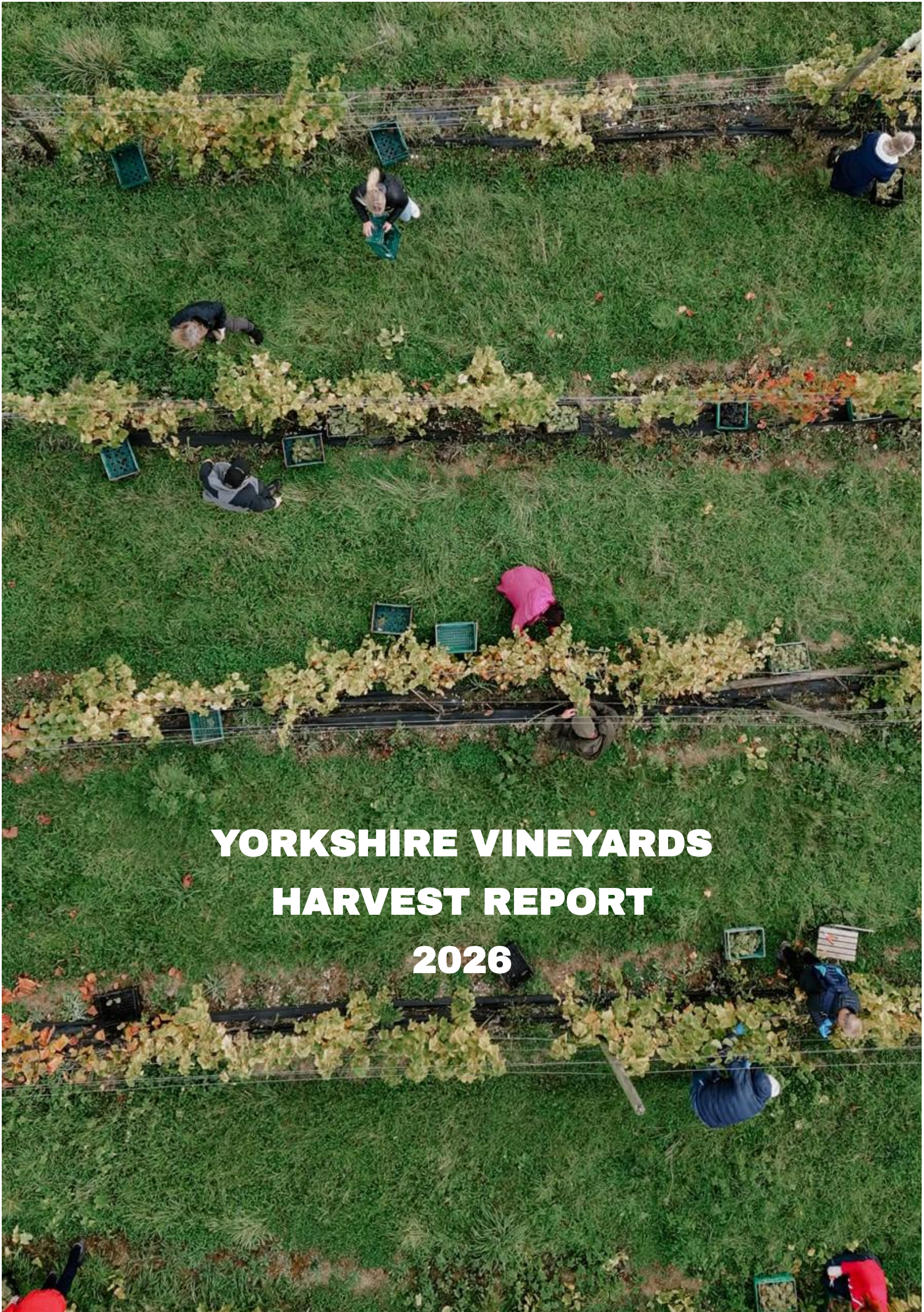
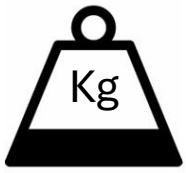
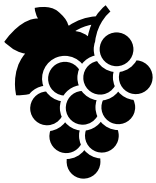
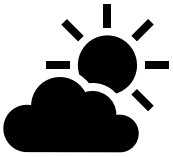


