

People & Places

# Sustainability runs in the family

LangeTwins winery follows Lodi Rules in their Central Valley vineyard

By **TIM HEARDEN**  
Capital Press

LODI, Calif. — Marissa Lange remembers what it was like to grow up in a family of vineyard operators who were conscious of their impact on the environment and their neighbors.

She recalls being admonished by her grandfather while riding her horse through the family's vineyards in the heart of California's Central Valley.

"My grandfather would say, 'Don't kick up the dust!'" she said. "I'd say, 'Where's the fun in that?'"

Sustainable farming has been a goal of the Lange family since it put in its first vineyard more than a century ago. The push culminated in twin brothers Bradford and Randall Lange founding LangeTwins Family Winery and Vineyards in 2006.

The winery includes many state-of-the-art features aimed at minimizing the operation's carbon footprint, including California wine's first bi-facial solar array above its crush pad. A bi-facial array uses energy directly from the sun as well as from the sun's reflections around it.

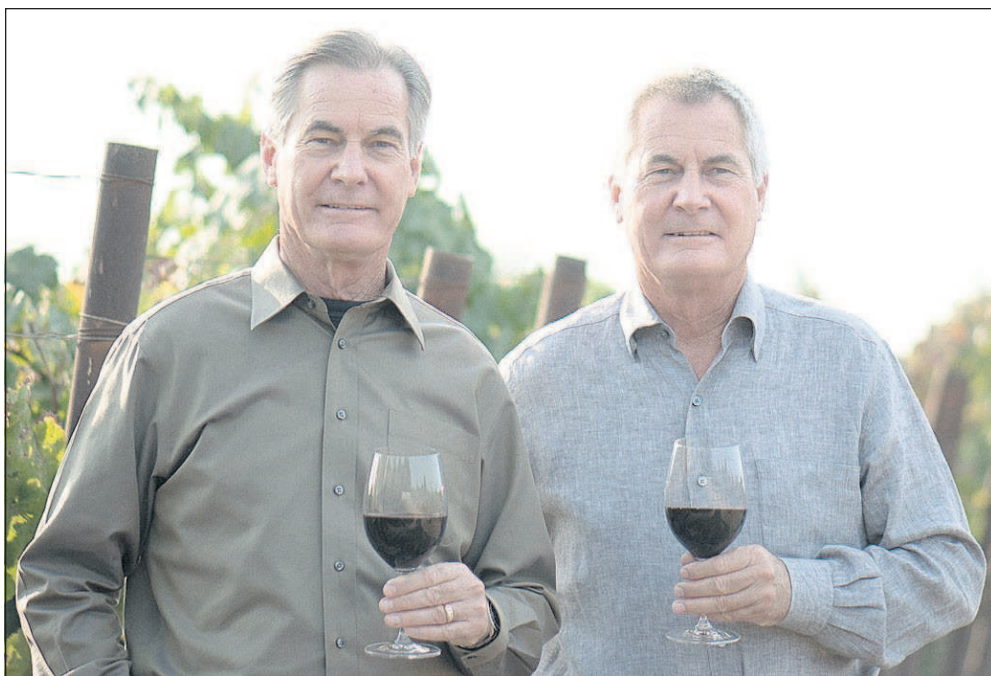
"We crushed 4,000 tons in our first year," Bradford Lange said.

The brothers also established a first-of-its-kind safe harbor agreement with the state, minimizing legal barriers for growers wanting to do habitat restoration projects along Lodi's South Mokelumne River.

