

CONCERN

Efficiency and sustainability

SOLUTION

Identify equipment to create high quality, sustainable compost with a 80% reduction in labour



A Good Investment

With the help of Planning Advisor, Peter Spencer, Willem Semmelink of Summerhill Pyramid Winery completed the easy to use Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) workbook. His results have saved time and money while still maintaining sustainability and quality.

Willem Semmelink is the vineyard manager for Summerhill Pyramid Winery in the Okanagan and decided to get involved in the Canada-British Columbia Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) Program. “The workbook is easy to use and is basically a guideline for systematized sustainability. It fits in perfectly with organic farming, which is also about sustainability,” said Semmelink.

With support from the EFP Program, a Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) was done to assess the level of nutrients in the soil so that crop yields could be increased while protecting the soil, air and water. The NMP suggested that the vineyard would benefit from a windrow turner, a piece of equipment that helps create higher quality compost more efficiently and sustainably.

Although there wasn't any funding available specifically for windrow turners, it did fit into a sustainability model. Semmelink and Planning Advisor Peter Spencer made a case for funding through the Beneficial Management

Practice (BMP) Program. “The EFP/BMP Program is always looking for innovative ways to make farming more environmentally sustainable,” said Spencer. The funding request was approved at 30% of the cost funded to Summerhill.

“Being a low input facility, being softer on the earth, definitely has its rewards,” says Semmelink. “The windrow turner was a good investment. It's creating high quality, sustainable compost and it's a major time and money saver too. It has reduced our labour costs for creating compost by 80%”.

Semmelink highly recommends going through the workbook with a Planning Advisor, no matter what size or type of farm you have. “The EFP workbook is a well thought out tool and it's made for all types of farms. You only need to complete the sections that apply to your farm.”



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The EFP and BMP Programs are funded through Canadian Agricultural Partnership. For more information on these programs, visit the [Environmental Farm Plan website](#) or call **250.940.6150**