



VILLA MARIA
ESTATE
NEW ZEALAND

Sustainability: A Founding Objective

Being environmentally responsible is a core objective and has long been a key driver for Villa Maria's owner and founder Sir George Fistonich: "As a family company, the desire to leave something for the next generation is an ever-present and overriding business objective."

CERTIFICATES

Sustainable Winegrowing New Zealand (SWNZ)

Villa Maria has been a member of Sustainable Winegrowing New Zealand (SWNZ) since its inception in 1995. SWNZ, an initiative of New Zealand Winegrowers, provides a best practice model for vineyards and wineries involving the sustainable management of land and resources to meet the needs of today without adversely impacting the needs of tomorrow.

ISO Certification

All Villa Maria wineries and company owned vineyards are certified with the environmental management system ISO14001. The overall idea of this ISO accreditation is to establish an organised approach to systematically reduce the environmental impact of Villa Maria's wine production.

BioGro Certification

In 2009, Villa Maria was the first major New Zealand winery to achieve BioGro organic certification from the vineyard to the winery, bottling facility and warehouse. BioGro is a not-for-profit organic producer and consumer organisation, actively working to grow organics in New Zealand. Wine from grapes grown at Villa Maria's organic vineyards is bottled at the main bottling facility, enabling Villa Maria to trace organic certification for their organic wines from grape to bottle.

CEMARS Certification

In 2010, Villa Maria marked another milestone in sustainability, achieving Certified Emissions Measurement and Reduction Scheme (CEMARS) certification, as part of its strategy to reduce the company's carbon footprint. CEMARS is an internationally recognised carbon reduction programme developed in New Zealand by Landcare Research and focuses solely on measuring and managing an organisation's carbon footprint or greenhouse gas emissions profile.

SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

Organic Vineyards

Villa Maria currently grows and harvests BioGro-certified organic grapes on selected vineyards in Auckland, Hawkes Bay and Marlborough. The company started its first organic vineyard in Hawkes Bay in 2000 and achieved full certification of the site in 2004. The company currently has four vineyards under organic management and plans to progressively implement organic practices throughout all of its vineyards.

Heat Recovery

Both Villa Maria wineries are installed with heat recovery systems, which take waste heat from the refrigeration plant and store it for use in the winemaking process. The recovered heat is used to warm grape juice prior to and during fermentation, and to warm the wine before it is bottled. The heat recovery plant complements gas and electric energy and enables the winery to significantly reduce its total energy consumption.

Night Air Cooling

Villa Maria's Auckland warehouse features a night air cooling system importing night air into the warehouse where the wine acts as a giant "chilly pack" to maintain optimum temperatures, even during the summer heat.

Natural Lighting

Villa Maria's wineries are designed to use natural light as a source of daytime illumination. This provides a healthier environment for staff and significant energy savings.

Recycling

Villa Maria encourages recycling in its wineries. Grape pressings are either recycled as cattle feed or composted as nutrient for the vineyards. The company has an ongoing commitment to separating all plastic, glass and metals waste. In fact, approximately 70 per cent of the packaging used for a bottle of Villa Maria Private Bin wine is made from recycled material.

Hybrid Vehicles

Since 2007 Villa Maria has been progressively changing its sales team fleet to low emission hybrid vehicles.

RECENT RECOGNITION

Supreme Winner, Sustainable Business Network Awards 2012

Villa Maria Estate took out the Supreme Winner trophy at this event, being named overall champion. This nationwide accolade came after being named the Northern Sustainable Business of the Year. The Supreme Winner trophy recognised Villa Maria's long-standing commitment to sustainable practices and environmental responsibility.

Supreme Green Ribbon Award Winner 2012

Villa Maria Estate won the Supreme Green Ribbon Award at a ceremony at Parliament, recognising the company's outstanding and on-going contributions to protecting New Zealand's environment. The family owned and operated company also secured the Large Business Leadership category, which recognises large organisations who demonstrate an on-going commitment to environmental best practices.

Sustainability Champion, Sustainable Business Network Awards 2010

Villa Maria's Executive Director Fabian Yukich won the Sustainability Champion Award at the 2010 NZ Sustainable Business Network Awards recognising his efforts in embedding sustainable business principles at Villa Maria Estate over the last 12 years.