

BEST KEG PROVIDER: FREE FLOW WINES

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In 2009, **Free Flow Wines'** two founders, Jordan Kivelstadt and Dan Donahoe, started the company with 60 used beer kegs and the desire to create the first premium wine brand available in keg only. Other winemakers quickly began asking for help putting their wines in kegs and with this, the company as we know it today was born, providing keg filling, leasing, and logistics services for wineries that want to offer their wine on tap—one of the most sustainable moves in the industry.



Today, it has 180,000 kegs (all new, reusable stainless steel, made in Germany) and works with more than 270 U.S. distributors to fulfill that service. It also includes logistics, sales, and marketing support to help its winery partners launch successful keg programs. In 2017, it launched a canning service as a second sustainable, alternative packaging method.

In January 2019, Free Flow Wines moved from Napa, Calif., to its new 58,000-square-foot space in Sonoma, Calif. It has a bulk storage room and a new keging line, which is fully automated to fill 150 kegs per hour. It currently houses three semi-automatic canning lines and plans to add a high-speed canning line this summer. A second location in New Jersey focuses on filling services for imported wines.

"Each keg holds 26 bottles of wine," says Heather Clauss, vice president of marketing and customer success, "which reduces the equivalent footprint of bottles. As a result, since Free Flow's inception, more than 30 million pounds of trash have been diverted from landfill."

She continues, "Reusable steel kegs protect wine from both light and oxygen, so the wine is always fresh." Once tapped, the wine is good for three months.

The company's employees also pride themselves on customer service. "We work with our customers to help ensure their keg programs are a success with a host of education, sales and marketing support," says Clauss. "We listen to their input and use it to stay innovative as we grow our offerings."

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