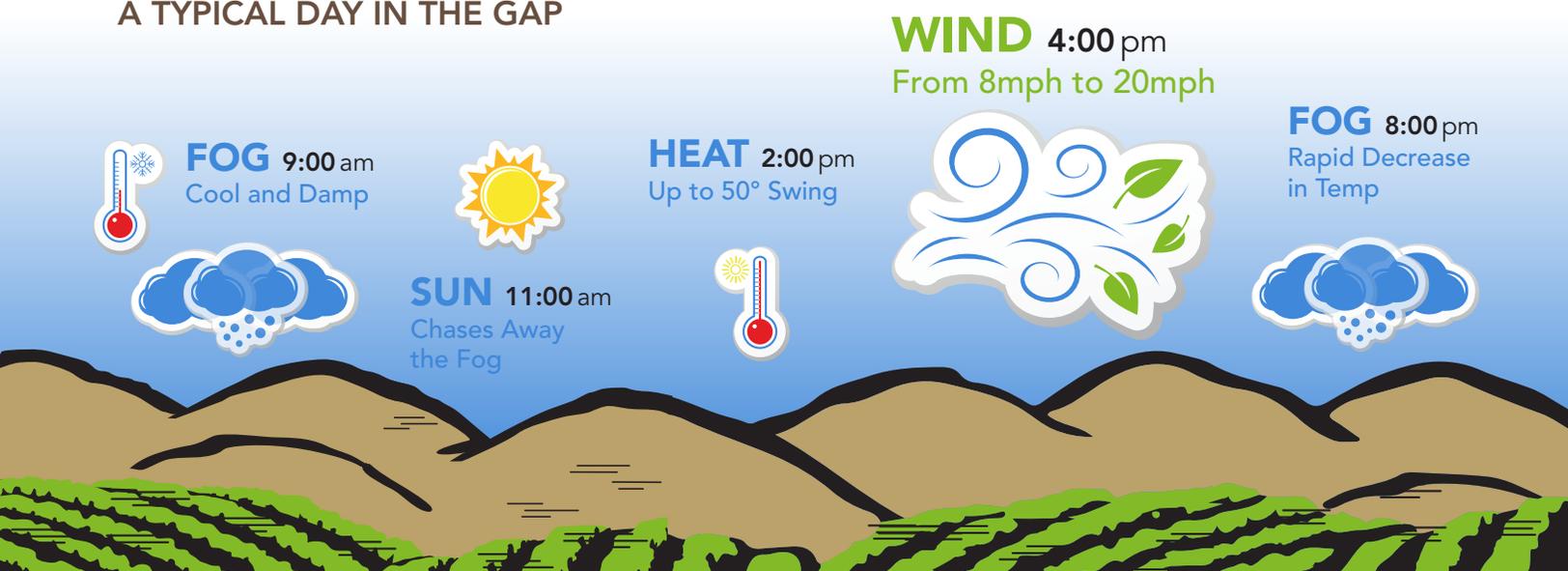


Petaluma Gap Climate Fact Sheet

Located in Southern Sonoma County, the Petaluma Gap region enjoys a mild Mediterranean climate characterized by warm, dry summers and cool, wet winters. The major climatic influence is determined by the marine airflow from the Pacific Ocean and the effects of geography in diverting that airflow. At the western-most boundary of the Petaluma Gap along the coastline, the Estero Lowlands and a series of low hills form a major transport corridor allowing marine air to pass into the Bay Area. During an average summer there are many days when a band of cold fog sits along the coastline and is transported inland by afternoon sea breezes. The predominant wind pattern in this region is for marine air to move eastward from the coast toward Sonoma Mountain, then to split into northward and southward paths. The northward path enters Cotati and eventually diminishes as it moves toward the Santa Rosa area. The southward path is channeled through the Lakeville area and continues unabated into the San Pablo Bay.

A TYPICAL DAY IN THE GAP



PETALUMA GAP: THE WIND TUNNEL

The low terrain in the Petaluma Gap does not offer much resistance to the marine air as it rushes in bringing with it the cold coastal fog. This fog bank is typically accompanied by a rapid decrease in afternoon temperature which can be as much as 50 °F. A typical summer day in the Gap begins with a distinctive crisp coolness and a blanket of morning fog. By late morning the sun has chased away the fog and the temperature rises. By mid-afternoon, however, the cool on-shore breezes begin, picking up speed as the afternoon progresses and bringing in the almost nightly fog. Hourly average wind speeds throughout the Gap regularly exceed 8 miles per hour (mph) nearly every afternoon during the winegrape growing season, with winds in excess of 20 mph a common occurrence. It is this cooling “wind tunnel” effect that distinguishes the Petaluma Gap from our neighboring winegrowing areas. It results in lower yields with grapes that reach physiological ripeness at lower sugar levels, developing wonderful flavors and fruit characteristics while maintaining ideal levels of acidity. It’s the perfect recipe for intense but well-balanced wines with character and distinction.