ORGANIC WINES SOUTH AFRICA CHARTER

A. OUR PHILOSOPHY

Organic Wines South Africa brings together certified organic and biodynamic producers of premium South African wines. Our shared vision is to protect and preserve the environment through sustainable and responsible wine production.

We believe it's our duty, as caretakers of the land, to farm in a way that supports local communities, delivers value to consumers, and preserves the soil and environment for future generations.

B. OUR VALUES

a. Integrity

We see it as a moral responsibility to protect the land, animals, plants, and environment for the benefit of future generations.

b. Reliability

Meaningful change requires consistency. We stay committed to our goals, our employees, and our consumers.

c. Social Responsibility

We build relationships based on trust and respect with our employees and ensure our farming practices promote the well-being of local communities. We also commit to fair remuneration / living wage for our employees.

d. Accountability

All our members must comply with the European Union's organic or biodynamic wine standards to maintain certification.

C. BENEFITS OF ORGANIC PRODUCTION

1. Organic reduces greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions

Fossil fuel-based fertilisers require significant energy, adding to GHG emissions. Since organic farming avoids synthetic fertilisers, it can reduce global agricultural GHG emissions by 20%. [i] It also cuts nitrous oxide emissions from soil by 40% per hectare.

2. Organic protects ecosystems

Organic farming builds healthy soil and reduces erosion by 22% [ii]. It helps protect rivers and dams by decreasing nitrate runoff by 28-39%. [iii]

Soils with high organic matter absorb and retain water better, which further reduces erosion. [iv]

3. Organic supports biodiversity
Organic farms have 30% more species and 50% more individual organisms [v]. The biodiversity boost is particularly strong in vineyards and other perennial crops.

4. Organic stores more carbon
Practices like reduced tillage improve soil quality, fertility, and carbon storage [vi].

5. Organic builds crop resilience
With climate change increasing the frequency of heatwaves, droughts, and storms, vines must be more adaptable. Organic farming improves soil health, increases water retention, and produces stronger, more resilient vines [vii].

6. Organic promotes health and well-being
Grapes grown without synthetic chemicals result in wines free from chemical residues. Organic wines also contain higher levels of antioxidants, such as polyphenols and resveratrol, which help protect against cell damage, chronic diseases, and inflammation.
Organic farming also safeguards the health of farmworkers by reducing their exposure to toxic chemicals.

7. Organic supports local communities
Organic farming relies more on manual labour and less on machinery, creating steady employment opportunities. It also improves air quality by eliminating synthetic fertiliser sprays.

8. Organic aligns with changing consumer behaviour
Consumers are becoming more mindful about what they purchase and increasingly seek products that align with their values. With better access to information, people are making smarter choices by supporting sustainable and organic producers. Organic wines meet this demand, offering transparency, quality, and environmental responsibility.

D. PURPOSE OF THE ORGANISATION

Our mission is to promote sustainable production in the wine sector by sharing knowledge and technical expertise. We also collaborate on marketing efforts, both locally and internationally.

We aim to grow the number of organic wine producers in South Africa, bringing sustainable practices into the mainstream.

We welcome any South African wine producer certified as organic or biodynamic, including those currently in conversion or certified as organic regenerative. Our

membership criteria align with EU standards to ensure consistent, high-quality practices.

Our goal is to encourage more producers to adopt organic farming and obtain the necessary certifications.

E. REFERENCES

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