



Dear all,



We have already had a busy start to the year. In the winery, the team have been looking after a wide range of wines and styles. The majority of wines that were going through malolactic fermentation are now through - this is the process by which, either naturally or as a result of adding special bacteria, the malic acid in wine is converted to lactic acid, reducing the overall acidity and softening the mouth feel. Some of our wines have been kept on lees for longer, with 'lees stirring' to add texture to the wines, whilst others have had an element put into barrel,

adding flavour and complexity to the wine, not least through the micro oxygenation that comes from maturation in wood rather than steel. This also means that the barrels need constant topping to keep them full as the wine evaporates (losses that are known as the 'angel's share'). Depending on the style of wine that our clients want, we have also been fining the wines; running blending, bentonite and other trials; conducting tastings with our clients to balance out any acidity; and will then be stabilising the wines prior to filtering and then bottling, which will start for still wines next month.



Preparing for a client tasting

The lab has been doing more and more contract analysis, helped by some extra equipment we have now received, including a microscope (which has been great for counting yeast viability) and a piercing kit so that we can test dissolved oxygen and dissolved CO₂ in a sealed bottle - essential for monitoring the quality of bottling.

Our new labelling line should arrive soon,

which will enable us to label directly from the bottling line, in time for the disgorging line to move out into another building which is being specially prepared for it. This will give more space for tanks in the winery; more space for the production team to disgorge; and the riddling machines having already moved out of the winery last year, will centralise all storage, riddling and disgorging in one area.



Event for local NFU members



Tasting with Terlingham

Meanwhile the team has been steadily growing: Paul joined us at the end of last year to run the warehouse; Jack started about the same time to work in the winery and will soon be joined by Elena who brings experience from around Europe; and Chris has joined the production team, alongside Henry and Trevor who helped us out over harvest and have been stalwarts ever since.

Having run out of office space too, we now have a portacabin in what was the car park in front of the winery (we have long since had to park our cars elsewhere), with a second one on top as a tasting room/meeting room. We have plans in place to make sure they don't become permanent fixtures! Looking ahead to later this year, we have more tanks on order, as well as some other equipment that will make our production lines more efficient.

Regards,

Henry



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