



What is the Biodiversity & Wine Initiative (BWI)?

The BWI is a partnership between the South African wine industry and the conservation sector to minimise the further loss of threatened habitat and contribute to sustainable wine production.

BWI philosophy

BWI's central philosophy is the conservation and **continual improvement** of all aspects of environmental management on farms. BWI members are not required to do everything right from the very start. However, they are required to show their ongoing dedication and commitment to conserving our unique Cape winelands by their actions on the ground.

First wine district to achieve BWI accreditation

Darling is the first wine producing district to be awarded membership status by the Biodiversity & Wine Initiative (BWI) with all individual farms, as well as Darling Cellars, achieving accreditation.

Spokesperson for the Darling Wine and Art Experience, Shaun Mc Laughlin said, "This recognition is testimony to our farmers' desire to leave the district in an even better state for generations to come."

Individual farms include Groote Post, whose Peter Pentz was one of the pioneers in the creation of the West Coast Biosphere and Tukul Wines, which are grown in Papkuilfontein deep red soils and boasts a popular organic range. Ormonde, well-known for its dedicated conservation efforts, and BWI Champion farms Cloof and Burghers Post are also on the list. Oscar Foulkes of Cloof and Burghers Post derives his inspiration from standing on the southern boundary of the farms and seeing the tangible benefit of

his team's alien clearing programme as farm lands are reverting back to natural vegetation.

Jaco Engelbrecht, viticulturist of Darling Cellars said the cellar was committed to sustainable and environmentally friendly practices. "There's a growing awareness of the value of the natural capital in our area. For example, many farmers are putting up owl boxes to attract owls to the farms. These owls do an excellent job of controlling the numbers of pest species, such as rats and mice."

"What makes this district's dedication all the more remarkable," says farmer John Duckitt, who supplies his grapes to Darling Cellars, "is that the wildflowers and vineyards flourish in the same soils, meaning that the conservation and preservation of flower reserves in and around Darling, instead of planting more economically valuable vineyards in the area, really showcases these farmers' long commitment to a sustainable environment."

News flash!

The number of BWI's members and champions is growing, along with the total hectares conserved. We now have 10 champions, 9 cooperative cellar members and 105 members conserving a total area of 99069 ha. This is equivalent to 99% of the total vineyard footprint in the Cape winelands.

BWI's newest members are (in alphabetical order):

Champions:

La Motte,
Oak Valley Wines
Waterkloof;

Cooperative cellar members:

Darling Cellars,
Uitvlucht Co-op Winery
Villiersdorp Cellar

Members:

Armajaro Estate,
Beaulieu Farm,
Cape Lion Vineyards,
De Morgenzon,
Drumearn,
Elgin Orchards,
Helderbergkloof Vineyards,
Muratie Wine Estate,
Nuwerus,
Shannon Vineyards,
Simonsig Estate,
Slent Farms,
Vogelfontein,
Wallovale Vineyards.

Visit our website at www.bwi.co.za
for up to date news and information.

BWI champions in the spotlight

Historical Oak Valley Estate looks forward

The magnificent Oak Valley Estate in the Elgin valley is renowned for its fruit, cut flowers, beef cattle and, since the launch of its first wine in 2003, for its cool climate wines. Oak Valley Wines recently became the ninth BWI Champion.

In 2005, Oak Valley Wines joined the BWI programme. Since then they have worked consistently and very effectively at their continual environmental improvement, including significant alien clearing activities and a comprehensive and forward-looking waste management and recycling plan for the farm.

With 282 ha of pristine mountain fynbos, including the largest known remaining colony of Protea Stokoei in the Western Cape, Oak Valley is also playing a significant role in the conservation of threatened fauna and flora.

It is a founder member of both the Groenlandberg Conservancy and the Green Mountain Eco Route, which were established to promote conserving the natural habitats of the region. The Estate is adding to these by rehabilitating alien-infested mountain areas. Work has also begun to compile a species list of the mountain fynbos. Already five Red Data plant species have been identified, including the very rare *Linconia Cuspidata* of the *Bruniaceae* family.

