FROG'S LEAP

JOHN WILLIAMS
FOUNDER & WINEMAKER

John T. Williams grew up on a dairy farm in western New York. While attending Cornell University a fortuitous work study program at the Taylor Wine Company shifted his focus from cheesemaking to viticulture, and after graduating in the spring of 1975 he made his way to the Napa Valley where he joined Warren Winiarski and Andre Tchelistcheff on the winemaking team at Stag's Leap Wine Cellars. He completed his Masters at U.C. Davis in 1977.

In 1981 John founded Frog's Leap Winery, producing 450 cases of Sauvignon Blanc and 350 cases of Zinfandel. Employed at Spring Mountain Winery as head winemaker at the time, Williams garnered enthusiastic support for the first release and by 1984 was able to quit his "day job" to focus on his own label. In 1987 he purchased his first vineyard (35 acres) in Rutherford. With the acquisition of his own land, John turned his focus towards healthy soils as a driver for quality wine production and in 1989, in accordance with his vision Frog's Leap became the first winery in the Napa Valley to receive organic certification for its vineyards through California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF).

In 1994 the family took a gamble and purchased an old Red Barn and another 40 acres of land to the east of the family ranch, the same year the Rutherford Appellation was formally recognized as an American Viticultural Area (AVA).

A vocal advocate for organic farming practices, John's deepening understanding of sustainability began to seep into all areas of his life and business. Frog's Leap is widely recognized for being an early industry adopter of a range of practices in both business and farming and continues to lead the way, fueled by the consistent vision of it's founder.

Today Frog's Leap is still family owned and operated. John oversees the winemaking program, working closely with his son Rory to bring new viticultural perspective to the cellar in order to produce wines of balance, restraint and respect for the natural environment in which they are grown.