

PRESERVING A WAY TO CONNECT

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CULTIVATING PRESENCE

Across the world, the gesture of clinking glasses around New Years takes many forms: *Salud!* - *Sláinte!* - *Γειά μας!* - *Prost!* - *Cheers!* - *Santé!* - *Cin cin!* Different languages, different cultures, yet one shared meaning—a celebration of life and togetherness. Entering 2026 there is an energy of change in the air. In the past few years, it has been common to go to a restaurant and see families and friends sitting together all on their phones, completely disconnected. The addictive nature of our devices fosters a type of disassociation that I believe we all have felt to some degree. So, what is the solution to this? **How do we combat these technologies and foster deeper connections with each other?**

In a recent Interview, Ben Stamp of Lakewood Vineyards, made the claim that wine is an antidote to this issue of isolation, pointing to the thousands of years of people of all different backgrounds coming together to share wine with one another. Ben exclaimed, "Wine is real,

Wine is authentic, wine brings people together, wine is social, and is needed now more than ever!"

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-BEN STAMP

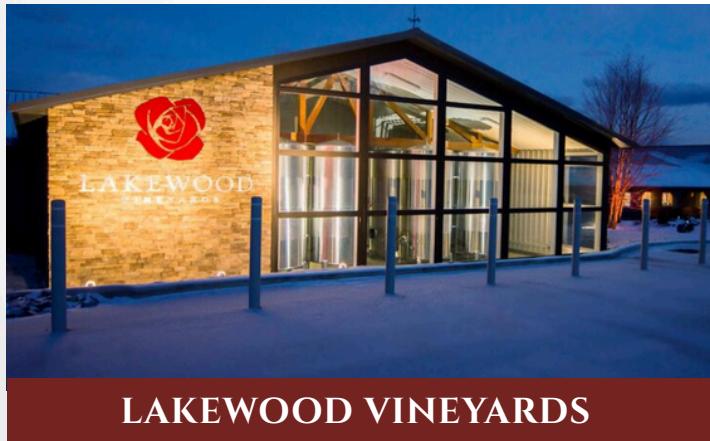
Through this past year I have had the privilege to sit with some of our farmer customers to hear their stories, the history of their farms, and how solar plays a role in their operations. I love asking the question to each farmer, **"With so much change over time within our society what would be one value of the life on the farm which you would like to see stay true into the future?"** When I asked this question to Chris Stamp, Ben's Dad, he spoke about the beauty of diversification within his small farm operation. Chris expressed,



VALUE-DRIVEN WORK

"The strength of the agriculture community is small farms, individual farms and not corporate farming."

Both Chris and Ben are worried about the consolidation of family farms, which is happening for many reasons, one being that the next generation of farmers are being pulled away from the land. Ben expressed, "If you look at it, it's a lot of really hard work. If you're willing to work that hard, you can probably make more money doing just about anything else, especially with all the engineering that has to go into farming. **It's a great way to raise a family. It's a great way to live your values more actively** than you might have an opportunity to in other professions." Without a moment's hesitation Chris stepped in to say, "It [Farming] gives you the opportunity to go home at the end of the day feeling satisfied, not just used, but worn out." My Dad and I could really feel their passion when listening to Ben and Chris speak to this aspect of the farming lifestyle.



LAKWOOD VINEYARDS

If you travel rural America, each farm is unique, but there are some commonalities that are shared by all. One of these farm values, especially family farm operations, is the connection into the community. For example, Chris' wife, Liz, hosted a Grape Stomp Event in September to bring people together to stomp some grapes and put their

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-CHRIS STAMP

footprints on some t-shirts as souvenirs of the wonderful day. Chris said, "We're going to have some extra grapes this year and we were trying to think of ways to use them rather than just leave them on the vine or drop them on the ground." We joked about warming up the grapes for community members' feet, but beneath the humor lies a darker reality: many wineries and grape growers are under real financial strain.

The wine industry is facing significant pressure. A recent study showed that the youngest generation, Gen Z, is drinking 87% less alcohol than previous generations, favoring seltzers or other beverages. In our minds, this makes it more important than ever to support wineries by not just slowing down to share more wine, but actively cutting the energy costs these wineries are facing through the implementation of solar and storage.



