

SOMERSTON WINE CO



Craig Becker General Manager, Co-founder and Director of Winemaking

Craig Becker, a Southern California native, is a founding member of Somerston Wine Company. A strong love of the outdoors attracted Becker to winemaking. This attraction, combined with innate talent, led him to the helm of Somerston – an expansive project focused on great wines and an appreciation of the natural world.

Becker oversees all of Somerston’s winemaking and vineyard operations. He has a tremendous thirst for knowledge about each element of winery and vineyard operations and is constantly developing new ideas for improvement. Becker’s management style also encourages innovation and entrepreneurship by allowing employees to take ownership of, and improve, their positions, the vineyards, and the winery. He maintains strong relationships with vineyard workers, many of whom live on-site, having worked the property for decades before Becker knew it existed.

Becker is a self-starter who believes in hard work as a precursor to success. He worked full-time for most of his scholastic life, beginning in high school as a dishwasher at the Nordstrom Café. One year later, he was assistant manager of the café. Since then, Becker’s ability to quickly learn all aspects of a job and capably lead has been a theme in his life.

After spending much of his childhood in Long Beach, California, he moved north to attend Santa Rosa Junior College out of the desire to be surrounded by nature and, as he says, for the unlimited mountain biking opportunities. Within a few years, he transferred to the University of California at Davis to study plant physiology and soil science. It was in a class at UC Davis—Plant Physiology 112—that he met Courtney Siverson, who would later become his wife. She had been offered a harvest position at Robert Mondavi Winery. She declined, but Becker took the harvest job instead and continued to work at Mondavi while finishing his degree.

Upon graduation in 1997, Becker accepted a position at Spring Mountain Vineyard to work under the direction of winemaker Craig MacClean. Despite other more lucrative opportunities, Becker joined Spring Mountain for \$12 an hour because he felt he’d have more hands-on opportunities in both the winery and the vineyard. He was right in more ways than he anticipated - once harvest finished, MacClean left to start his own brand. Less than 9 months out of college, Becker was promoted to winemaker and his career—as well as his reputation for working with mountain vineyards and being a winemaker deeply involved in both farming and the cellar—took off.

In 1999, Becker started his vineyard consulting business. A short time later, Craig and the Peacock family launched “Peacock”, a single-vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon from a 6-acre vineyard high above the town of Saint Helena in the Spring Mountain District of Napa Valley. The success of Peacock launched a series of premium vineyard consulting projects for Becker. In 2003, Becker left Spring Mountain to work on developing the Dierberg and Star Lane vine-

