



WaterSmart Success Story

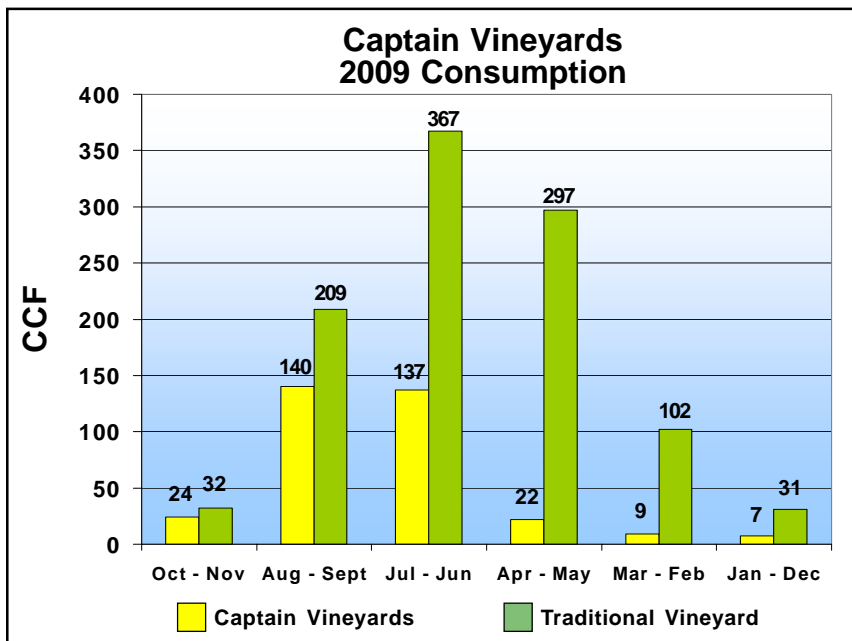
Captain Vineyards



EBMUD created the WaterSmart brand to recognize those organizations that seek and achieve outstanding water efficiency. Some businesses independently seek to become good stewards of the land and its resources. Captain Vineyards is a good example of both. The Captains started their 2.5 acre winery in May 2005 using “dry-farming” methods in order to reduce their water consumption. Traditional grape growers can use as much as 20 gallons to make a single gallon of wine. The Captains also implemented a spacing method called “5 X 3,” meaning that vine rows are 5 feet apart and plants are 3 feet apart, minimizing water use. The vineyard also uses drip irrigation and has “trained” their vines to use less water. Watering less frequently and for a longer duration trains the root system to go more deeply into the soil, thus improving the water supply capability of the root system.



Overlooking Captain Vineyards, Moraga CA



Dry farming is unusual. While there is an overall trend toward using less water in California, dry farming refers to a practice of relying only on natural annual rainfall for growing grapes. There are two main reasons to dry farm: water conservation and grape quality. On the conservation side, up to 16,000 gallons of water per acre can be saved annually. On the quality side, some vintners believe the practice leads to more intensely flavored grapes. The Captains rely mostly on rain to water their vineyard, using very little irrigation.

Compared to another vineyard of roughly equal size and using traditional methods, the Captains use 67% less water annually. The Captains’ efforts are all the more impressive given that their house is located in the vineyard, they host guests

regularly, and they use water to clean their equipment. Unlike many wineries in the East Bay, the Captains grow their own grapes for wine production. The winery is the first green winery in Contra Costa County.

WaterSmart Certification Facts

2.5 acres of vines, 253,572 gallons used in 2009

67% water savings over traditional methods

Their average per person use is less than 50 gallons per day

Captain Vineyards showcases how good water management can translate into big savings that help both the bottom line and the environment. EBMUD would like to congratulate Captain Vineyards on their WaterSmart Certification which helps preserve the environment and vital resources for our community. WaterSmart — good for business, good for the environment.