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Night Owl Winery Gives a Hoot and a Home

Monterey, Calif. - Night Owl Winery has launched **Habitat for Hootmanity**, an in-house initiative that will place 200 owl nesting boxes on its San Bernabe Vineyard by January 2007. **Habitat for Hootmanity** furthers Night Owl's commitment to the National Audubon Society's conservation efforts by providing a safe haven for barn owls to breed.

Habitat for Hootmanity owl boxes are hand-built by winery and vineyard employees according to a custom design developed from a combination of sources including the Western Regional Office of the National Audubon Society, *Sustainable Agriculture Magazine*, and *Practical Winery and Vineyard Magazine*. In addition to building and placing the owl boxes, employees regularly maintain the boxes by painting, cleaning and providing fresh nesting materials.

"We're really apartment managers," says Vineyard Manager, Bill Petrovic. "The owls nest and breed in the boxes throughout the spring. When they move out in the fall, we move in to tidy up and prepare for the next breeding season."

"Seeing healthy owlets become a part of San Bernabe's ecosystem is very gratifying," says Petrovic. "On their own, the owlets are subject to the predators - coyotes, foxes - that also live at San Bernabe. **Habitat for Hootmanity** boxes give owls a safe place to be babies."

But it's not all fun and fledging - the owls perform a vital function in the vineyard. "The fact is that owls control the rodent population better than anything else," says Petrovic. "Mother Nature had it right the first time, and we're just helping her do her job."

Night Owl wines express the characteristics of San Bernabe Vineyard, the most diverse single vineyard in the world. **Habitat for Hootmanity** is just one of the many ways Night Owl implements sustainable farming methods. Night Owl Winery proudly supports the mission of the National Audubon Society.

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