

SUSTAINABLE WINEGROWING AT HENNESSY

STRONG COMMITMENTS AND CERTIFICATION FOR EXCELLENCE



PICTURES TO DOWNLOAD 

THE VINEYARD IS OUR FIRST AND FOREMOST PRODUCTION TOOL

MAISON HENNESSY HAS BEEN COMMITTED TO PROTECTING ITS PRODUCTS, ITS SAVOIR-FAIRE AND ITS TRADES RELATING TO THE LAND AND SOIL FOR OVER 250 YEARS. IT IS THUS ACTIVELY REDUCING THE IMPACT THAT WINEGROWING HAS ON PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

IT ALSO HAS ITS OWN 180-HECTARE VINEYARD WHERE IT TRIALS PIONEERING SOLUTIONS THEN TRANSFERS THEM TO PARTNER WINEGROWERS.

A VINEYARD IS ALIVE. IT IS EXPOSED TO THE CLIMATE (AND CLIMATE CHANGE), DISEASES AND PESTS. IT NEEDS CAREFUL TENDING TO YIELD FIRST-CLASS GRAPES. VINES CHANGE WITH THE SEASONS, AND EACH WINEGROWING CYCLE IS DIFFERENT, SO WE HAVE TO ADAPT WITH SENSITIVITY TO THE VINEYARD'S NEEDS WHILE COMPLYING WITH ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS.

OUR COMMITMENTS

REINVENTING OUR WINEGROWING MODEL WHILE PROTECTING VINEYARDS IN NEW WAYS

- ◆ Reduce our environmental footprint.
- ◆ Preserve the plant life we have inherited, to pass it on to the next generations.

AIMING TO SHOW THE WAY IN SUSTAINABLE WINEGROWING

- ◆ 2015: the indiscriminate use of weed killer was banned from all contracts Hennessy negotiates with its partners; this principle was added to Cognac specifications and requirements in 2021.

- ◆ 2016: Hennessy earned HVE-3 certification and introduced confined spraying techniques in Hennessy vineyards.
- ◆ 2018: we apply confined spraying.
- ◆ 2021: zero herbicides used in Hennessy vineyards, which have earned level 3* High Environmental Value (HVE) certification. A total of 138 operations will have earned Cognac Environmental Certification* (CEC) and HVE certification in vineyards within the AOC area, including 89 Hennessy partners, by the end of 2021.
- ◆ 2025: 100% of partners will have earned CEC.
- ◆ 2028: zero herbicides used in 100% of partner winegrowing operations.

OUR APPROACH

REDUCE THE USE OF CHEMICAL INPUTS

- ◆ Cut back on chemical weeding: grass the space between vineyard rows, weed the ends of rows mechanically.
- ◆ Closely monitor the vineyard's health with a combination of firsthand observation, state-of-the-art decision-support tools and enlisting outside expertise.
- ◆ Consider all the options to choose the products that have the least impact on people and the planet.
- ◆ Confine spraying (with panels to recover excess product).
- ◆ Use less insecticide and more natural alternative methods such as mating disruption*.
- ◆ Recover byproducts.

FOSTER BIODIVERSITY

- ◆ Agroforestry projects using bushy hedges and isolated trees to create ecological corridors.

- ◆ Sow plant covers and leave land fallow to restore our ecosystems.
- ◆ Upgrade landscape quality.

GOOD NEIGHBORLY RELATIONS

- ◆ Stay clear of untreated plots.
- ◆ Treat plots at suitable times of the day.
- ◆ Keep vineyard workers safe.
- ◆ Show respect for neighbors, host meetings to keep them informed.

MANAGE EFFLUENTS

- ◆ Comply with standards relating to effluents (organic and waste from plant-health products).
- ◆ Apply best practices for rinsing, collecting and treating effluents.

OUR KEY MEASURES

SOIL

The Maison has launched several programs to achieve its goal, i.e. phasing out herbicides entirely from its vineyards by 2021 and from its partners' vineyards by 2028:

- ◆ It is already using several breakthroughs extensively—mechanical tilling, natural grassing (every other row) and using plant cover. (Note: Plant cover refers to a variety of plants sheltering soil permanently or temporarily.)
- ◆ Covering the ground limits erosion and nurtures life in the soil (grassing and plant cover both do this).

VINEYARD PESTS

Hennessy was the region's first Maison to trial and promote confined spraying systems with panels to recover excess plant-health product and avoid droplets drifting away.

This technique reduces the amount of product used by up to 30%. It is now widely used and, whenever possible, combined with biocontrol agents and other biological methods such as mating disruption*.

