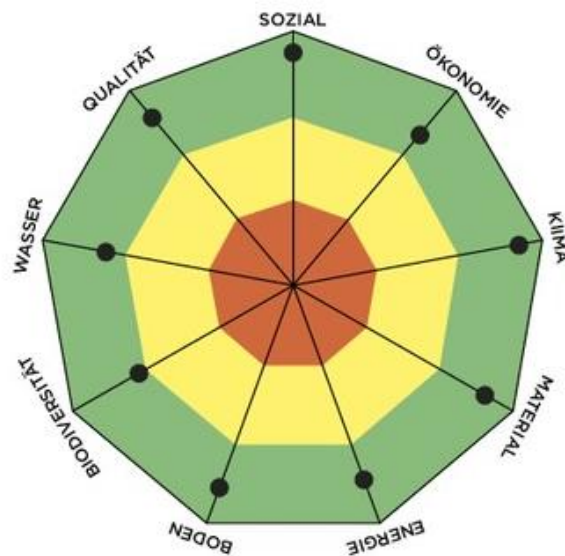




Certification System – Online Tool

The certification system of Sustainable Austria („Nachhaltig Austria“) represents the three pillars of sustainability (ecology, economy and social issues) and evaluates more than 340 activities involved in the production of wine. This evaluation system is being made available to wine producers from The Austrian Winegrowers' Association as an online tool. By means of this it is possible for an establishment to anonymously submit their operational activities and see the computer automation of the effect that their practices have upon soils, biodiversity, water, use of materials, climate, energy and quality, as well as effects in the social and economic sectors. For every activity it is made clear if a grower's actions are considered to be more or less sustainable, compared with alternative means and measures. When the sum of all evaluations surpasses a specified level, the establishment is rated 'sustainable' and can then be certified. Depiction of the analysis is made on a spider graph according to the 'traffic light' system.



The certification tool is designed as a dynamic system, in order to support and facilitate further development.

Sustainability goals of Sustainable Austria:

In order to achieve the certification 'Sustainable Austria', a majority of the following objectives must be achieved. These targets will be listed under the headings

- Grape Growing
- Wine Production
- Establishment of New Vineyards
- Social Issues
- Economics



Grape Growing

UTILISATION OF MACHINERY

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

implement an appropriate use of machinery, and reduce the number of passages through the vineyards to the bare minimum necessary by such means as combining technical appliances.

integrate the use of regionally produced canola oil as fuel, and reduce its consumption to the least amount required.

FOLIAGE CANOPY AND CLUSTER MANAGEMENT

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

do their pruning predominately by hand.

remove vine stems by manual and mechanical means, avoiding chemical agents.

cultivate a tall foliage canopy.

avoid excessive extensive thinning and defoliation.

practise manual cluster reduction and partitioning, and avoid chemical means of reduction, with no thinning-out of excessive overhang.

practise manual harvesting in multiple passes.

USE OF WATER

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

favour drip-irrigation and avoid crown irrigation.

cultivate water conservation measures by means of intensive greenery management, such as partial turnover of the soil, cover crops.

implement appropriate irrigation methods with reference to recorded observations and measurements.

SUPPLY OF NUTRIENTS

Sustainable Austria wine producers...

have at least 50% of their area under vines analysed by means of soil sample testing at five-year intervals.

practise needs-oriented fertilising.



implement organic fertilising with manure, compost, straw, mulched tree bark or organic commercial fertilisers according to legal tenets (for example, the Nitrates Directive, the Austrian Compost Ordinance) in their vineyards.

cultivate autumn/winter vegetation for at least four months, spring/summer vegetation three months.

prefer biennial and perennial vegetation.

PLANT PROTECTION

Sustainable Austria wine producers...

use certified application equipment.

prefer spraying equipment with recycling or sensor technology, axial fans for spraying with least possible waste, and avoid using large-area sprayers and other implements involving blowers.

install drift-reducing nozzles.

shape the foliage canopy by means of manual thinning, timely topping or moderate defoliation for optimal plant protection.

practise ecologically sound cultivation and undertake the most limited measures possible against fungal pests during the vegetation period.

practise organic cultivation and forgo use of insecticides and undertake the most limited measures possible against animal pests during the vegetation period.

practise biotechnical measures such as setting out hormone-confusion ampules to combat the grapevine moth.

avoid the application of growth regulators.

introduce ground cover in the vine space.

introduce host plants for beneficial organisms among the vegetation.

depending on region and vintage, protect the harvest material against the depredations of birds by culturo-technical rather than chemical measures.

depending on region and vintage, protect the harvest material against the depredations of wasps by culturo-technical rather than chemical measures.

depending on region and vintage, protect the harvest material against hail damage by culturo-technical rather than chemical measures.

perform an appropriate degree of soil cultivation in the vine space, and reduce use of herbicides to a minimum.

perform an appropriate degree of soil cultivation in the tractor lanes between vines, and avoid use of herbicides.



