

LIVE Continuous Improvement for Wineries

The list provided below are suggestions for continuous improvement in the winery. They may be expanded upon and included in your sustainability plan. Feel free to make suggestions for future inclusion on this list. Its purpose is to create dialogue and inspire you, not to prescribe or dictate.

Summarize your continuous improvement project(s) on the last page of this document. For long term or capital intensive projects, please describe your timeline and milestones.

Demonstrate a year-over-year improvement in at least one metric – This could be gallons of water per case, overall greenhouse gas emissions, percent of power supplied by renewables, kWh/case, petrol/case, diesel/case, LPG/case, employee satisfaction, or define one that is relevant to your operations.

Employee training on sustainability issues in the winery – We encourage the communication of both your sustainability challenges as well as solutions to your entire staff. Solutions appear faster in an environment that fosters communication, brainstorming, and openness. By communicating your policies to your staff, they can then communicate them to your customers. This has two effects: First, responsible practices are shown to result in a high quality product, which in turn encourages your customers to adopt these practices in their private lives. Second, customers upon hearing of your program may surprise you with a solution you may not have thought of previously.

Install a bike rack – Encourages employees and customers to use alternate transportation, both through practical application and by example. This may also encourage employees to exercise on their breaks, as well as before and after work.

Offer incentives for electric, hybrid, or other non-gasoline powered vehicle purchasing by employees, or encourage carpooling or using public transportation – This could be as simple as a small weekly subsidy. The goal here is to encourage reduction of carbon emissions.

Install a boot scraper outside winery with signage to show benefits to customers and employees – This simple tool cuts down on dust and mud inside winery, reducing the need for cleaning agents and frequent vacuuming.

Install solar panel(s) or wind turbine(s) – There may be tax incentives for installing solar panels on your property. Solar panels and turbines can be used to reduce peak load of energy in your winery.

Upgrade solar array for efficiency – Replace old inverters when a loss of efficiency is observed.

Replace propane forklifts with electric – Replacing a propane forklift with an electric one offers significant advantages in terms of reduced GHG emissions, quieter operation, and increased efficiency.





Replace reciprocating compressors with screw compressors – Rotary screw compressors are generally more energy-efficient than reciprocating compressors. They use continuous, rotating motion to compress air, resulting in less energy loss compared to the reciprocating motion of pistons in reciprocating compressors

Install winery space partitions for efficient heating and cooling – Installing PVC strip doors and fabric curtains to cut down air flow and isolate heat.

Investigate tank insulation, either permanent or a temporary wrap – Improving insulation can reduce energy costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Install low-flow or waterless toilets and urinals, and other bathroom fixtures – An average family of four can save 22,000 gallons of water per year with the installation of just one low-flow toilet. Now imagine the effect of this applied to your winery and tasting room.

Install gray water collection system for reuse in non-potable applications – Currently in Oregon, gray water is classified as sewage and is regulated under OAR 340-071 (Oregon's onsite wastewater treatment system regulations). Treatment and reuse of gray water requires appropriate DEQ permits.

Track down and remediate water leaks – One member said this was the most consequential continuous improvement action taken in their winery.

Implement alternative and/or locally-produced packaging – This could be as simple as buying lighter glass bottles or as image-changing as changing over to boxes. Other options include reducing printing on case boxes or switching from printed to kraft boxes

Use an eco-friendly printing company for wine labels, signage, marketing materials – Printing is a notoriously eco-harmful industry. We recommend finding printers who used recycled papers and soy-based inks.

Eliminate foils/capsules – Reducing extra packaging eliminates waste that is likely not recycled by the consumer.

Take monthly measurements of noise outside winery during evening and early morning hours, at a distance of 100 feet from building – Especially when winery operations extend to evening and early morning hours, measurements should be taken when noise levels are greatest. Implement changes to bring noise levels below 45 dB throughout these hours.

Install shutters, blinds, curtains, or other features to reduce nighttime light pollution from the winery – Reducing or eliminating lights at night can help with neighbor relations as well as assisting birds during nighttime migrations.

Participate in a free voluntary consultation by OSHA at your site – Inviting OSHA to inspect your worksite can lead to critical improvements and can protect you from regulatory penalties.

Conduct blind tastings with competitors wines at least once per year with staff – Stave off that cellar palate.

Develop a tasting and sensory quality testing protocol for wines prior to release – This is important to catch flaws before they hit the market. Sometimes the employee you least suspect will see something you may have missed.

Participate and collaborate in industry or academic research projects – Engaging in research projects can help move the state of the art forward and benefit your winery in the long term.

Add a line item in annual budget for sustainability initiatives – Having a dedicated expenditure helps to ensure sustainability is prioritized and implemented annually, and provides continuity to longer term projects.

Take B Corp assessment – B Corp certification offers wineries global recognition for ethical business practices and can highlight areas in need of improvement.

Implement a refund program for return of bottles for recycling or reuse – Wineries that have done this have seen an increase in return customers while at the same time helping to add circularity to the waste stream.

Grow a community garden at the winery – Feed the troops, and foster a sense of community while doing it.

Attend sustainability seminars, symposiums, classes, etc. – Continuing education is available in many places, many times at little or no cost.

Start a sustainability blog about your winery and tell your customers – Spread the word!

Institute annual cost of living raises across entire company – This is especially important during high inflationary periods when employees can see their functional spending power decrease.

Install LIVE signage at winery/vineyard – Promoting your certification can help start valuable conversations with your customers, employees, and encourage neighboring wineries to enroll.

Refer another winery to LIVE – Help grow the LIVE network to give winemakers in the region more leverage and resources for technical knowledge and support.



Next Page - Summarize your continuous improvement

Describe your continuous improvement projects and estimated/actual completion dates (required)



Make any suggestions for additions to this list (optional)

Prepared by (name and contact info)