



Dear all,

we remain incredibly lucky, with some appropriate measures in place, to be able to keep working in these uncertain times, just as well as most wine is now finished and ready to leave the winery.



Not without incident, as the team were loading wine into a tanker recently when a passing Health and Safety Executive inspector saw them on top of the tanker. Unfortunately the driver hadn't erected the guard rail but after some contrition, a new risk assessment, guard rail plus harness we were fine.

But the exciting news has been the arrival of our delayed bottling line from Italy. I had just discovered that the big forklift we were borrowing to unload it was still not big enough when it arrived 24 hours early. We were saved by a local farmer and it was unloaded safely (see photo). However we then discovered it was missing the part to apply screw caps, four days before we were due to start bottling them....

Fortunately our supplier has the only mobile bottling line in UK, so he brought his line over and we had an intense 3 days bottling 24,000 bottles. This was only made possible by all the wines being ready for bottling, having a plan in place to deal with all the logistics and a fantastic team.



Bottles ready to be filled...



...the finished result

I am so glad Rob persuaded me to buy a crossflow filter, as there has been no doubt that it has been brilliant for filtering – not only in minimising losses but also in providing gentle filtration to a really high quality. He also persuaded me to buy a device to measure dissolved oxygen and dissolved CO₂, used elsewhere but I have been told we are the only winery in UK to have one (which I find hard to believe but if true probably reflects the English wine sector focus on sparkling wines). It enabled Poppy to ensure that dissolved oxygen was low (by sparging with nitrogen) in wines where this will help and adjust the dissolved CO₂, which has an impact on the palate, allowing us to produce really high quality wines.



Testing for Dissolved Oxygen

This week we will start bottling corks and then move onto *tirage* - bottling sparkling wines with a crown cap and bidule before they start their period of on-lees ageing. We are then back onto screw caps at the end of the month, by which time our screw capper will have been installed.

In the meantime we are finalising plans for this year's harvest, which could come early after the hottest May on record and have ordered another 24 tanks. The photos below show just how much has changed over the past year.



June 2019



June 2020

We have also featured in some more articles:

Vineyard magazine - May 2020

Wine GB's GrapePress

Regards,

Henry



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