YORKSHIRE VINEYARDS HARVEST REPORT 2026

YORKSHIRE VINEYARDS

HARVEST SEASON 2026

IN METRICS

 180,000 Kg picked in 2026	 27 varieties picked Top 3: Solaris Rondo Seyval Blanc	 Harvest Started 27 August 2026 and ended 27 October 2026
 1042 Growing Degree Days in Vale of York, up 25% from 2025	 7 Frosts Severe frosts 11 & 12 May	 130% of Average Sunshine for the season
 19 commercial vineyards with 125 acres harvested	 Over 500 volunteers involved in harvest	 Year Rank: Excellent

©Yorkshire Vineyards



©Little Wold

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2026

Yorkshire is one of the newer, expanding and exciting regions of English Wine production.

Harvest 2026 has been broadly considered an excellent year for the Yorkshire region, especially for the established vineyards. Newer vineyards did have pressure from early frosts, and the very hot and dry summer, as young vines were put under stress. There was also some mildew pressure on some varieties, but the broad consensus is that grape quality was very good. There are genuinely high expectations for 2026 wines when they land next year.

Highlights:

- Harvest started in August and very early September for varieties used for sparkling wine. The majority of the harvest was done between 20 September and 15 October 2026. These dates are typical for the Yorkshire harvest, the advantage this year has been the grapes were approximately a week ahead of the typical season, meaning riper and better-quality grapes have been picked.

- Seyval Blanc, Solaris, and Rondo have done particularly well, showing how PIWI varieties continue to thrive in the Yorkshire. These three varieties accounted for approximately 70% of the overall grape weight picked this season. Yorkshire is

building a reputation for producing great fruit and wines from these varieties. Oher varieties are being skilfully blended into these wines to build complexity and quality.

- Generally, yields have been very good with over 180 tonnes picked across the region. The view from the vineyards is this is one of the best years ever. Yields were maximised by the great weather in June which meant flowering went well and we had all the buds set. However, there is some commentary that berry sizes seemed smaller resulting in slightly less juice per tonne. The greater number of bunches, offset the reduced juice per berry, so volumes were up.



©Olivia Braggs

- Frosts in May hit some vineyards hard, especially in frost prone areas, resulting in the loss of buds, so yields were held back by the damage. Also, newer vineyards had some pressure due to the drought conditions, especially in August and September, and as a result had to green harvest to protect young vines, again resulting in lost yield.

- The humidity this summer helped to drive mildew pressure in the non-PIWI varieties. This also affected yields of classic grape varieties such as Bacchus and Chardonnay. One vineyard reported a 25% reduction for these varieties against average yields.

- All vineyards expressed that grape quality was excellent.
    - We have seen sugar levels higher than average. We saw Solaris hit 1.1038 specific gravity in one vineyard when picked in mid-October which translates to a potential alcohol of 14.1%.
    - Acidity levels were in the expected acid ranges of 2.95 to 3.3 pH for white varieties and 3.0 to 3.6 for black varieties. Note - both some white and some black grapes were picked early for sparkling wines where a higher pH is desired.

