



Jon Ruel

Director of Wines, Vines, and People

Since his arrival in 2004, Jon Ruel has played a key role in furthering our mission of making world-class wines that reflect our unique terroir. Initially brought on as our viticulturist, Jon quickly made some small changes that had huge effects. One change our ranch foreman, Alfonso Beas, noticed right away was “mucho movimiento”. That’s because Jon’s insistence for each sub-block of the vineyard to get the attention it needs, at exactly right the time, has the vineyard crew moving all around the ranch to keep up.

With an approach to quality that blends ancient methods with modern technology, Jon is now guiding the entire process of crafting each of our wines – from vineyard to bottle. And he is doing it with a keen environmental awareness, drawing on his diverse scientific background that includes not only a M.S. degree from UC Davis in Viticulture and Enology but also a M.S. degree in Ecology and over 10 years of ecological research that spanned the globe, literally, from Antarctica to the Norwegian Arctic and many points in between.

Apparently, we are not the only ones to recognize Jon’s unique talents. Since 2007, he has been on the Board of Directors of the Napa Valley Grapegrowers, where he currently serves as chair of the Issues Committee. In 2009, he was appointed to the advisory council of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, a regional agency entrusted with regulating air pollution across the entire nine county San Francisco bay area. He is also a frequent speaker at local industry events, often being asked to present aspects of our sustainability programs.

When asked by wine writers and others what he thinks goes into making truly exceptional wine, Jon is quick to give credit to the whole Trefethen team – from our professional winemaking staff to members of our vineyard crew, some of whom have been working with us for over 25 years. But his appreciation of their efforts goes deeper than words. A few years ago, he initiated a project called “La Huerta” that has us growing a vast array of organic fruits and vegetables to be provided to employees as a very tangible reward for their hard work.