



THE YOUNG FAMILY LEGACY
Land as Inspiration

One of the first families to settle in the Alexander Valley, the Young family and the land are inseparable - the land is their life, it is part of them.

The scions of Robert Young are descendants of a long line of farmers. Throughout five generations of farming the same property, they understand the most efficient, best way to cultivate their land. From wheat to cattle to prunes and now wine grapes, they have sustained a unique balance of dedication to and preservation of the land. Savvy business instincts have encouraged them to take risks in farming, becoming pioneers in the planting of new crops.

The first of the Young family to emigrate from upstate New York to California came for the Gold Rush. Peter Young, grandfather of Robert Young, settled on a 206-acre ranch southeast of Geyserville, California in 1858. He was among the pioneers who literally built the community of the Alexander Valley. It was Peter's wife, Rachel, who was a key contributor to the building of the church and establishment of the community Sunday school.

Considered an excellent farmer, as well as a miner, Peter Young planted various grains and prunes and ran cattle on his land. The family tradition of growing for quality began with him. Peter's three sons, Warner, Maynard and Robert's father, Silas, continued the prosperous family business and developed prunes as the principal crop.

Cultivation of grapes began when Robert Young Vineyards was established in 1963. Seeing the potential of the emerging wine industry, Robert Young gradually converted the prune orchard into vineyards. Robert and his first wife, Gertrude, worked diligently to expand the property to encompass all of the land previously owned by Peter Young.

The scions of Robert Young - JoAnn, Jim, Susan and Fred - believe their legacy is to keep this land together, while carrying forth their father's commitment to excellence. "The creation of the winery is a result of dad's years of hard work. Dad is the rootstock who is responsible for this new growth coming forth from the scion," said JoAnn.

Having secured their land long before others arrived in the Alexander Valley, the Youngs are well aware of the character of the land to which they are stewards. "*Ours is the rim of the heights,*" said Robert. The valley floor and hillside land are planted to 300 acres of pristine vineyard. Rolling hills encourage perfect conditions for cultivation of the red Bordeaux-style varieties. Chardonnay vines thrive on the benchland, where well-drained gravelly soils meld with clay loams. Nine complex soil types and diverse climate and temperatures complement the extreme attention to detail in farming that distinguishes the Robert Young Vineyards.

As stewards of the land, Robert Young Vineyards is proud to be certified as sustainable growers by the California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance.

The Young family has always believed that, "A farmer's footprints are the best fertilizer." Farming wine grapes, and now creating wines for Robert Young Estate Winery, is more than a business for the Young family - it is a way of life and has been over the turn of two centuries.