

ORGANIC FARMING / WINEMAKING

- The Barra home ranch, Redwood Valley Vineyards, has been certified by the CCOF (California Certified Organic Farmers) for over **25 years** now (and it had taken another three years of inspections prior to that for the certification to become complete). But even 40 years before there were official organic certification programs, Charlie was farming without chemicals!



- **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.
- All of the grapes that go into *BARRA of Mendocino* and *Girasole Vineyards* wines are **estate grown**, which means they are grown/farmed on our own properties.

- There are **5 ponds** spread throughout the Redwood Valley Vineyards which help irrigate the grapes during the summer and provide the source of water for overhead sprinkler systems during frost season. Because we farm organically, these watersheds are protected from chemicals that would otherwise be leaching into the soils.



- In addition to having organically certified vineyards, the **BARRA of Mendocino Winery** 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 wine labels. Additionally, any wines carrying this claim can only contain 100 ppm (parts per million) of sulfites. *The BARRA of Mendocino/Girasole Vineyards* wines often test out as low as 40-50 ppm (traditional wines can have up to 350 ppm). The wines are also considered **vegan friendly** as they don’t contain any animal products, such as egg-whites (sometimes used in the fining process).

- “Why wouldn’t I farm organically? Yes, it’s more work (annual audits, certifications, paperwork, labor requirements), more risk (crop devastation from pests) and not necessarily a bigger payout, but it’s essential to the well-being of this planet. We need to leave this earth the way we found it, and this doesn’t include chemicals”. *91 year old grape grower Charlie Barra*

