



Dear all,

whilst 2023 will be remembered more for quantity than quality, we have been really pleased by how the wines have turned out.



Pre-bottling tasting!

It has taken an enormous amount of work in the winery to prepare wines for bottling but the cellar team have done a fantastic job, working weekends to ensure all wines are filtered and cold stabilised in time. At the same time they have run blending and pre-bottling tastings for clients; sending out samples and running contract lab analysis for other wineries. We have taken on extra staff to make sure we cope with the extra

demand but in summary everyone has been extremely busy!

We started bottling in February and have been bottling between 3,000 to 7,000 bottles of still wines most days. From the start of May we have been running two shifts, bottling sparkling wine from 6 am to 10pm or later and filling 34,000 bottles per day. This means the first people get in at 5am to check that the yeast culture for the sparkling wine (which will have been started several days before and added to the tank to start the secondary fermentation in bottle) is viable and to prepare the line, with the second shift finishing as late as 2am. In June and July we will go back to still wines before finishing the sparkling in August.



This has been a huge logistical challenge, peaking this month when we have needed two trucks per day delivering glass and another two taking filled bottles into storage. Fortunately there



New track for extra cork 'dwell time'

is not the same shortage of glass as last year but most of it has come from France and finding trucks to come to the UK has made deliveries very intermittent. This has taken a lot of coordination by the production team, especially since on top of bottling we have been disgorging and labelling still and sparkling wines as people have their labels printed. We have made this easier by upgrading how our still labelling line runs, with a better 'pack off' station and ability to accumulate bottles at various stages which gives more 'dwell time' for corks, ensuring they re-expand post insertion.

An emerging trend in English wine has been the increased planting of vineyards in East Anglia, in part prompted by research (by Dr Alistair Nesbit et al) showing that with lower rainfall and warmer temperatures, it (along with the South East) is particularly suited for grapes. We are therefore very excited to have just received planning permission to convert an existing agricultural building outside Dedham into a winery. Work will start in June to cut drains and then lay a new sloping concrete floor. Presses, tanks and other equipment will start to arrive in July and August, as will staff, so that we are ready for harvest this year. Most of our clients will be people who we already make wine for, as well as some new vineyard plantings.



The East Anglia winery will have tanks like these (installed in Kent last year)



Last week we had a stand at the London Wine Fair and next month are organising a Trade Tasting for our clients in London during English Wine Week. This is aimed at introducing wine buyers, journalists and influencers to the vineyards and brands we make wine for in order to help them sell their wine. This week work starts on new offices in the winery. This will give us a much bigger space for the lab, as well as a tasting room and will allow us to move out of the three portacabins we currently use.

In the vineyards, a number had a late frost in April which will reduce yield but the mild winter means that many are about two weeks ahead of last year. Now we just need a nice warm summer!

Regards,

Henry and all the team



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