



Six Sigma[®] RANCH



“Our love of nature is the driving force behind the way we are developing the ranch. We focus on integrating the vineyards with native vegetation, making the grapevines a part of the natural landscape.” - Kaj Ahlmann, Proprietor

Six Sigma Ranch, a 4,300 acre estate in Lower Lake, California is the life-long dream of proprietors Kaj and Else Ahlmann. When they acquired the ranch in 2000, one of their top priorities was to create a sustainable ranch with vineyards nestled into nature. About one percent of the acreage has been planted to vines; the balance is dedicated as a nature preserve through a conservation easement donated to the Golden State Land Conservancy.

In 2005, the Ahlmanns constructed a winery on the ranch, including a barrel cave and state-of-the-art winery equipment. In 2008, they were joined by their eldest son, Christian, a horticulturist who oversees the vineyard operation.

Six Sigma is the pursuit of perfection. The Ahlmanns chose the *Six Sigma* name to show their commitment to quality and consistency. A statistical tool and management process, *Six Sigma* was developed by engineers. In 2000, the Ahlmann family registered the Six Sigma trademark for use in their winery business and on apparel.

The Ahlmann Family

Kaj (pronounced "Kye") Ahlmann was born in Denmark where, at the age of fourteen, he leased a tiny piece of land and farmed his first produce. This would lead to a lifetime interest in agriculture and passion for land conservation.

Kaj's professional life includes a career in reinsurance, most notably as Chairman and CEO of Employers Reinsurance Corporation, a division of General Electric. Today he serves on the board of directors for several companies including Deutsche Bank Global Insurance Asset Management, Cyrus Re, and Six Sigma Academy.

Six Sigma Ranch is truly a family affair. The vineyards are named after Kaj's wife, Else, and their four children, Christian, Michael, Marianne, and Annette.

Else is a history buff and has spent countless hours ferreting out details about the ranch's early settlers, dating back to the late 1850s. Her goal is to publish a book of her findings.

Christian joined the family business in 2008; a horticulturist, he oversees the vineyard operation. In his spare time, he trains his young Border Collie to herd their sheep and also can be found hitting the hills of his family's ranch on his mountain bike with his wife, Rachel. Camp Asbill, Six Sigma Ranch's nature education program, is orchestrated by Rachel.

Michael is a rocket scientist (really!) living in Sacramento with his wife, MaryBeth, and they regularly make treks to the ranch to assist with tasting events and troubleshoot any rogue IT problems.

Marianne is completing language studies at the University of Washington and recently served as translator on a viticulture research trip to Spain with Christian and winemaker Matt Hughes.

Annette shares her family's love of animals and aspires to be a vet. She attends Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo and doubles as the model for the Six Sigma Ranch apparel line.



The Ahlmann family from left to right: Annette, Marianne, Rachel, Kaj, Else, Christian, Michael, and MaryBeth

The Vineyard Sites of Six Sigma Ranch

Else's Vineyard was planted in 2001 on a picturesque slope near the site of a historic stage coach stop, two miles from the Ranch entrance. The three-acre vineyard is planted to Cabernet Sauvignon.

Rootstock: 101-14 and 3309 Spacing: 6 by 4
First harvested: October 2004

Christian's Vineyard, ten acres planted in 2002, is located in the Diamond Mine area at the southern-most part of the ranch. The Diamond Mine derives its name from "Lake County Diamonds," small volcanic-made pieces of quarts that litter the ground and glimmer in the sunlight. This vineyard is planted to Tempranillo, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Pinot Noir.

Rootstock: 101-14 and 44-53
Spacing: 7 by 5
First harvested: September 2005

Michael's Vineyard, twelve acres located at the Ranch entrance, welcomes visitors with astounding beauty. This vineyard was planted in 2004 to Sauvignon Blanc placed in irregular blocks among oak trees. Although less cost-efficient to develop, Kaj and Else believe it is worth the extra effort to retain the natural setting.

Rootstock: 101-14, 5BB, SO4, St. George, and 110R
Spacing: 8 by 5
First harvested: September 2006

Marianne & Annette's Vineyards were planted in the fall of 2007 to Cabernet Sauvignon, Tempranillo, Petit Verdot, Merlot, Syrah and Graciano. The 25 acres are located in the Diamond Mine area of the Ranch.

Rootstock: 101-14
Spacing: 6 by 3
First harvested: September 2009

"Six Sigma Ranch is home not only to our vineyards but also to wildlife and vegetation of all varieties. With approximately 4,300 acres, we are just beginning to explore all of the opportunities the ranch offers."
- Kaj Ahlmann



Sustainable Practices

Biodiversity is a cornerstone of Six Sigma Ranch, with vineyards and livestock complementing each other.

Sheep graze in the vineyard during the winter months, naturally "mowing" the grass and weeds while distributing fertilizer and saving resources and labor.

A small herd of free-range Black Angus grazes on the rich diversity of ranch grasses while horses add an element of picturesque; both contribute manure which is added to pumice from the winery to create fertilizing compost for the vineyards.

To teach new generations to preserve and protect our natural resources, the Ahlmanns also host environmental education camps for children throughout the year.



The Wines of Six Sigma Ranch

Sauvignon Blanc, Rooster Vineyard

Stainless steel fermented, clean and crisp with bright acids

Sauvignon Blanc, Michael's Vineyard

Barrel fermented, ripe flavors and rich texture

Rosé

Dry and food friendly, floral and berry notes with a hint of oak

Pinot Noir

Bold mountain fruit with subtle spice and toast

Cuvée Pique-Nique

A well balanced, complex and approachable red blend

Cabernet Sauvignon

Classic and well structured, displaying its volcanic terroir

Tempranillo

"This is the best California Tempranillo in this critic's experience."

-Steve Heimoff, WineEnthusiast



Winemaker, Matt Hughes

Our Winemaker

In April of 2009, Matt Hughes joined Six Sigma Ranch as winemaker. Matt began his enological adventure when he arrived in Lake County ten years ago. A position at a local winery led him to Kendall-Jackson, and after several years of learning the technical aspects of winemaking, he then joined the team at Vérité Winery, in Sonoma County. There he worked under Bordelaise winemaker Pierre Sellan, crafting critically acclaimed, classically styled wines. Matt has embraced Six Sigma Ranch's philosophy of listening to customers, and producing consistently great wine saying, "The marriage of artisan winemaking and Six Sigma practices is the perfect blend of art and science." Matt lives with his wife Nancy and their two dogs, Ellie May, and Murphy, in Kelseyville. Their home is surrounded by vineyards and located in the heart of Lake County's Red Hills AVA.