PROMOTING BIODIVERSITY

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

make a practice of creating Biodiversity Reports for their vineyards.

create new or maintain current vineyard areas where biodiversity is encouraged, to the greatest degree possible.

undertake additional measures for encouraging biodiversity, such as adding or maintaining habitats for beneficial organisms, stone walls, bird houses, bird-of-prey perches.

WINE PRODUCTION

ECOLOGICAL BALANCE AND CO₂ EMISSIONS

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

actively participate in preparing data toward establishment of a potential system of indicators for generating ecological assessments.

observe currently available information in making their decisions with regard to energy, climate (CO₂ and other gases), soil, water, use of raw materials and biodiversity as well as pollutants toxic to humans and the environment, seeking to implement recommended practises.

ENERGY USAGE

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

record precise information concerning their energy usage.

use buildings rated in Energy Classes A, A+ and A++, as well as preferring earth cellars.

convert to lighting that conserves energy.

practice passive consumption of energy.

apply control devices that optimise use of energy.

obtain reliable advice concerning usage of energy and water, and implement recommended practices within five years.

constantly examine and maintain machines and other equipment, and keep the operator's manuals for machines and the estate's operating handbook current.

implement application of renewable sources of energy, and where possible use their own facilities for production of energy.

strive to attain self-sufficiency in matters of energy.

favour the uses of power/thermal couplings.



if possible, utilise heat exchangers with coupling.

implement use of Green power from the grid.

conduct quality-oriented temperature control of maceration; avoid extended maceration periods or high-temperature short-term macerations

CELLAR MANAGEMENT

Sustainable Austria wine producers...

prefer to work without chaptalisation, avoiding the use of cryoextraction, reverse osmosis, vacuum evaporators, must concentrates and sucrose.

avoid application of measures designed to eliminate heavy metals (for example, blue fining).

avoid the use of sorbic acid, DMDC and/or lysozyme.

favour clarifying the must of white wines.

utilise fining agents to remedy faults only in the least measure absolutely necessary.

filter wines in the gentlest way possible, and as little as possible.

when possible prepare the lees with regenerative filter materials, or altogether without.

when possible avoid the application of allergenic protein-based wine treatment agents.

when possible practice only natural – and only with permissible wine treatment agents, or none at all – tartaric stabilisation

store wines and bottles in an appropriate manner.

sterilise bottles professionally.

prefer cold bottling with professional equipment.

bottle wines in lightweight glass.

prefer appropriate closures such as natural cork.

prefer to utilise the most environmentally friendly packaging possible.

avoid cleaning agents containing chlorine.

prefer conscientious use of water-efficient techniques for cleansing (for example, the CIP method).



WASTE WATER, REFUSE AND OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

pursue a clear course of wastewater management, such as full treatment, wastewater neutralisation, processing with sedimentation tanks or discharge by means of a wastewater discharge contract.

create measures whereby packaging, glass and other waste materials obtained through recycling and reutilisation are brought into the production process.

create measures for the appropriate disposal of residual waste and dangerous waste materials.

as far as possible compost waste materials in-house, and apply this compost to the vineyard.

keep regular records concerning cellar practices, transportation of wine and bulletins.

keep a bottling audit trail, conforming to prepackaging regulations, and a batch report.

keep records on the maintaining of foodstuff security (such as HACCP).

ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW VINEYARDS

TERROIR

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

plant vineyards preferably in south-facing sites, as well as on plateaus or on plains.

avoid planting vineyards in unsuitable marginal areas such as cold-retentive microclimates.

prefer soils with up to 80% sand (gravel) content or up to 40% clay.

SOIL AND EROSION PROTECTION

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

implement a needs-oriented and appropriate system of drainage.

implement appropriate construction of terraces, especially on hillsides sloping more than 26%, or implement other measures such as planting oats or grass as 'nurse crops'.

ensure in instances where the incline on steeply sloped sites is greater than 26%, that measures for erosion protection are instituted.

construct stone walls as supplementary measures when there is a minimum of 26% incline.



SEEDS AND SEEDLINGS

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

prefer certified and select seeds and seedlings.

avoid seeds and seedlings that are neither certified, selected, officially evaluated nor come from outside their own growing region.

consider recommended and (PIWI=fungus resistant) proven varieties for extensive cultivation of new plantations.

choose appropriate rootstocks for their new plantings.

TRELLISING

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

establish a trunk height supportive of quality for training their vines.

plant their vines with appropriate vine-density.

establish a tall trellis height for an optimal foliage canopy.

choose an appropriate anchoring staff for support.

choose an appropriate rod for support.