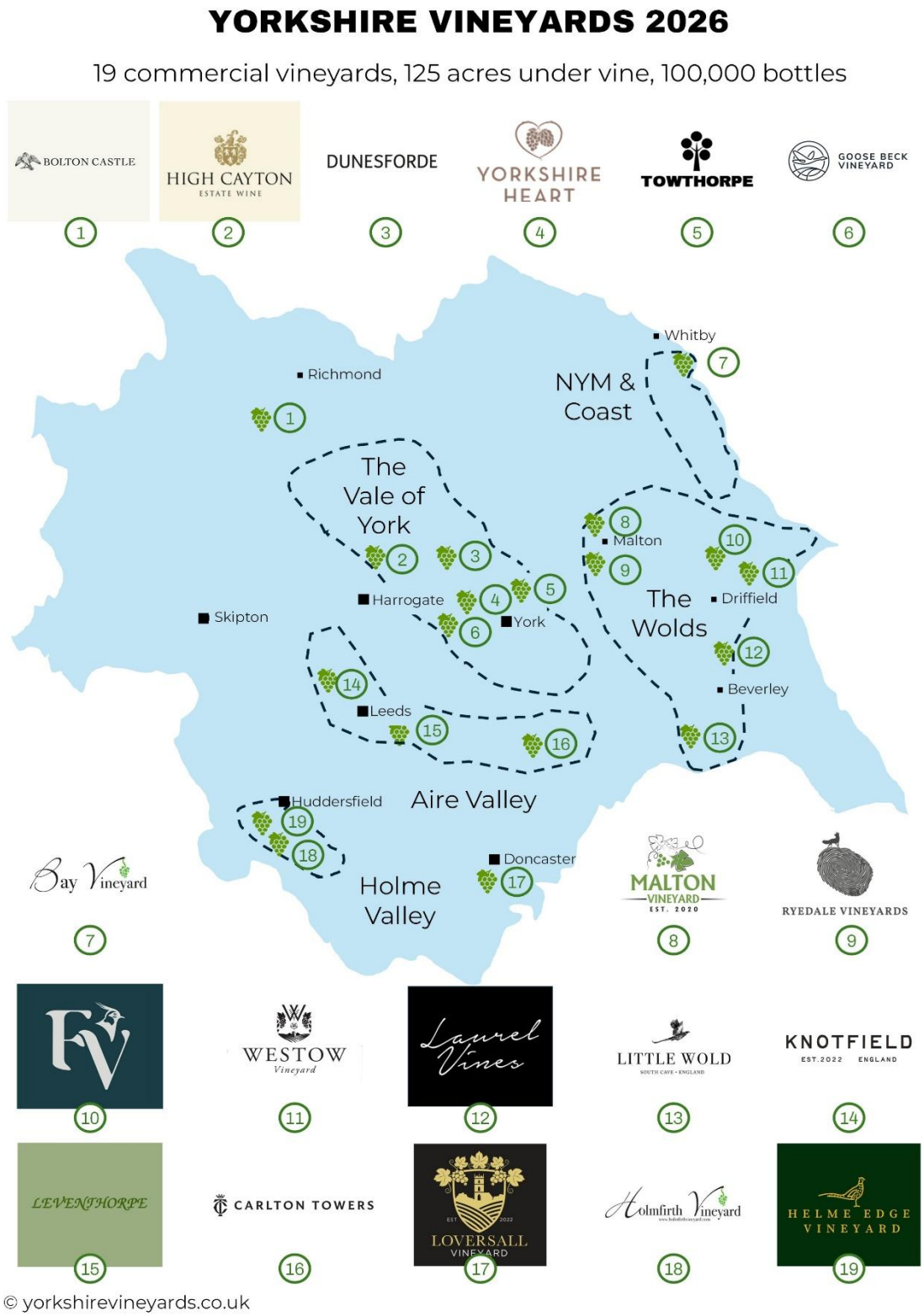
- The region continues to experiment with classic French varieties such as Cabernet Franc, Gamay and Pinot Noir. All have ripened to levels appropriate for wine production in the region, again signalling the strength of this season's production.

- Over 500 hundred volunteers have helped in this year's harvest across the vineyards, with harvest celebrations and events held throughout September and October. We thank them for all their help.