## All in the family

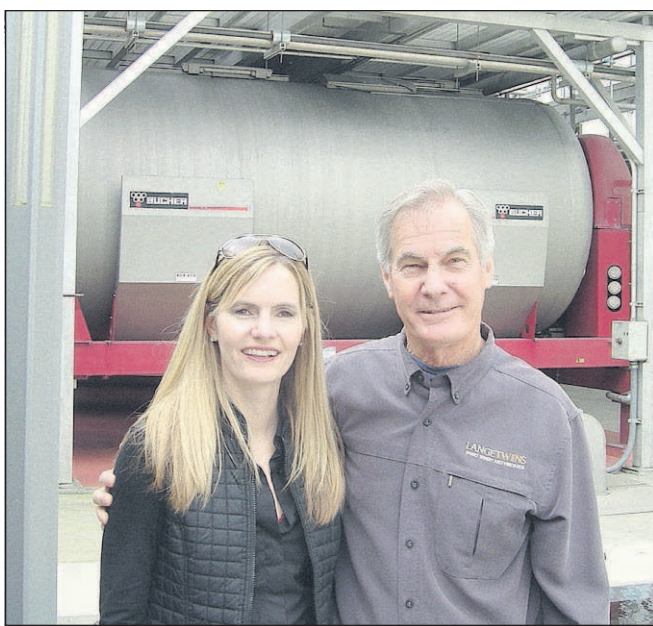
Today all nine adult members of the Lange family, representing its fourth and fifth generations in agriculture, are involved in the wine operation, Bradford said. Marissa Lange, Randall's daughter, is the company president.

Randall's son Aaron, the company's vice president of viticulture operations, chairs the California Association of Winegrape Growers and is vice chairman of the California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance. At LangeTwins, he leads such initiatives as a 20-acre habitat restoration project with the Audubon



Courtesy of LangeTwins Winery

Twin brothers Bradford and Randall Lange opened LangeTwins Family Winery and Vineyards in Lodi, Calif., in 2006. The operation has helped build a market niche for sustainably produced wines from the Lodi area.



Tim Hearden/Capital Press

LangeTwins Family Winery and Vineyards co-founder Bradford Lange, right, stands with his niece, Marissa Lange, under a solar array that provides shade for the wine production operation April 27 in Lodi, Calif. The operation has helped build a market niche for sustainably produced wines from the Lodi area.

California nonprofit and a partnership with the University of California-Davis to study automated technologies in the company's vineyards.

"This winery represents our commitment to future generations of Langes," Bradford said. "It's certainly been a big step to do this and accomplish this."

## Sustainable rules

As part of this mission, the family has been instrumental in developing and maintaining the Lodi Rules for Sustainable Winegrowing, California's original sustainable viticulture program. And while caring for the environment is a key component of

the program, it's far from the only component.

The Lodi Rules' more than 100 "sustainability practices" are organized into chapters for managing the overall business, human resources, the ecosystem, soil, water and pests, according to the Lodi Winegrowers Commission's website.

The program also includes a Pesticide Environmental Assessment System, which quantifies the environmental and human impact of all pesticides applied in a vineyard. Each pesticide is scored based on its impacts on farmworkers, consumers and the environment, and only those with limited impacts are used.

Growers can minimize use of chemicals by taking such measures as planting cover crops, using no-till techniques and removing shoots and leaves within the vineyard to prevent the spread of the variegated leafhopper, a common pest in grapes.

Similar programs have since been implemented throughout California, Marissa said.

"It's a practice-based program that encourages continued improvement on the farm," Bradford said. In addition to third-party verification, "farmers self-assess what they can do to make a difference in water, air and soils."

## 'A natural thing'

Bradford and Randall Lange went into business together in 1973, growing winegrapes and developing a company that manages vineyards for other growers as well as its own. Environmentally friendly practices have always been their goal.

"It was a very natural thing for us," Bradford said. "When the kids were growing up, we were able to teach them what my dad taught us. ... We were able to walk along the river and plant trees."

"I think the biggest thing my dad taught us is that the environment ... needs as much nurturing as our own vineyards," he said.

Today the Lodi Rules have created a niche market reaching consumers in the San Francisco Bay area and elsewhere who consider farming practices in their purchasing



## Western Innovator

### Randall and Bradford Lange

Relationship: Twin brothers

Occupation: Winegrowers

Age: 66

Residence: Lodi, Calif.