GRAPE STOMP EVENT



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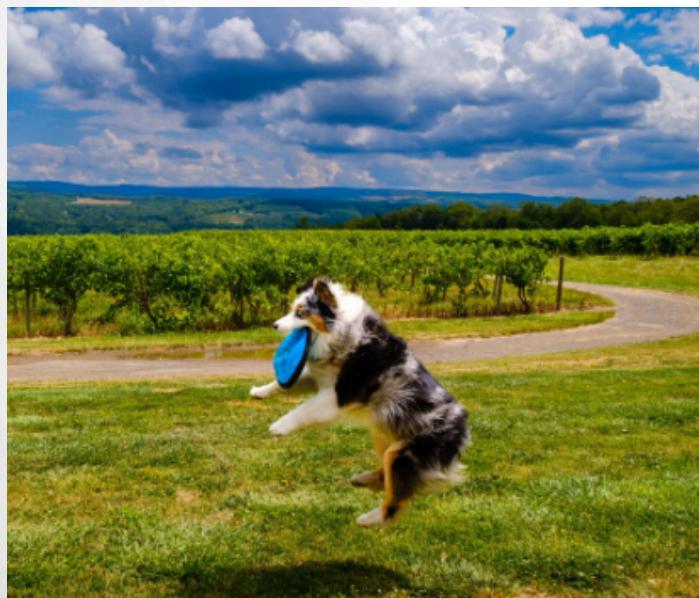


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STRENGTHENING FAMILY FARMS

At Jordan Energy & Food Enterprises we pride ourselves in building solar and storage solutions in ways that strengthen family farms. We wholeheartedly believe **solar and storage positively impact the longevity and financial stability of family farms**. When Chris reflected on the installation that has been a silent tenant on Lakewood's roof the past 12 years, he expressed, "at the time, it's a little less than that now because our energy consumption has increased, but it covered about 70% of the production energy needs. So it was a big investment, but it's paid for itself. And interestingly, it's one of those things that I kind of really don't think about."

Chris went on to add, "We're using that energy for our business without gobbling up farmland to do it. That fits with how we think about sustainability." For a multi-generational farm, sustainability isn't a marketing term. It's survival and progress. Chris expressed, "You want to be sustainable because you're hoping the next generation can come here and enjoy the same things you did."



FIZZY - ASSISTANT WINEMAKER



LAKWOOD WINES

Chris is not just a farmer; he is also a pilot and often reflects on preserving farmland from his bird's-eye view. Like many farmers, he doesn't want to see **prime farmland turned into energy generation farms for data centers that drain the water and spike electricity prices** for community members. A subset of the solar industry has a black eye in many agricultural circles, by prioritizing convenience over farmland preservation. We approach our work differently.

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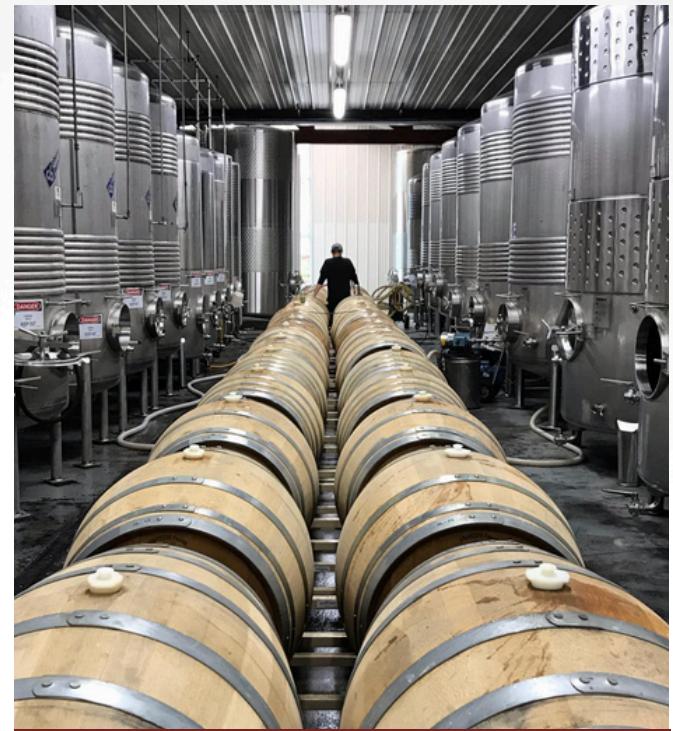


A BRIGHTER VINTAGE

Fighting for the preservation of values and culture is not easy. In the coming year I am looking forward to embracing community more. I love the idea of stomping some grapes, making a cool t-shirt, and raising awareness of an industry that fosters community. There's an interesting parallel between what wine represents and how the best solar partnerships have worked for Jordan Energy. Wine brings people together. It's about slowing down to connect in an authentic way. The best solar partnerships operate the same way: **relational and built for the long term on a foundation of trust.**

We believe in the power of the sun, wine, people and most importantly hope. We hope reading this article illuminates a beautiful story

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WINE CELLAR

of a family farm working together to preserve a way of life. My Dad and I felt inspired after leaving Lakewood Vineyards to foster a deeper connection to our communities in a way that preserves values and unites our culture within a positive light.