Our vineyards have been broadly happy with the 2026 harvest, summarised by some of our vineyards:

> *"After a nervous start to the year with frost damage affecting all varieties, the prolonged warm and dry weather led to an excellent recovery and good yields. The dry weather enabled us to hang the grapes where we wanted and push for excellent ripeness. Overall, we're really pleased with the 2026 harvest and are excited to see the quality of wines from this year."* James Townsend - Dunesforde Vineyard
>
> *"As a newer vineyard we had a mixed year with frost and drought playing their part in reducing the yield, but good clean grapes have been harvested."* Antonia Chasney – Goose Beck Vineyard
>
> *"The Solaris crop was the best ever and the Rondo was also brilliant. The Regent at Holmfirth was the best ever."* Rebecca Sheveling – Holmfirth and Bay Vineyards.
>
> *"Mildew was a challenge in the Bacchus, but across the wider vineyard yields on the mature PIWI grapes have been exceptional, and the flavour profiles seem to be more intense given the smaller berries. This hopefully sets us up for good 2026 wines."* Peter Kirk – Towthorpe Vineyard.
>
> *"2026 harvest was our biggest and best harvest yet. The quality and quantity of the grapes coming in was brilliant, the weather during our harvest period was excellent which helped with the processing and fermentation. The wine in tanks is tasting very good, we are excited to see what the finished product is like when bottles and released in 2027."* – Tim Spakouskas – Yorkshire Heart Vineyard

WHO WE ARE


YORKSHIRE VINEYARDS 2026
19 commercial vineyards, 125 acres under vine, 100,000 bottles
BOLTON CASTLE
HIGH CAYTON
ESTATE WINE
DUNESFORDE
YORKSHIRE HEART
TOWTHORPE
GOOSE BECK VINEYARD
1
2
3
4
5
6
Whitby
Richmond
NYM & Coast
The Vale of York
Malton
Harrogate
Driffield
Skipton
York
The Wolds
Beverley
Leeds
Huddersfield
Aire Valley
Doncaster
Holme Valley
Bay Vineyard
MALTON VINEYARD EST. 2020
RYEDALE VINEYARDS
WESTOW Vineyard
Laurel Vines
LITTLE WOLD
KNOTFIELD EST.2022 ENGLAND
LEVENTHORPE
CARLTON TOWERS
LOVERSALL VINEYARD
Holmfirth Vineyard
HELME EDGE VINEYARD
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REPORT CONTENTS

This report is produced by the vineyards of Yorkshire and covers the harvest of 2026.

We are proud of the Yorkshire wine industry and have seen it growth over the 40 years since the first vineyards were planted in 1985. Yorkshire now has 19 commercial vineyards with 125 acres under vine producing over 100,000 bottles of wine in 2025. The report will discuss the factors that have influenced production.

We have summarised our collective performance in 2026 to:

- Create a baseline for future years and to help provide wider statistics to the UK Wine sector.
- Show the diversity of grapes we are now producing and the innovation that is occurring in our region.

Our desire is to create a regular report that will:

- Help all our growers understand season by season what to expect from the vines we have.
- Look at how specific varieties have performed so we can see the trends of production in future years.



2026 HARVEST

HOW THE YEAR UNFOLDED

Many things compound to build a good harvest, including previous year's performance, the weather at specific times, disease pressure, and the right conditions for harvest. Here is how the year unfolded and the impact on the harvest results.

2025 was an exceptional year and that set the vines up well for 2026

The previous year produces the canes which this year's fruit grows from, so it matters. 2025 was great with strong cane production and the winter had not been too extreme, so we had healthy plants at the start of the year.

We had a warm early spring which kickstarted the vines early, extending the growing season.

Heat in late March and April helped kickstart the vines. In Yorkshire we were 1.5 to 2.5 ^{o}C above average, so the grapevines woke up early and started their annual cycle earlier which gsve the vines more time at the end of the year to ripen.

April was in fact very sunny and warm, with 8th April hitting 21^{o}C. This early heat adding to the potential for the 2026 harvest.

