

**RODNEY STRONG VINEYARDS BECOMES  
SONOMA COUNTY'S FIRST CARBON NEUTRAL WINERY**  
**Leading Advocate of Solar Energy and Sustainable Farming is Now Carbon Neutral**

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**HEALDSBURG, CA – October 15, 2009** – Rodney Strong Vineyards owner, Tom Klein, announced today that, in an effort to fight global warming, the company's winery and vineyards have achieved carbon neutral status. This makes the winery the first in Sonoma County to become carbon neutral. The winery recently became a member of The Climate Registry ([theclimateresistry.org](http://theclimateresistry.org)), where they will calculate and report emissions of winery and vineyard greenhouse gases, allowing the company to mitigate and offset those emissions.

Rodney Strong enrolled in PG&E's ClimateSmart program ([joinclimatesmart.com](http://joinclimatesmart.com)) in an effort to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. The ClimateSmart program is a voluntary, tax-deductible program that allows enrolled customers to balance out the GHG emissions produced by the energy they use. To participate, customers pay a separate amount on their monthly energy bill, based on their actual energy use. PG&E invests all payments in new, independently verified environmental conservation, restoration and protection projects that reduce or absorb GHG emissions.

In addition, NativeEnergy ([nativeenergy.com](http://nativeenergy.com)) is working with the winery to counterbalance carbon emissions with purchased carbon offset credits benefitting three projects that create new green energy. The projects are the Greensburg Wind Farm Project, Hillcrest Saylor Family Farm Methane Project and the Wanner Family Farm Methane Project.

Over the years, Rodney Strong has implemented numerous green business practices to reduce their impact on the environment. The company installed one of the largest solar electric systems in the wine industry in 2003; updated production facility lights to energy efficient fixtures with motion sensors; farms in accordance with the Code of Sustainable Winegrowing Practices Workbook, published by the California Association of Winegrape Growers and the Wine Institute (verified by third party assessment); and received Fish Friendly Farming certification for their estate vineyards. In 2004 the winery received the EPA/US Dept of Energy Green Power Leadership Award and Sonoma Green Business Certification.

"As with making great wine, going green starts in the vineyard," states winery owner, Tom Klein. "Our sustainable farming led us to install solar panels to conserve energy, participate in Fish Friendly Farming to protect the nearby streams and audit our whole winery's green practices for immediate and on-going environmental progress. I'm proud to say that now, in 2009; we've become carbon neutral and hold ourselves accountable for our winery's carbon footprint. Global warming is real and one of today's biggest threats to our future. This is something we had to do. The whole world needs to get involved in solving this problem."

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Rodney Strong Vineyards is dedicated to crafting world-class wines that capture the essence of Sonoma County. Rodney Strong sustainably farms 14 estate vineyards and produces wines from Sonoma County's finest appellations – Alexander Valley, Russian River Valley and Chalk Hill. The winery was founded in 1959 by Sonoma County wine pioneer Rodney D. Strong as the 13th bonded winery in the county. It was purchased by the Klein family, a fourth generation California agricultural family, in 1989. The company aspires to conserve and protect the environment in all its operations.

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