



# ROBERT YOUNG

E S T A T E W I N E R Y

## ALEXANDER VALLEY WINEGROWING Soil Diversity in the Robert Young Vineyards

**R**obert Young Vineyards' 498 acres of valley floor and hillside land are planted to 317 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.

Ten different soil types with differing depths are found on the Robert Young estate. One of the main soils consists of alluvial fans found close to the vineyard's hills. Extremely rare in Sonoma County, this alluvium accumulated from erosion flowing down off the hills onto the flatland. The soil is composed of alternating strata, several inches of silty loam soil, then a layer of fine gravel the size of rice, then more loam and so on. This alluvial soil forms the basis for some of the favorite blocks on the ranch.

The other main soils on the benchland are Zamora silty clay loam and Clear Lake clay loam. On the hillsides the soils are predominantly Suther-Laughlin loams.

Primary soil types at Robert Young Estate Winery consist of:

- Alluvial. This rare soil type represents 50 percent of Robert Young benchland soil. In Sonoma County, it is found on 0.1 percent of county land or 1,136 acres.
- Zamora Silty Clay Loam. This soil constitutes 30 percent of Robert Young benchland soil. In Sonoma County, it is found on 1.2 percent of county land or 12,409 acres.
- Clear Lake Clay Soil. Also rare, this soil type represents 20 percent of Robert Young benchland soil. In Sonoma County, it is found on 0.6 percent of county land or 6,082 acres.
- Suther-Laughlin Loams. Fifty percent of Robert Young hillside soil is Suther-Laughlin loams. In Sonoma County, this soil is found on 1.7 percent of county land or approximately 17,000 acres.

- Other soils found on the Robert Young Estate include Toomes Rocky Loam, Spreckles Loam and Cortina Very Gravelly Loam on the hillside.