Frosts in May dealt a blow to some vineyards, especially newer or frost prone vineyards reducing yield potential for 2026.

We should not forget the frosts in May 2026. Frost kills the new shots and is therefore very bad. The south was hit hard but Yorkshire did not escape the impacts. Yorkshire had two particularly late frosts on 11 May and 12 May when the vines shoots were young. Established and hilly vineyards had less damage, but newer and frost prone areas like the Vale of York had some particularly hard frosts which killed shoots.



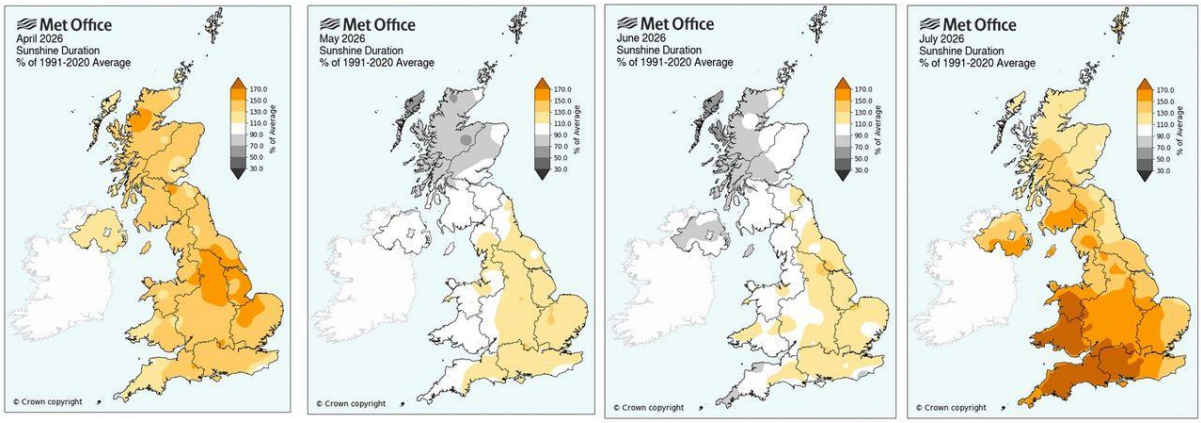


New shoots and buds were killed reducing the scale and size of the potential harvest for some vineyards.

Excellent sunshine levels in April, May, June and July allowed the vines to flourish producing very good flowers and leaf growth.

At this stage of the year sunshine is very important. Photosynthesis is driving the growth of the vines, and we need good amounts of sunshine to grow leaves and produce flowers.

In 2026, Yorkshire had 130% to 150% of its average sunshine (source MET OFFICE) so we had a great start to the year. The sunshine also combined with 33% to 50% of average rainfall for April in the Pennies, helping the West side of the region start well.



Source: ©Met Office Climate Summaries

Record breaking heat in early Summer provided extended daily growing conditions

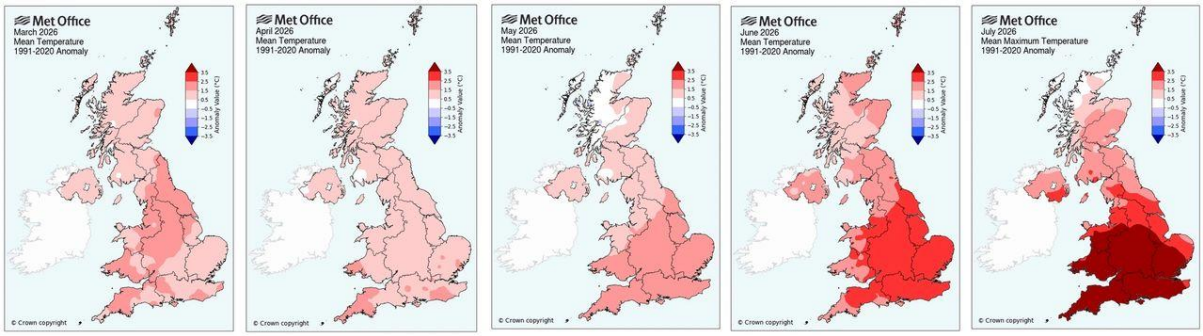
We also had a very warm start to the year. Growing Degree Days for the first three months of the season was 338.7, which is very high for the region and compares to 247.2 for 2024.

