil sampling will be used to validate on-the-ground results.

## TRANSITION PERIOD

Once enrolled in the Napa Green Vineyard certification all practices do not have to be fully implemented to be certified:

- Implementation of chosen Carbon Farm action items will be ongoing. The baseline Carbon Farm Plan will be reviewed and updated as a part of each three-year recertification cycle.
- If the required data for the Resource Calculator is not yet being collected this data collection must be initiated at the start of certification, and baseline metrics will be calculated at the start of year two.
- There will be a transition period of one growing season for the Prohibited and Restricted Pesticides. Variances are available for exceptional circumstances.
- In addition, all certified properties will have an Action Plan for practices that need a longer time period or budget cycle(s) to implement. These Action Plans will identify the lead staff responsible for each task and rough deadlines for implementation. The status of the Action Plans will be reviewed annually.

## **VINEYARD MANAGEMENT COMPANIES**

If you use a vineyard management company (VMC) to manage your vineyard operations you must validate and ensure that they comply with the relevant standards when managing your property. The third-party auditor will review VMC materials and practices.

## **CONTINUING EDUCATION**

Since sustainability is a path, not a destination continuing education and improvement is essential. Minimum annual Continuing Education:

- Eight (8) hours/year for full-time management staff
- Five (5) hours/year for full-time vineyard team members

This includes virtual workshops, trainings and webinars, as well as the quarterly meetings of the RCD-led “Carbon Farming Networking Group.” Each applicable staff member should keep a record of Continuing Education – Title, Date, Hours. *We do not require official CE credits.*

## **STANDARD REVISION**

The latest relevant science and policies will be reviewed annually and inform any necessary revisions to these standards over time. In addition, the Social Equity Working Group and the Pesticide Working Group will continue to meet twice annually to discuss and consider new best practices, resources and science that will inform any revisions or additions to those two elements of these standards. As with the aims of sustainability the Napa Green Vineyard certification program is committed to continuing improvement.





## **RECERTIFICATION**

Recertification is every three years. Staff will do an onsite review and work with you to update your Carbon Farm Plan, complete Irrigation assessments as needed, and create a new Action Plan. Annual dues will go toward staff recertification time. An independent, third-party audit is required every three years and should take less time than the initial certification audit.

### **EXAMPLE OF FEES OVER THREE YEARS**

A current Napa Green member enrolls two properties that total 80 acres. Both properties are third-party audited for certification. This member also has a Napa Green Certified Winery.

#### **Start of Certification**

Certification Fees: \$1520

Third-Party Audit: \$900

#### **Following Year**

Licensing Fees: \$1045

#### **Following Year**

Licensing Fees: \$1045

#### **End of Year Three – Recertification**

Licensing Fees: \$1045

Third-Party Audit: \$600