Although Oak Valley leases cellar space from its neighbouring farm, Paul Cluver Wines, the cellar was required to meet the 75% threshold of the

Integrated Production of Wine (IPW) criteria. Estate Manager Pieter Visser said most of the IPW procedures had previously been put in place due to the fact that Oak Valley was exporting fruit. "One has to produce evidence of the consultants one used, rootstocks, etc. so if one keeps good records, the IPW process is not difficult."



Making Better Wine The Sustainable Way

One of BWI's newest Champions is Waterkloof, which is situated on Schapenberg Hill in the Helderberg sub-region, just 4 km from the False Bay coast. With the highest point on Waterkloof 300 m above sea level, the slopes of Schapenberg boast a myriad of variations in topography.

Werner Engelbrecht is Waterkloof's viticulturist and

winemaker. He said, "At Waterkloof we are committed to the preservation of our unique heritage, having set aside almost 50% of our farm for conservation purposes." He added that measures were introduced to complement sustainable farming practices. These range from introducing a formal nature conservation plan, biological pest control and erosion control measures

to installing drip irrigation, clearing some 45 ha of alien invasive plants and re-establishing natural vegetation in previously disturbed areas.

Indigenous vegetation is used for landscaping, corridors have been established to allow species to migrate between isolated areas of natural vegetation and perches for birds of prey were installed to facilitate natural rodent control

measures. Winter cover crops are mulched to create a healthy environment for the natural predators of vine pests.

"We measure the benefits associated with sustainable farming in terms of avoided costs, such as energy and water savings. Strong agricultural outputs also contribute to offset the costs associated with conservation, such as healthy soils, good water infiltration, enhanced productivity and a larger degree of self-sustained pest control," Werner explained.

"In our experience the application of biodynamic farming practices in the vineyards complements our conservation approach outside the vineyards, leading to a healthier ecosystem that is starting to approach a healthy balance. We believe that we can make intrinsically better wine this way and enhance the quality of life for all that works on the farm."



New BWI label



Since its launch in May this year, the BWI label has received a warm welcome from both wine producers and consumers.

The label identifies and endorses wines which have been produced in accordance with BWI's conservation requirements. The label is displayed prominently on the front of wine bottles or alternatively incorporated as logo on the wine bottle's backlabel.

According to Inge Kotze, BWI Project Coordinator, "The importance of the label is that it empowers retailers, wine buyers and consumers to favour wines which are contributing to the long term conservation of critical natural habitats and species in the Western Cape winelands."

"Wine producers like it because it highlights their ongoing commitment to conservation and consumers like it because it helps them make informed decisions."

BWI is engaging with key retailers and restaurants to support and showcase BWI members. Kirstenbosch Gardens is the first of the botanical gardens to stock only BWI compliant wines. Watch this space in the next edition for exciting new developments! Please contact Inge Kotze (ikotze@wwf.org.za) should you like to know more about ordering and using this label.



Take a Hike

The Green Mountain Eco Route, a biodiversity and wine route, offers scenic beauty, natural diversity, a wide range of wine styles and varied activities around the Groenlandberg, through the Elgin Valley, over the Theewaterskloof Dam and down the Bot River.

From September, visitors will be able to enjoy these attractions on foot when the Route opens its five-day guided hiking trail called "Take a Hike". Wander along vineyards, hike through acres of fynbos, enjoy meals made from locally grown produce and stay at four-star guest houses.

All Green Mountain Eco Route members also belong to the Groenlandberg Conservancy and are committed to conservation, sustainability and social upliftment. The wine growers and grape producers amongst them are BWI members or Champions.

Read more at www.greenmountain.co.za

Hartenberg recreates itself on the www



You'll find everything you need to know about BWI member Hartenberg on its stunning new website at www.hartenbergestate.com. Whether you're looking for the specifications of each of its wines or actions taken to protect the environment, it's all there.