Record-breaking heat re-wrote May temperature records across the UK. Temperatures reached 31^{o}C in the Vale of York Also, very high overnight temperatures were recorded across the region, with 20.9°C observed at Emley Moor in West Yorkshire, marking a 6°C increase from previous records.[1]

We also had 5 consecutive days over 29^{o}C at the end of June which is a key for the reproductive cycle of a vine.

Yorkshire recorded its highest ever June temperature - reaching 34.4C (93.5F) in Sheffield.

Temperatures were 2.5 – 3.5 degrees above average in July, so July was very good for the grapes to grow and mature.



Source: ©Met Office Climate Summaries

We had a calm mid-summer which meant fruit set on the flowers that formed was near 100%

The flowers self-pollinate and need calm conditions to help pollination. We had high pressure over the UK in late June/early July as the grapes flowered bringing light winds and dry weather, which is ideal for fruit set. This meant most vineyards had record levels of grapes forming on their vines, and varieties such as Seyval Blanc were laden.



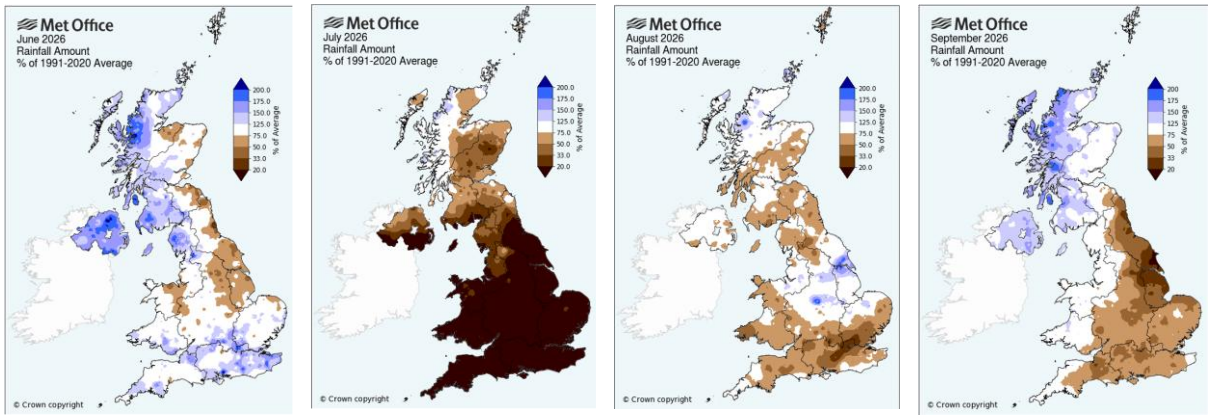
We had an early veraison driven by heatwaves and sunshine through the Summer which increased the opportunity for riper fruit at harvest.

The grapes went through "veraison" early this year with some black grapes starting veraison in the last week of July. Sunshine on the grapes is needed to help them ripen and develop the flavour profiles we need for wine production. We had a sunnier and warmer August than average which again helped. Also, we had another heatwave with temperatures hitting 35C on 13 August. At these temperatures the vines start to shut down. It was only for a day so

limited impact but again shows the heat. The sustained heat and sunshine help build the flavour profiles in the grapes, so there is potential in 2026 wines to express rarer flavour traits.

Grape swelling and growth through the summer and autumn was stalled by some of the lowest rainfall levels on record reducing the litres per Kg at harvest.

