Organic farming & winemaking practices

BARRA GIRASOLE

About us:

All **Barra** and **Girasole Vineyards** wines are made with estate grown grapes grown on 300+ acres of CCOF (California Certified Organic Farmers) certified vineyards. Our home ranch, originally planted in 1955, was first certified in 1989.

Our organic practices:

Organic certification requires that our grapes are grown without conventional pesticides or herbicides, synthetic fertilizers, sewage sludge, bioengineering, or ionizing radiation. Bell beans, red clover, peas and vetch are planted between the rows of vines, and then, just when the flowering plants are turning to either seed or starting to bear "fruit", the plants are turned back into the soil where they are converted to nutrients for the vines. The soils are alive with micro-organisms that allow the vines to take up the nutrients in a more efficient manner.

In addition to having organically certified vineyards, our winery facility is also certified organic by the CCOF. This means that our winemaking process must adhere to strict guidelines and ongoing inspection by the CCOF in order to maintain the claim "made with organically grown grapes" on our **Barra** and **Girasole Vineyards** wine labels. Additionally, any wines carrying this claim must not exceed 100 ppm (parts per million) of sulfites, measured prior to bottling. Conventional wines are allowed to contain up to 350 ppm. Many people with sulfite allergies find they are able to consume our wines without issues.

Our water supply:

There are 8 ponds spread throughout the Barra family's three vineyard properties. Because we farm organically, these reservoirs are protected from chemicals that would otherwise be leaching through the soils.

Building soil the organic way:

- Mowing and then turning cover crops back into the soil. Particularly good for enhancing nitrogen.
- Chopping and turning prunnings back into the soil (instead of burning).
- Adding CCOF approved naturally-mined nutrients such as phosphorus, magnesium, potassium under the vines.
- Testing the soils once a year for nutrient balance.
- 2023 –2026 test plot development using biochar, a wood product created by burning wood chips in equipment that uses little oxygen for the burning process. Biochar increases a vine's ability to uptake nutrients, has water-holding capabilities, and increases the carbon sequestration in the soil. Old vines pulled out for replanting will be converted into biochar.