



## The Irrigation System

When you turn on that irrigation system you will have failures! So far this year I've had emitters broken off, turn-off-valves disconnecting spontaneously and tubes chewed completely off by rabbits or very nasty coyotes. After starting the water, walk the vineyard; look for leaks. Have repair equipment in hand. You'll need it.

## Weed Control

This week's rain is perfectly scheduled for pre-emergent weed control. We've got light rain today (Thursday) and a heavier rain on Saturday afternoon and evening to soak any spray into the ground. If you choose to do pre-emergent the period between these two rain events would be an excellent time. The label warnings specify that Goal 2XL, a broad leaf weed preventive, must be applied before Feb 15th. Good timing!

## Squirrels (all squirrels must die)

Squirrels are getting active right on schedule. They are starting to come out of hibernation and re-dig all those access holes around your vineyard. Do what you need to do now so that you don't have 10 more little mouths to feed from your ripe vineyard in August.

## Pruning

Pre-pruning should be complete. You should not leave full length cuttings in your vineyard. They are disease vectors and they catch on everything that goes thru the rows - like a tractor or ATV.

If you live at the bottom of a cold valley don't prune now. Otherwise, it looks like it will be safe to start by mid-February. At this month's meeting of the RVVA (FEB 26th) we will announce a hands-on pruning class for the beginning of March. If you are new to the vineyard - this one you need! If you are an expert, than come and share your expertise.

Don't final prune within 3 days before or after a rain. Use Vita-Seal or Rally on large cuts. Avoid introducing pathogens.

## Clean Owl Boxes

If your owl box was occupied last year, or the last couple of years, there is probably a couple of inches of 'who knows what' inside the box. Lower the box and clean it before nesting starts next month.