



Dear all,

A global shortage in glass delayed our ability to bottle over the summer (at times there was no green sparkling glass in the UK), so it was a relief to 'tirage' (bottle traditional method sparkling wine) the final 2021 vintage wines at the start of the month. However the winery and production teams have been kept busy all summer as we have also been bottling and labelling still wines, as well as disgorging and labelling sparkling wines. They have done a great job of running two production lines at once, juggling different labels, boxes and packing requirements. We have taken on extra staff as well as some students, some of whom are now back on their second season, to keep things running over the holidays and allow everyone to get away. In the lab Poppy and Irena have been doing contract lab analysis for 21 other wineries, providing rapid results for winemaking decisions, especially important pre-bottling.

Having moved the disgorging line out of the winery earlier in the year and finished bottling, we have been able to start moving in the extra French, German and Italian tanks we have bought ready for harvest. Squeezing them into the winery has been interesting! The lab has also had a revamp and we have welcomed four 'harvest hands' to provide extra skilled staff in the winery and lab. Tim and Fran over from New Zealand, Janneke from South Africa and Greg, who is British, back from vintages in Australia.





Machine harvested Ortega

The hot dry summer has on the whole been great for growing grapes. Some young vines, especially those on clay, suffered from the prolonged dry spell and dropped their leaves early, leading some growers to start irrigation. The lack of rain slowed up what looked as if it could be a very early harvest but it should be a ripe one - similar or better than 2020 and a huge improvement on 2021. The rain over the past couple of weeks has swelled berries but increased disease pressure, so hopefully it will now stay dry.



Hand picked Bacchus

We received our first grapes (ripe, disease free and delicious!) last Monday and after a pause, along with the whole Nation, for the late Queen's funeral yesterday, things get busy this week and we will be operating 24/7. Unusually we are seeing Chardonnay, which normally ripens last at the end of October, being picked now so are expecting a truncated and thus more intense harvest over the next 4 weeks.



'pumping over' a fermenting red wine

Regards,

Henry



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