# VINEYARD DEVELOPMENT

## The Preparation Years

Below is a check list of tasks to be done a year or more before planting a vineyard.

- ☐ Backhoe - determine suitability of the soil for grape productions.
- ☐ Determine your market outlet and varieties to be planted.
- ☐ Survey the vineyard site.
- ☐ Make a scale drawing of the proposed new vineyard. It should include:
  - --Direction of rows, usually east to west is best.
  - --Row and vine spacing (determined by variety, expected vine vigor and training method used)
  - --Row lengths
  - --Picking avenues and roadways
  - --Irrigation delivery system
  - --Drainage system (if needed)
  - --Loading area
- ☐ Order vines from nursery. If rooted vines, rootstocks, or dormant bench grafts are to be used, order them 15 to 18 months before planting.
- ☐ Observe the vineyard from which you are going to obtain cutting or budwood for crop level, fruit quality and abnormal foliage symptoms (viruses). If possible, obtain certified propagation wood.
- ☐ Design irrigation system (and drainage system, if needed).
- ☐ Take root and soil samples for nematode determination.
- ☐ Check dead or dying vines or trees for oak root fungus disease.
- ☐ Clear the site. Remove old vines, trees, rocks and shrubs.
- ☐ Control perennial weeds.
- ☐ Rip the soil in two directions. Do this when the soil is dry (fall). You may have to plant a crop to dry the soil out before you rip or slip plow.
- ☐ Level land. If surface irrigation is to be used, you must know the slope needed for your soil type, length and direction of irrigation runs. Touch-up leveling may be needed for other irrigation methods to improve run-off and drainage.
- ☐ Develop water source. Drill and develop wells where needed.
- ☐ Deep plow
- ☐ Smooth and work soil in preparation for fumigation.
- ☐ Fumigate for nematodes or oak root fungus. Fumigation should be done when soil temperatures are warm (not below 55°F) and soil is relatively dry. Fall of the year is best.
- ☐ Install drainage system (if needed).
- ☐ Install irrigation system.
- ☐ Plant cover crop to prevent erosion on hillsides (if needed).
- ☐ Install deer or rabbit fences.
- ☐ Lay out and plant vineyard in spring after frost hazard is past.

**GOOD LUCK!!**

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