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Trefethen, Raymond go entirely solar

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May 16, 2013 10:00 pm

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Many wineries have installed solar power, but two recent announcements deserve mention: Trefethen Family Vineyards has become completely solar-powered.

So has Raymond Vineyards, claiming to be the largest solar producer in Napa Valley, generating 1 million kilowatt-hours annually.

Trefethen's installation generates nearly 564,000 kilowatt hours annually — equivalent to eliminating 389 tons of carbon dioxide emissions or taking 76 cars off the road.

Raymond's solar system includes more than 50,000 square feet of panels on the winery's roofs and a 17,000 square-foot solar canopy that also helps shade workers and fermentation tanks. It offsets 758 tons of greenhouse gas emissions.

Trefethen has quietly pioneered sustainable farming practices since Gene and Katie Trefethen began growing grapes around the 19th-century Eschol winery in 1968. Gene installed a rain water collection and recycling system that replenishes Trefethen's reservoirs.

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In addition to solar powering its vineyard and winery operations, Trefethen:

- recycles waste water for irrigation;
- uses deficit irrigation to curb water waste;
- transforms winery pomace into compost;
- restores riparian areas and streams;
- employs natural methods of weed, mildew and pest control (bats, hawks and barn owls diminish pests);
- plants cover crops to enhance soil health;
- harvests at night instead of refrigerating grapes;
- uses electric and soy-based biodiesel-fueled vehicles;
- chooses soy inks on labels;
- provides year-round jobs and full benefits for agricultural workers, along with extensive employee health and education programs.

Boisset Family Estates' Raymond Vineyards will be 100 percent solar powered in time for it to host the Napa Valley Vintner's Friday Napa Valley Barrel Auction as part of Auction Napa Valley, officials said.

Report shows direct shipments top exports

Direct-to-consumer shipments from American wineries increased to \$1.46 billion in 2012, greater than the value of U.S. wine exports, according to the 2013 Direct Shipping Report released by ShipCompliant and Wines & Vines.

The 10 percent increase in sales of direct-shipped wines outpaced growth of wine sales in the United States. Nearly 3.2 million nine-liter cases of wine were shipped directly to American consumers in 2012, a 7.7 percent increase in volume over 2012.

Napa County wineries represent half of direct sales, shipping \$713 million, though its shipments grew only 8 percent.

The 2013 Direct Shipping report is available free at shipcompliant.com or winesandvines.com. The Ship Compliant Direct Shipping Seminar will be at the Napa Valley Marriott Resort & Spa on Thursday, June 13.

Sonoma State online wine business studies

Sonoma State University will conduct a fundamental course for its Wine Business Management Certificate June 5 through July 3. It is taught by Master of Wine Tim Hanni.

The application deadline is May 27 and the price is \$590. Visit Sonoma.edu for information or to register.


Vineyards Economics Seminar

The annual Vineyards Economics Seminar is on Thursday, May 23 at the Napa Valley Marriott Resort & Spa.


It's organized by the Wine Symposium Group founded by David Freed of




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