BIODIVERSITY

We also pay special attention to biodiversity and soil quality. Here, we are rolling out a pilot agroforestry project and agroecological infrastructure including bushy hedges and fallow land, and creating shelters for beneficial insects and wildlife. Grass covers 60% of the area of the vineyards. Some of the grass grows naturally but in some cases we plant it in selected areas to limit erosion and nurture life in the soil. In winter, 100% of the vineyard's soil is grassed.

R&D AT HENNESSY

“ANSWERING MATTER-OF-FACT QUESTIONS ABOUT PRODUCTION AND QUALITY, WHILE SHOWING THAT WE CARE FOR PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT”.

Hennessy's R&D teams are coordinating a number of research projects with academic and private-sector partners, covering a variety of topics ranging from eau-de-vie quality to sustainable development and on to the environment:

- ◆ **On the main wood diseases** hampering vine productivity (inhibiting grape growth) in Charente: this large-scale program in partnership with the INRAE (France's National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment) in Bordeaux brings together 25 researchers and is aimed at understanding the biological mechanisms of the fungi associated with wood diseases and the influence of vine-tending practices (especially pruning).
- ◆ **Vine adaptation to climate change:** funding a PhD thesis to determine the extent to which various vines can cope with droughts.
- ◆ **New vines:** the Maison and the Bureau National Interprofessionnel du Cognac are testing new resistant varieties among the wild vines that grow naturally in the area, with a view to cutting back on the use of phytosanitary inputs.

In addition to its long-term research endeavors, the Maison is testing pioneering, down-to-earth solutions in its own vineyards to deal with winegrowing issues in the nearer future. These include:

- ◆ **Robotics:** we are jointly developing an eco-responsible robot to treat the soil mechanically and move closer to the zero-herbicide goal.
- ◆ **Virtuous practices,** in particular involving pruning techniques and plant cover.
- ◆ **Antifreeze towers:** these mobile systems protect up to five hectares of vineyard by pushing warmer air down towards the buds, and are effective until temperatures drop to -4°C. Research nowadays is focused on reducing noise pollution.
- ◆ **Hail nets:** these systems are still in the experimental stage. They shield vineyards during hailstorms, but we do not yet have enough information about their impact on grape quality.
- ◆ **Biocontrol agents to reduce the use of phytopharmaceuticals.** (Note: Biocontrol encompasses all the methods to protect plants using natural mechanisms; the goal is to harness the interactions and other processes that govern relations between species and their natural surroundings.)

HENNESSY'S ACTION PLAN IS BEING ROLLED OUT WITH 1,600 PARTNER WINEGROWERS

Maison Hennessy has teamed up with all of its partners to keep the Cognac winegrowing region vibrant, and is working side by side with the people creating tomorrow's eaux-de-vie today, through a dynamic program that rotates with the seasons.

The Maison intends to rally all its partner winegrowers around its drive to make winegrowing more sustainable. How? With individual support, in particular as regards securing Cognac

Environmental Certification (CEC), which was designed by our industrial sector, then taking the next step with collective workshops to start building virtuous practices for the future.

Certification attests that winegrowers apply best practices. But securing it also involves a number of administrative formalities for applicants. The Maison is aware of this, and has therefore stepped up its support through Hennessy CEC communities, alongside seven partners in the winegrowing sector.

*LEARN MORE:

HVE-3 (HAUTE VALEUR ENVIRONNEMENTALE) CERTIFICATION is specifically for farming operations that are striving for particularly high environmental stewardship standards. Maison Hennessy earned it in 2016. This monitoring tool helps to direct the next steps in efforts to continue to foster biodiversity and cut back on the use of inputs.

CEC (COGNAC ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATION): combined CEC and HVE certification is an approach designed by the Bureau National Interprofessionnel du Cognac (BNIC), in association with the Charente and Charente-Maritime chambers of agriculture and the Institut Français de la Vigne et du Vin (IFV). It attests to and promotes winegrowers' pledges to consumers and neighbors, and their commitment to achieving excellence in winegrowing, which creates value while protecting the environment and resources.

MATING DISRUPTION: the Maison is trialing alternative approaches to ease parasite pressure while limiting the use of insecticides. For example, since 2012 we have been using pheromone capsules that disrupt reproductive cycles among specific butterflies that harm vines. This mating disruption technique needs to be used consistently over a large enough area to be effective. In other words, winegrowers need to work together to protect their plots properly. This practice is producing excellent results.

JAS HENNESSY & CO

THE ABUSE OF ALCOHOL CAN HARM YOUR HEALTH. PLEASE DRINK IN MODERATION.