Since their purchase of Hartenberg in 1986, the Mackenzies have intensified conservation efforts, including the clearing of alien invasive vegetation. Hartenberg has a pure water source flowing through

the entire length of the property into a pristine wetland system. This wetland occupies 65 of the farm's 170 ha and plays host to dozens of creatures (like rare frogs) and birds such as the furtive African Sedge Warbler.

The good news is that Hartenberg completed work on a 2 km wetland trail, so you can explore it for yourself. The Estate will even pack you a picnic rucksack (remember to book in advance) so you can stop and relax along the way.

Please note: BWI has moved offices to

New contacts details:



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Waverley Hills gee die pas aan

Waverley Hills aan die voet van die Witzenbergreeks naby Wolseley is nie net bekend vir sy organiese wyn en voeseldprodukte nie, maar spog reeds met twee interpreterende staproetes.

Die voetpaaie, waarvan een sowat 1,2 km en die ander 4,7 km lank is, is langs 'n helder stroom geleë. Inligtingsborde vertoon die name en interessante besonderhede van inheemse plante. Een roete kan ook met fietse aangepak word.

Besoekers aan Waverley Hills kan hulle verlustig aan die tuin, wat in vier 'kamers' uitgelê is. Dit verteenwoordig medisinale

plante, fynbos van die hoërliggende gebiede, fynbos van die veld, die rivierstroom en, laastens, renosterveld. Die tuin is die handwerk van landskapsargitek Johann van Biljon.

Johan reken: "Ons is gelukkig om unieke tipes plantegroei in die omgewing te hê. Ons het slegs inheemse plante vir ons tuin gebruik en het selfs Breede rooivlerkies ingebring vir die visdam. Dis 'n hoogs bedreigde inheemse visspesie uit die omgewing. Daar word ook tans planne beraam om saam met CapeNature 'n bewarea van hier tot by Tulbagh tot stand te bring."



CALENDAR

BWI members, please feel free to send us all eco-tourism or marketing events happening on your farms and we'll spread the word!

10 September 2008

Take a trip on the Ghoema Route along the R44 from Paternoster to Gansbaai. The Route will showcase its tourist delights, including products and services, leisure and lifestyle at the exhibition centre at L'Avenir between Stellenbosch and Klappmuts. The morning session is open to the trade, while the afternoon is open to the public. Read more at www.ghoemaroete.co.za

12, 19, 22 September

CAPE WINE international media tours focusing on BWI will be undertaken to areas such as Franschhoek, Slanghoek/ Breedekloof and Somerset West.

19 – 21 September

Vier lente by die Darling Veldblommefees, waar die verskeidenheid, grootte en kleur van die veldblomme verstommend is. Die blomme weerspieël die geografiese verskeidenheid van die veld in die gebied, soos Sandveld, Strandveld, Renosterveld en Rietveld. Lees meer by www.darlingwildflowers.co.za

23 – 25 September

More than 300 wineries will exhibit over 4 000 wines at the fifth biennial Cape Wine trade show at the Cape Town International Convention Centre. BWI will be hosting a stand at this event, as well as a seminar entitled "We are the champions". Read more at www.capewine2008.co.za

10 - 12 Oktober

Breedekloof Buitelugfees bied vanjaar vir die vyfde keer wyn, voedsel, avontuur en musiek aan. Lees meer by www.breedekloof.com

24 – 28 September

Look out for the BWI/Green Mountain Eco-Route stall at the Sustainable Living Expo on Market Square, Hermanus! The Expo is part of the Hermanus Whale Festival. Read more at www.whalefestival.co.za

13 & 27 September

Paul Cluver Hike. This event is so popular that it is already fully booked!! Keep your eye on www.cluver.com for future events and opportunities.

4 & 25 October

Paul Cluver Hike – fully booked. (Keep your eye on www.cluver.com for future events.)

We gratefully acknowledge our BWI funders!