Randall's family: Wife, Charlene; children, Marissa, Aaron and Joseph; five grandchildren

Bradford's family: Wife, Susan; children, Philip and Kendra; three grandchildren

Website: [www.langetwins.com/](http://www.langetwins.com/)

decisions. The Lodi Winegrowers note on their website that by purchasing Lodi Rules-certified wines, a consumer is supporting a grower community that "embraces their responsibility to care for the environment and their neighbors."

Now in its 14th vintage, LangeTwins distributes its wines to most markets in the U.S. through a wholesale network to restaurants and wine shops, and two of its labels — Caricature and Sand Point — are available in supermarkets. The winery's latest addition was a largely automated bottling facility opened in 2014, and there are plans to keep expanding.

The family hasn't calculated how much, if any, added income has been brought in by the Lodi Rules label, but they do know there are consumers who look for the label.

And wineries will pay a premium for grapes produced according to the rules, Bradford said.

"Wine is a market-driven, free-market system," he said. "But I think a certifiable, sustainable emblem on the bottle sends a message to our consumers that we're actually serious about what we're doing here."

For Marissa, it comes down to family values.

"It's a bit of a pure form of altruism," she said. "We do what we do because it's the right thing to do."

## Calendar

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### Monday, May 8

Oregon Raspberry and Blackberry Commission meeting. 6-8:45 p.m. Hayden's Lakefront Grill, 8187 SW Tualatin-Sherwood Road, Tualatin, Ore. The agenda includes the commission's annual budget hearing. [www.oregon-berries.com](http://www.oregon-berries.com)

### Monday-Tuesday May 8-9

Ag Innovation Showcase. University of California-Davis Conference Center, 550 Alumni Lane, Davis, Calif. Themes of the 2017 showcase include automation and robotics, food safety, boosting nutrition and sensory value and innovation in the livestock and dairy sectors. Website: [www.foodaginnovation.com](http://www.foodaginnovation.com)

### Wednesday, May 10

Nickels Soil Lab Annual Field Day. 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Nickels Soil Lab, Green Bay Road, Arbutucke, Calif. Speakers will focus on walnuts and almonds. A tri-tip barbecue lunch will follow. RSVP to 530-458-0570. Cost: \$15 prepaid, \$20 at the door.

### Wednesday-Thursday May 10-11

Managing for Resilience: Northwest Grazing Conference 2017. 8 a.m.-7 p.m. Pendleton Convention Center, 1601 Westgate, Pendleton, Ore. Featured speakers are Kit Pharo and Fred Provenza. Pharo, cattle breeder and owner of

Pharo Cattle Co., says, "The most profitable cow-calf producers that I know of have a low-input, grass-based program with very efficient, low-maintenance cows. These are also the happiest producers I know of." Provenza, professor emeritus at Utah State University, is part of the BEHAVE team. BEHAVE principles, based on 30 years of research: If we understand how animals learn, we can train the animals to fit the landscapes instead of changing the landscape to fit the animals. Cost: \$227 by April 14, \$267 after. Website: <http://bit.ly/2kpT9yb>

"Dairy Nutrition: An Engine for Economic Growth: The First 1,000 Days and Beyond." Boise Centre, 850 W Front St., Boise, Idaho. Co-hosted by United Dairymen of Idaho and the U.S. Dairy Export Council, the conference will focus on the role of prenatal and postnatal dairy nutrition and its impact on economic development. Website: [idahodairy.com](http://idahodairy.com)

### Thursday-Friday May 11-12

Oregon Board of Agriculture. 8:30 a.m. Best Western Mill Creek Inn, 3125 Ryan Drive SE, Salem. On day one, the board will hear from a panel of agriculture industry representatives regarding the legislative session. A separate panel, representing key industry organizations, will discuss immigration issues. The board will also be given a presentation on food sourcing and hunger issues in Oregon. A public comment period is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. on day one. On day two, board members will receive a progress report on the Japanese beetle eradication project in Cedar Mill and receive an update on Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy

and a presentation on the Port of Portland's efforts to address transportation issues. The meeting will conclude with reports by board subcommittees.

