

Dry Farmed Wine



Dry Farmed Wine, Domaine Gioulis, Greece

The buzz words surrounding organic wine continue to ebb and flow over time, with some of the more popular phrases like “raw wine,” “sustainable,” and “natural,” suddenly losing favor to an old-yet-new-again term “**dry farmed wine**.” At their core, most consumers believe all these terms indicate wines that are made without the use of pesticides or other toxic chemicals, have little or no additives, such as sulfites, and minimal intervention in the production process. We have always been of the belief that [USDA certified organic](#) is the gold standard for “green” wines and we remain dedicated to suppliers who adhere to these rigorous regulations, which are recognized around the world. But let us take a moment to define and address the latest buzz words, “**dry farmed wine**.”

What Is Dry Farmed Wine?

The textbook definition of a “dry farmer” is one who never irrigates his vines, no matter the conditions. With no regulated standards, the definition has been evolving, and may include farmers who irrigate only in emergency situations. This is referred to as “rescue irrigation.” In these instances, the farmer is saving his crops or vines from death, with tough drought conditions and no rain in the forecast.

Vineyard growers dedicated to dry farming in the Willamette Valley of Oregon have created the [Deep Roots Coalition](#). They believe that “Wine should reflect the place from which it emanates: its *terroir*.” They believe that in many cases, irrigation prevents the true expression of the grape. Winemakers who are members of the Deep Roots Coalition believe that “a winemaker’s job is simply to ensure that the grapevines don’t die; beyond this, it’s the *terroir*’s job to handle the rest of the growing process.”

Our European winery partners who are dedicated to practicing **Dry Farmed Wines** include [Biokult](#) in Austria, [Domaine Gioulis](#) in Greece, [Vignobles Raymond](#) in France, [Pratello](#) in the Lake Garda region of Italy and [Fattoria di Romignano](#) in Tuscany.



Dry Farmed Wines, Biodynamic Biokult, Austria

In Austria, the Demeter Biodynamic regulations call for non-irrigation, with only rescue irrigation when absolutely required. Biokult tells us that they have only had to ask for exceptions 2 or 3 times in the past ten years, with the last 3 vintages using absolutely no irrigation.

According to [Vinfoлио](#), “Dry farming isn’t “dry” in the sense that the vines never receive any water; instead, dry farmers want the shallowest roots to remain dry while the lower roots suck up water trapped deep below the ground. This speeds up the vine’s maturity, allowing it to take on a more traditional Rhone-style set of flavors that is unlike the very bold,

Dry farming techniques, especially when combined with organic and Biodynamic production methods, can result in lower overall yield, but grapes that have less concentrated sugar and produce “drier” wines.

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Dry Farmed Wine, Vignobles Raymond, Bordeaux

Which Brings us to Other Potential Definitions of Dry Farmed Wine

For some, the definition of **dry farmed wine** extends to only wines with lower residual sugar and alcohol content. Our [Les Hauts de Lagarde Bordeaux Blanc](#) from Vignobles Raymond, and both [Chianti Naturale](#) and [Pizzolato Chianti](#) from Tuscany meet these criteria. **Dry farmed wine** is often produced to be a drier wine that doesn't hide the true taste of place behind a big, bold wine that is both high in alcohol and residual sugar. This trend has certainly found its way into many of the wines in our portfolio. But not all consumers are looking for a completely dry wine, and prefer a sweeter palate. Those who desire wines which are lower in alcohol and sugar content have many to choose from.

Both organic and **dry farmed wine** have been tied to being "better for your health" as well as being wines that don't cause hangovers. While the jury is still out as to what in wine (and other forms of alcohol) actually causes hangovers, factors that can have a positive effect in producing **hangover-free wines** may include

- Minimal to no use of sulfites-our wines range from 10-100ppm and most are under 30ppm
- No chemical additives-forbidden in organic and Biodynamic production
- Lower histamine content-red wines have more histamines than white; our Spanish producer Bodegas Iranzo monitors the histamine levels of their black grapes and harvests before they get too high
- Lower sugar content-drinking a whole bottle of Moscato yourself is never a good idea!
- Lower Alcohol content-or simply drink less wine!
- And remember to hydrate with water-alcohol dehydrates the body and dehydration is a very likely hangover culprit

We believe that cleaner wines, produced with organic and Biodynamic practices, leave many feeling better at the end of the night, and the next day.

Why Aren't All Organic Wineries Producing Dry Farmed Wine?

In certain regions of Europe and South America, our winery partners have found it to be impossible to farm without irrigation.

Enologist and engineer Carlos Alberte, who serves as Agricultural Director for [Bodegas Matarromera](#) in the Castilla y Leon area of Spain explains, "We don't practice dry farming as a philosophy, because our position in this matter is that irrigation, when used properly and responsibly, can increase quality without increasing quantity. We don't position ourselves in a black or white situation. We evaluate all the analytics we have from weather stations, controlling the humidity of the land, and physical examination of the vines, to assess if a little irrigation is needed in order to avoid harm to the plant. We are in an extremely dry area, so there are years when we don't use it and years when we do, it all depends on the needs of the vines and the weather and humidity characteristics of each year."



Snowmelt irrigation for Chakana Winery,

[Cantina Pizzolato](#) in the Veneto region of Italy says, "The local agriculture is based on the use of irrigation. During this 2017 production year the regions that are not yet allowed to use irrigation have lost about 30% of production. No water means no life. Our irrigation system uses [hydrogeological \(ground\) water](#) that conveys water in the vineyards through an automated system, optimizing its use and avoiding waste. In general, all grape varieties were healthy with large grains and heavy bunches, with a moderate degree of sweetness and acidity."

[Chakana](#) winery in the heart of Mendoza, Argentina, makers of our newest line of Inkarri Biodynamic wines explains, "We only irrigate with snow melted surface water, which is the equivalent to dry farming in a desert condition. Other factors have proven to be beneficial for health, such as the quantity of polyphenols, which is normally very high in high altitude sunny climates such as ours. We believe wine is a drink of pleasure, not a medicine."

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All of our Dry Farm Wines are available at fine retailers and restaurants nationwide:



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