

Mendocino County Vineyard Soils

Wolfey

Wolfey soils are shallow soils formed from weathered sandstone under annual grasses. They are moderately permeable soils of very limited native fertility found across a wide range of convex slope positions on hills and mountains.



Typical Profile:

0-.5 ft.: very dark grayish brown Loam

.5 - 1.5 ft.: dark yellowish brown Loam

1.5 ft. +: soft, fractured sandstone

Soil Properties of Interest:

Available water-holding capacity (typically 0 - 1.5 feet)	2.3 inches
Drainage class:	Well Drained
Permeability class:	Moderate
Clay range in profile:	22 to 12% Decreasing at depth
Sand range in profile:	40 to 60% Increasing at depth
Coarse fragments in profile:	Less than 5% gravels in profile
Soil pH range:	6.6 to 5.6 Decreasing with depth



Fitness for Use in Vineyards:

- **Nutrient Cycling:** Vineyard establishment practices should aim to sustain the limited nutrient pool in the topsoil layer. Organic amendments and cover crops build fertility and feed soil biology.
- **Water Relations:** Very limited water-holding capacity. Soil cover enhances water penetration into the soil reservoir. Un-covered and heavily disturbed soils promote rapid runoff leading to soil erosion.
- **Management Considerations:** Soils are quite susceptible to soil compaction, rutting, and soil erosion on sloped ground. Engineered runoff control measures may be necessary on steep slopes to manage runoff.
- **Winegrape varieties suited to Wolfey:**
Coastal: Cabernet Sauvignon, Zinfandel on ridge-top locations; Pinot Noir, Merlot



Geography and Soil Climate:

Acres of Wolfey in Mendocino Co.: 12,400 acres
* Wolfey commonly occurs intermixed with similar soils such as Bearwallow

Acres of Wolfey soil under vines: over 918 acres

Annual precipitation: 45-60 inches
Frost-free days: 150 to 250 days
Elevation Range: 300' to 2,500'

Slope Range: 5 to 75%

