



United States Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service

helping people help the land

# Alaniz Vineyard

**“You don’t have to start big, you can begin with as little as you want.”**

**— Raul Ramirez,  
Soil Conservationist**



*With proper maintenance, oil applied to an unpaved farm road could last five years or more.*

### DUST CONTROL PROGRAM SPECIFICS

- Applicants can choose from either a two-year road oil contract or construction of a more permanent road
- A two-year contract requires using SC 250 heavy road oil, or an approved equivalent product, at a rate of 3,000 gallons per mile
- Construction of a more permanent road involves a two-year contract and a one-time application of SC 250 heavy road oil (or equivalent) with an appropriate road base, which will result in a minimum 50 percent reduction in dust emissions over a five year period
- If soil is alkali, SC 800 must be used
- The road surface should be graded, removing any potholes and imperfections and, if possible, incorporate a crown.

**Rodolfo Alaniz** and his son **Rudy** had been in the trucking business for several years when an opportunity came up to buy land and start farming.

They acquired a 133-acre vineyard in Arvin, Calif. and now grow raisins and table grapes.

They wanted to do something about the dust generated by their farm operation to prevent the particulate matter being released into the air. The State of California and the Environmental Protection Agency now require San Joaquin Valley farmers to suppress dust in their farm operations, which has been identified as a contributor to asthma and other medical ailments.

The family contacted the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and learned about its Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). This program provides funds on a cost-share basis to growers who want help controlling the pollution. The advice the Alaniz Family received was to oil their unpaved farm roads.

“They didn’t have a lot of money so they concentrated on oiling those roads around their equipment yard and those that are adjacent to county roads,” said Soil Conservationist **Raul Ramirez**. “You don’t have to start big, you can begin with as little as you want.”

NRCS provided the family technical assistance about how to prepare their roads and the rate of oil to be applied. Ramirez says if they maintain it properly, the oil treatment should last five years or more.

“We’re trying to develop a long-term relationship with them so they’ll continue to seek out our service after their EQIP contract expires and to put out the word that they’re satisfied with our help,” concluded Ramirez.

Ramirez believes the Alaniz Family will be repeat customers. They plan to continue with road oil treatments, and next year, they want to apply for a micro-irrigation system, which will bring water to their grapes more efficiently.



*Rodolfo Alaniz (right) and his son Rudy applied oil to their unpaved farm roads to reduce dust problems in their vineyard.*  
Raul Ramirez photo