GRUBBING UP, SOIL REHABILITATION AND PREPARATION

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

remove the old plantings in appropriate fashion and allow the site to lie fallow for one vegetation period.

attempt soil rehabilitation via an intervening interval of at least two years lying fallow.

reduce the number of passages through the parcel in order to avoid compacting of the soil, with its attendant effects.

prepare the soil in an appropriate manner before planting.

research the vineyard to be planted by means of soil analyses.

conduct a programme of at-need fertilisation.

implement organic fertilising with manure, compost, straw, mulched tree bark or organic commercial fertilisers according to legal tenets (for example, the Nitrates Directive, the Austrian Compost Ordinance) in their vineyards.

cultivate autumn/winter vegetation of at least four months growth

cultivate spring/summer vegetation of at least three months growth.



avoid having naked ground in the vineyard

PLANTING AND CULTIVATION

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

plant their vineyard in a workmanlike manner.

supply the young plants with water in the course of the planting process.

prefer to utilise drip-irrigation and avoid crown irrigation.

plant groundcover crops in the vine area.

perform appropriate cultivation of the soil in the first year of growth in the vine area, and attempt to avoid any application of herbicides.

conduct appropriate and measured cultivation of the soil in the tractor-lane between vines and avoid application of herbicides.

SUPPORTING BIODIVERSITY

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

create a biodiversity report for each vineyard parcel.

lay out new, or maintain existing, high-biodiversity vineyard areas whenever/wherever possible.

undertake additional measures for encouraging biodiversity, such as adding or maintaining habitats for beneficial organisms, stone walls, bird houses, bird-of-prey perches.

SOCIAL ISSUES

FAIR PAY

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

try to implement an overpayment of the collectively agreed minimum wage

guarantee no unobjective difference in salary among employees, but in particular pay the same wage for the same work done to both Austrian citizens and foreign workers, as well as to both men and women.



SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

duly declare all remuneration – minor or otherwise – paid for the work of obligated employees with the authorities of social security according to law.

attempt to establish the company's own pension scheme within the corresponding framework regulations and the realm of possibility, in addition to legally mandated provisions for employees.

QUALIFICATION, TRAINING AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

substantiate that they promote continuing professional development for senior staff members for at least two workdays, or assign a minimum figure of 2% of gross salary for purposes of training. (jährlich, oder? falls ja, dann 'each year' nach dem wort 'workdays')

demonstrably conduct employee-training sessions in the workplace for at least two working days. (hier wieder? falls ja, dann 'each year' nach 'working days')

employ a managing director who has at least sixteen hours of continuing education annually.

employ a managing director with a professional qualification of at least EQR 3.

PROMOTING A POSITIVE WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

verifiably conduct regular employee reviews.

given a certain minimum number of employees, establish within the company the position of 'confidant', who will function as contact person and communications facilitator for employee concerns.

INTEGRATION

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

regard negatively any failure to establish a company council, despite obligations specified by the Works Constitution Act (if more than five persons).

make a point of employing persons over 55 years of age and those long-term unemployed, with a target of 50%.

attempt to procure supplies and services produced or made via employment of the disabled or long-term unemployed.



OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

annually prepare and submit documents (concerning safety and health), evaluating hazards in the workplace (prepared with assistance of safety experts and occupational physicians).

prioritise the instillation of prevention and warning systems for toxic levels of CO₂ in the fermentation cellar.

guarantee adequate protection against noise.

ensure adequate qualification and protection for workers during the storage and handling of plant protection products.

ensure adequate qualification and protection for workers during the storage and handling of cleaning agents.

ensure the general protection of those most vulnerable.

guarantee adequate protection against falls and other dangers developing in the course of executing work.

ensure adequate safety standards in the maintenance of electrical systems.

conduct conscientious maintenance of machines and other equipment according to their protection- and safety regulations.

ECONOMICS

SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

create customer satisfaction analyses.

analyse past development and seek to present future strategies in a report (operational analysis).

seek to determine potential for economic improvement.

create a risk analysis.

ascertain and report key figures relevant to their operation.

ascertain and report figures concerning costs and revenues.

maintain secured acceptance of grapes and wine.

utilise and provide machine sharing with other producers

participate in at least one relevant operational activity outside the region. (jedes Jahr?, dann 'every year' nach dem Wort 'region')



PROMOTION OF REGIONALITY

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

contribute to regional development and regional security.

offer regular cellar-door sales.

figure government grants against contributions of the company to the common good, which must meet a corresponding percentage.

strive to attain management of a traditional wine estate (minimum 30 years).

prioritise as follows in the procurement of machines and equipment, as well as with service contracts for machines and equipment involved in maintenance of the operation:
local area before region, region before superordinate area.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainable Austria wine producers ...

promote the acquisition of 'clean' services from likewise fair and 'sustainable' third parties.

prefer to obtain services from business with proven environmental and social standards of certification.