### Thursday-Saturday May 11-13

87th Washington FFA State Convention. Washington State University, Pullman. [www.washingtonffa.org/calendar/](http://www.washingtonffa.org/calendar/)

### Wednesday, May 17

Pesticide Analytical and Response Center (PARC) Board meeting. 9 a.m.-noon. Oregon Department of Agriculture, 635 Capitol St. NE, Basement Hearing Room, Salem, Ore. Website: [www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/pesticides/pages/PARC.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/pesticides/pages/PARC.aspx)

### Thursday, May 18

FSPCA Preventive Controls for Human Food — One-Day Blended Course. 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Idaho Water Center, 322 E. Front St. Boise, Idaho. The new Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) regulation requires every processing facility to have a trained resource person or "Preventive Controls Qualified Individual" who has completed a specialized training course (such as this one) that was developed by the Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance (FSPCA) and is recognized by the FDA. This person will oversee the implementation of the facility's food safety plan and other key tasks. Cost: \$330. [www.techhelp.org/events/342/fspcaboisemay2017/](http://www.techhelp.org/events/342/fspcaboisemay2017/)

Four-Part Farm/Ranch Succession Planning Workshop. 6-8:30 p.m. Canby High School, 721 SW Fourth Ave., Canby, Ore. A free four-part workshop on succession planning with one-hour personal

counseling sessions for your family after each workshop. Light dinner 6 to 6:30, workshop 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Course 3 on May 18 is Getting Organized, and Course 4 on June 1 is Passing on Management Roles. RSVP required. Organized by Clackamas Small Business Development Center and Rogue Farm Corps. Cost: Free. <http://bit.ly/2opTHqO>

Family Business Charters. 7:30 to 9 a.m. BridgePort BrewPub, 1313 NW Marshall St., Portland. A family business charter sets forth the essential rules, obligations, and responsibilities relating to ownership and management of the business, as well as the family values that will help sustain the business for future generations. Presented by A. Jeffery Bird, Lane Powell PC and the Austin Family Business Program, Oregon State University. \$40 per person. 800-859-7609, <http://bit.ly/2gPuLYY>

### Saturday-Sunday May 27-28

Alpaca Shearing Day and Sale. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Alpacas of Oregon, 21345 SW Aebischer Road, Sherwood, Ore. Join EasyGo Farm at Alpacas of Oregon and take a break from the Memorial Day Winery Tours to watch the alpacas get their annual haircuts. Get up close, hand feed them and handle their luxurious fleece. Shearing Day is Saturday. On Sunday, learn to felt an alpaca gift. Phone 503-348-6954 to reserve a spot. \$25-\$75 covers your materials and instruction. Hand-spinners, knitters and other fiber artists will find fleece and yarn. Visitors can chat with four long-time livestock breeders who've raised llamas, horses, sheep and goats. [www.easygofarm.net/AOOMemDay](http://www.easygofarm.net/AOOMemDay)

### Wednesday-Friday May 31-June 2

2017 Oregon Cattlemen Mid-year Meeting, Wildhorse Casino, 46510 Wildhorse Blvd., Pendleton, Ore. The annual 2 1/2-day midyear event is where Oregon cattlemen and women gather to get updates on the latest news in Oregon agriculture, hear from top industry speakers and reconnect with fellow ranchers. <http://orcattle.com/>

### Thursday, June 1

Four-Part Farm/Ranch Succession Planning Workshop. 6-8:30 p.m. Canby High School, 721 SW Fourth Ave., Canby, Ore. A free four-part workshop on succession planning with one-hour personal counseling sessions for your family after each workshop. Light dinner 6 to 6:30, workshop 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Course 4 on June 1 is Passing on Management Roles. RSVP required. Organized by Clackamas Small Business Development Center and Rogue Farm Corps. Cost: Free. <http://bit.ly/2opTHqO>

### Thursday-Friday June 15-16

2017 Interpera Congress. Wenatchee Confluence Technology Center, 285 Technology Center Way, Wenatchee, Wash. The conference features presentations from world experts on emerging pear varieties, high-density planting, root stock, harvest and packing house mechanization, integrated pest management successes, export trade flows and successful practices for building consumer demand. <http://ncwctc.com/>

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