



Media Contact
Stephanie Angelyn Casola
Prologue
stephanie@prologuedetroit.com

Shady Lane Cellars earns prestigious sustainability certification

Northern Michigan vineyard is only second in state to be SIP Certified

SUTTON'S BAY, MICH. (Oct. X, 2020) – The staff at [Shady Lane Cellars](#) have long made sustainable practices a priority in their business, and now their Leelanau-based vineyard is earning official recognition for those efforts.

Shady Lane Cellars' vineyard recently achieved Sustainability in Practice - or [SIP Certified](#) - status. It is the most in-depth sustainability program available for vineyards, and represents a rigorous program with strict, non-negotiable standards based on science and expert input, independent verification and transparency.

"In some regards it's truly a validation of the efforts our team puts forth and our focus on sustainability," said Rick DeBlasio, general manager at Shady Lane Cellars. "It adds credibility to our farming practices and our priorities as a business and a winery. I hope it helps bring more awareness to our region as a whole."

For a vineyard to achieve SIP Certified, they must farm in a way that protects both natural and human resources. The third-party evaluation process assesses a wide variety of areas that includes biodiversity and habitat, farm management, soil conservation, integrated pest management, water quality, energy conservation, air quality, fruit quality, social and community responsibility.

DeBlasio said the staff at Shady Lane Cellars had been interested in seeking an independent, third party certification for a few years and began researching programs that aligned with their values. They found SIP Certified and have been working toward achieving it since last winter.

"There are so many great things happening here on the Leelanau Peninsula with wine that are worth highlighting," DeBlasio said. "We know sustainability and products with a conscience are important to our consumers."

SIP Certified is based in Altascadero, Calif. and launched its program in 2008 with a focus on California's wine region. Shady Lane Cellars is only the second winery in Michigan to receive this designation. WaterFire Vineyards, near Torch Lake, Michigan, became the first location outside of California to achieve SIP Certified status in 2017.

"It is very exciting to have our second certified vineyard in Michigan," said Beth Vukmanic Lopez, SIP Certified manager. It is a pleasure to work with a vineyard dedicated to caring for the people and planet."

The SIP Certified process reviewed farming methods and sustainable practices on every level - from farm labor to agriculture, energy conservation to water quality. The SIP Certified label signals consumers to recognize they're buying sustainable wines that give back to the land and community on every level.

Earning SIP Certified status required extensive record-keeping, evidence and verification. Shady Lane Cellars submitted everything from wastewater records to grapevine origins, mowing records, seeds used to create wildflower plots, and business practices. The survey was highly detailed and included an on-site inspection to demonstrate its multi-level requirements.

Vineyard Manager Andy Fles worked on the project daily for more than four months, in addition to his other responsibilities. The vineyard intends to maintain this certification and hopes to add another for the winery itself. The staff will resubmit for this certification annually, and every three years will go through the extensive on-site inspection process as well.

DeBlasio believes this SIP Certified status is proof that Michigan's growing wine industry is gaining ground.

"Not only can we achieve this certification in a dramatically different growing environment, but a group based in California is willing to put its name on our vineyard here in Michigan. That is a real testament to our industry and to this state."

ABOUT SHADY LANE CELLARS

Located at 9580 E. Shady Lane in Suttons Bay, Mich., Shady Lane Cellars produces one of the largest percentages of estate-grown wine in its region. Offering hilltop views of the Leelanau Peninsula in northern Michigan, the winery and its staff create a comfortable approach to wine. The winery was founded in 1999. Since 2017 all Shady Lane Cellars wines are 100 percent estate-grown. Tours, tasting experiences, private events and a wine club membership are all available. Visit www.shadylanecellars.com. Connect on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#).

ABOUT SIP CERTIFIED

SIP Certified is a rigorous sustainable vineyard, winery and wine certification with strict, non-negotiable standards based on science and expert input, independent verification, transparency and absence of conflict of interest. Certification addresses the 3 P's of Sustainability – People, Planet, Prosperity – ensuring that both natural & human resources are protected. The rules, called Standards, require a measurable, holistic set of practices addressing habitat, water, energy, soil, recycling, air quality, packaging, pest management, social equity, and business management. Participants document over 50 requirements and implement practices to achieve 75% of the total

available points. Practices verified through independent records and on-site inspections, and receive final approval from an independent advisory board.

XXX