

THE ENVIRONMENT

A BOOK TO BOOST YOUR GREEN IQ

Down to Earth: A Seasonal Tour of Sustainable Winegrowing in California

By Janet Fletcher; photography by George Rose (Wine Institute, \$40, 256 pages)

Sustainability never looked so good as in *Down to Earth*, an informative new coffee table book for wine lovers that's packed with enticing photography of vineyards full of flowering plants, beautiful birds, lush grapes, adorable weed-grazing sheep and goats, and the people who farm these plots.

Created to showcase the work of the California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance, the book highlights 15 of the state's winegrowers, representing small and large businesses, green pioneers and newer converts. Located in warm appellations and foggy, cool-climate ones, they all face their own challenges.

The book is divided by season into four main sections. For wine lovers, these descriptions—accompanied by close-up photos showing steps such as budbreak, flowering and fruit set—provide insight into what's happening in the vineyards and wineries at each point of the year. But don't look to this book for a critical analysis of what California's wine industry has accomplished or what remains to be done in terms of sustainability.

Napa-based food writer and cookbook author Janet Fletcher sets the tone with a friendly, accessible introduction and a two-page summary of key aspects of sustainable, organic and biodynamic farming. There's no eco-jargon and no lecturing, just matter-of-fact explanations of what winegrowers do and why.

Anyone can enjoy the sweeping vineyard vistas photographed by George Rose, an award-winning photojournalist. Tying sustainability in with enjoyment of the good life, the book wraps up with 12 seasonal recipes to pair with California-grown wine varieties.

—D.N.

