



HOP KILN WINERY

DAVID SMITH, VINEYARD MANAGER
HOP KILN WINERY
HKG & Hop Kiln Wines

It seems that agriculture, farming fruit and grape growing have always been an integral part of David Smith's life. Born in 1979, David is the fifth generation in his family to be involved with agriculture in Sonoma County. Dating back to the 1800's his great, great grandparents grew prunes in Santa Rosa, California. His great grandfather and grandfather also grew prunes, as well as raising sheep. In addition, his father is the Assistant Agriculture commissioner for Sonoma County. David now brings his talent and expertise to Hop Kiln Winery.

David spent time in his youth working and learning about farming, which ultimately inspired him to attend California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo. In 2003, David graduated with a degree in Fruit Sciences. Through college, and after graduation, David spent summers from 2000 to 2005 working as the Assistant Vineyard Manager at Napa Valley's highly regarded Ferrari Carrano winery.

From 2006 to 2007, David worked at Cosentino Winery, also in the Napa Valley, as the Ranch Manager, followed by a year as the Vineyard Manager at Fort Ross Vineyard in San Francisco. His knack lies in being able to see the big vineyard picture, working closely with nature and being extremely in tune with a vineyard's topography.

Favoring the Sonoma area with its small agriculture community and neighborly qualities, David was referred to Hop Kiln Winery in 2008. David Di Loreto, CEO for Vero Westside LLC, recognized this fresh young talent, believing that David was the right vineyard manager to move Hop Kiln toward the future of growing its burgeoning estate model. David is responsible for growing the ranch's premium HKG Chardonnay and Pinot Noir grapes. With 47 bearing acres and 20 newly planted on the property,

David is responsible for mapping the vineyards, specific site selection for varietals, planting and maintaining the vines and producing the highest quality fruit as possible. The sheer potential of what lies ahead for Hop Kiln vineyards is what sealed the deal for Smith. “Working with whole acres of young vines; the variety of topography including mountains, sandy loam and rocks; being able to find the right clones, vines and soils that will ultimately produce the characteristics in the varietals that we are seeking; this is what makes managing Hop Kiln such a dream” says David.

Sparing no expense on equipment in 2009, Hop Kiln Winery stepped into the forefront of mechanical technology purchasing a French-made, Pellenc 4560 Multifunction tractor. This impressive tractor has the capabilities of performing multiple vineyard functions from a single platform. “We can now work multiple rows at the same time, and simply attach new implements such as the three row sprayer. We have also invested in a mechanical leaf pulling machine which opens the canopy to light and air movement, a vital cultural practice that enhances fruit character and development” says David. “Though the biggest mechanical advantage we now have is the Pellenc Selectiv Picking Machine. This is without question the Bentley of mechanical harvesters. In 2009, our new picking machine will give us the ability to harvest our 35 acres at their peak with speed and precision.”

David has an amazing natural ability in the vineyard as if he senses just what it is that the fruit and vines need and how to care for them. Combining modern farming with this renowned soil on Westside Road allows Smith to see huge future potential in the years to come. Judging by the inaugural vintages, the successes will definitely continue making Hop Kiln Winery one to watch in Sonoma County.

###