



NIVEN FAMILY WINE ESTATES

PARAGON and FIREPEAK EARN SUSTAINABLE CERTIFICATION *Niven Family Owns Largest SIPtm Certified Vineyard Acreage in California*

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA - February 3, 2009 - Paragon Vineyard and Firepeak Vineyard, both in the Edna Valley on California's South Central Coast, have earned the Sustainability in Practice (SIPtm) Vineyard Certification. Owned by the winegrape planting pioneer Niven family, and farmed by Pacific Vineyard Company, certification of these vineyards proves their collective commitment to environmental stewardship, economic viability, and equitable treatment of employees. A project of the Central Coast Vineyard Team, SIPtm provides a comprehensive and verifiable method to authenticate a vineyard's attention to integrated farming practices.

At almost 1,200 acres between the two vineyards, the Niven family owns the most SIPtm certified acreage in the state. Their wines from the 2008 vintage will carry the official seal of certification.



"We've been working closely with the Central Coast Vineyard Team for years," says George Donati, President of Pacific Vineyard Company. "We have historically farmed in a careful and responsible manner that takes into account all facets of the world around us, and would continue to do so whether or not this certification program was developed. Even though, we were honored to participate in the pilot program, and are immensely proud to be amongst the first ten vineyards to earn the certification."

Both Paragon and Firepeak Vineyards were presented with a robust and comprehensive set of standards. Areas addressed included biodiversity, social equity, community involvement, energy efficiency, pest management, air quality, water quality and conservation, and practices that reduce risk. Once the standards were met, they were audited by an independent, third-party inspector. The Certification was granted by an independent advisory board, based on the recommendation and reporting of the inspector.

"This was a very rigorous exercise," says Erin Amaral, Pest Control Advisor and Viticulturalist of Pacific Vineyard Company. "Practicing and managing the actual techniques that continually foster a better environment for our vineyard, business, and people, is certainly rewarding. But I have to admit that keeping up on the documentation and reporting for almost 1,200 acres of vineyard is a bit challenging!"

Based in the Edna Valley on the Central Coast of California, Niven Family Wine Estates is dedicated to quality grape growing and winemaking, and to nurturing the exceptional culture and lifestyle of the region. Holdings of the company include Baileyana Winery, Orcutt Road Cellars, Tangent Winery, and two estate vineyards, Paragon and Firepeak. Two new wine brands, Cadre Vineyards and Trenza Wines, will join the lineup in 2009 and 2010. Additionally, the family is a partner with Diageo in Edna Valley Vineyard. Visit the [website](#) for more information.

More information about Sustainability in Practice (SIP)tm Vineyard Certification can be found on the Central Coast Vineyard Team's [website](#).

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