

Steven P. Pepe, Vigneron Clos Pepe Vineyards



Steve Pepe grew up in a family with a tradition of home winemaking, became the founder of Clos Pepe, and created the 9th vineyard in what has become the Santa Rita Valley viticulture area. Clos Pepe is now a vineyard known for its very fine Pinot Noir and Chardonnay wines and Steve has become a leader in the California Wine community.

Steve's second career as a vigneron began with the purchase of a horse ranch in 1994. Eight years later after planting and nurturing of thousands of vines, Steve retired from a 35 year career as a very successful, nationally known labor attorney to oversee the vineyard and winery full time.

Over the years Clos Pepe has gained a reputation for its grapes, wines and sustainable business practices. In 2007 Clos Pepe was named a Santa Barbara County 2007 Green Business because of their environmentally responsible production methods and the equitable treatment of their employees.

In spite of the rigorous demands of a thriving business, Steve has found the time to author a book about his experience in winemaking, *A Vigneron's Quest for Great Dirt*. He has also made significant contributions to his local community. Steve has been a founding member and president of the City of Lompoc's Economic Development Committee, a board member of the annual Turduckens Dinner which benefits local libraries and has been a Co-chair of St. Mark's-in-the-Valley Cellar Classic, an auction of fine and rare wines, which supports a number of programs. Steve's love and knowledge of wine has also led to participation in numerous food and wine organizations and societies throughout the state of California and to volunteering as a wine judge at the Los Angeles County Fair.