



Harry Wetzel

Head of Operations / Family Partner



When you are born into a family business and the “office” is just outside your back door, the chances are pretty good you will be put to work at a very early age. And so it was for Harry Wetzel IV, whose grandparents started Alexander Valley Vineyards and whose parents, Hank and Linda Wetzel, founded the winery.

At the age of 5, Harry was already in the vineyards that surrounded his house, picking grapes. At the age of 13, his father decided he needed to learn other parts of the business. He worked in the shipping department and then later in the vineyard, installing an irrigation system and developing a new vineyard block.

Today, Harry is one of the third generation working at the family owned winery. “For me, being part of a family business means continuing the traditions my grandfather and father started at the winery and in the community,” Harry says. “It’s also a matter of preserving the integrity of the Wetzel family name. It’s a lot to live up to given the work the rest of my family has done, but I see it as a fun challenge.”

Prior to graduation from UC Davis with a degree in viticulture and enology he worked at Kendall-Jackson’s Geyserville location handling quality control on the bottling line and overseeing the crush pad during harvest. After graduation he joined a Napa lab as an enologist where he did chemical analysis on wine, consulting with wineries and home winemakers around the country.

He officially joined Alexander Valley Vineyards in 2002 and was named Assistant Winemaker in 2004. Over the years his position has evolved and he was named Head of Operations. His principal duties include working with growers and keeping a close eye on the vineyards - from pruning to irrigation. Those responsibilities have already paid dividends, making growers more accountable for the fruit they deliver, which has improved the quality of the wine.

“For me, it’s all about making the right decisions from producing the highest quality wine that we can, to volunteering in our community,” Harry says. Outside of the winery I am actively involved as a Board Member in the Sonoma County Vintners Coop as well as the Wine Road. As a family, we have always supported community service and I want to encourage the involvement of other wine families. My family lives and works in the Alexander Valley and we want it to be a great place for the next generation. Harry and his wife, Rebecca, live with their two children on the Wetzel Family Estate.

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