Yorkshire recorded its lowest rainfall on record from over 100 years of records. June had below average rainfall and started a period where in some places it didn't rain for over a month. July was extremely dry. Some heavy down pours in August helped, however the water was not necessarily absorbed given the dry soils. September was also significantly below average for rainfall. Yorkshire officially moved into drought in mid-October 2026 after the exceptionally dry year. Met Office Climate Summaries demonstrate the extent of the drought with the amount of brown on the map during the crucial periods.



Source: ©Met Office Climate Summaries

This lack of rain did impact the size of the berries, especially where grapevines were not very well established. Even those vines with deep root systems had berries that didn't swell as much as a wetter year, and it was noticeable that it took longer for the grapes to fill out before veraison. This overall lack of water in September also meant berries sizes stayed small before harvest, so despite having significantly more berries, we have seen the litres of juice per Kg fall, offsetting some of the bumper harvest weight-wise.

The hope is that the lack of water will in turn concentrate flavours in the grape juice, leading to riper, more expressive traits in the wine.

The lack of rain also led to increased green harvests in new vineyards to protect vines, again reducing the potential Kg of grapes at harvest.

Some newer vineyards reported fruit loss due to the need to protect younger vines from stress by green harvesting grape bunches. This results in the vines focussing effort on few bunches with the hope of better grapes. Established vineyards where the vines had deeper root systems did not have this issue and many have reported bumper crops.

Several vineyards reported mildew pressure this season impacting yields on non-PIWI varieties.

A number of vineyards reported mildew pressure on their 'traditional' variety grapevines, caused by a combination of the heat coupled with humidity, and the associated 'tropical' nights reported by the Met Office.

Late July and early August as the canopy grew, micro-climates in the vines where humidity develops where compounded by the humidity in the atmosphere. Vine canopy management, such as leaf stripping and regular protective spraying, have kept the mildew at bay for many, but outbreaks had a big impact on crops like Bacchus and Chardonnay.

The weather profile in Yorkshire in September did have some cooler nights which generated mists that hung around in the valleys, especially as we approached October. This blocked morning sunshine, so leaves stayed wet building further mildew pressure again just before harvest.

The weather pre-harvest was benign so the final pre-harvest period continued a slow development of hanging grapes.

September was warm, very dry with average sunshine. We had some misty mornings so the grape development in September was steady and meant a few vineyards pushed planned harvests back by a week as the acidity in the grapes hadn't fallen far enough. Yorkshire had less than 50% if its average rainfall and this lack of rain reduced bunch swelling which contributed to this slight delay in harvest.

The good weather continued into October allowing a 'dry' harvest which contributed to better quality in the grapes and with less rot stress.

Nearly all vineyards reported good harvesting conditions and had limited problems from the weather bringing the grapes into the winery. We had some very good weather in middle of October to harvest, with the weather finally breaking around 20 October 2026.



2026 was incredibly warm by all measures and the warmest for many years, which has contributed to a stronger growing season for established vines.

The growing degree days for the Vale of York between April 2026 to October 2026, was 1,042. This is up from 791 in 2024 [2]. The equivalent figure in the Wolds for 2026 was 1008, showing the heat was widespread. (GDD measures the amount of time the temperature is above 10C.) Yorkshire had a season similar to the heat levels experienced in the Loire Valley in the 70s and early 80s.

Summary

The growing season for 2026 has been excellent for established vineyards with large crops. There has been some damage caused by frost in the frost prone areas, such as the Vale of York, and some mildew pressure given the humidly of this summer. Newer vineyards have had to prioritise the vines over the grapes in the drought conditions which has had an impact on volumes.

The general consensus is this has been very good season.

Sources

[1] Weather data from Met Office Climate Summaries 2026

[2] GDD data from Syngenta.



© Olivia Braggs

HARVEST DATES

Yorkshire produces all styles of wine and the harvest dates do reflect the need to have grape sugar and acids metrics appropriate for the differing start points for sparking wines through to red wines. As a result, we do have a long harvesting period.

The harvest this year started on 27 August and ran through until 27 October.

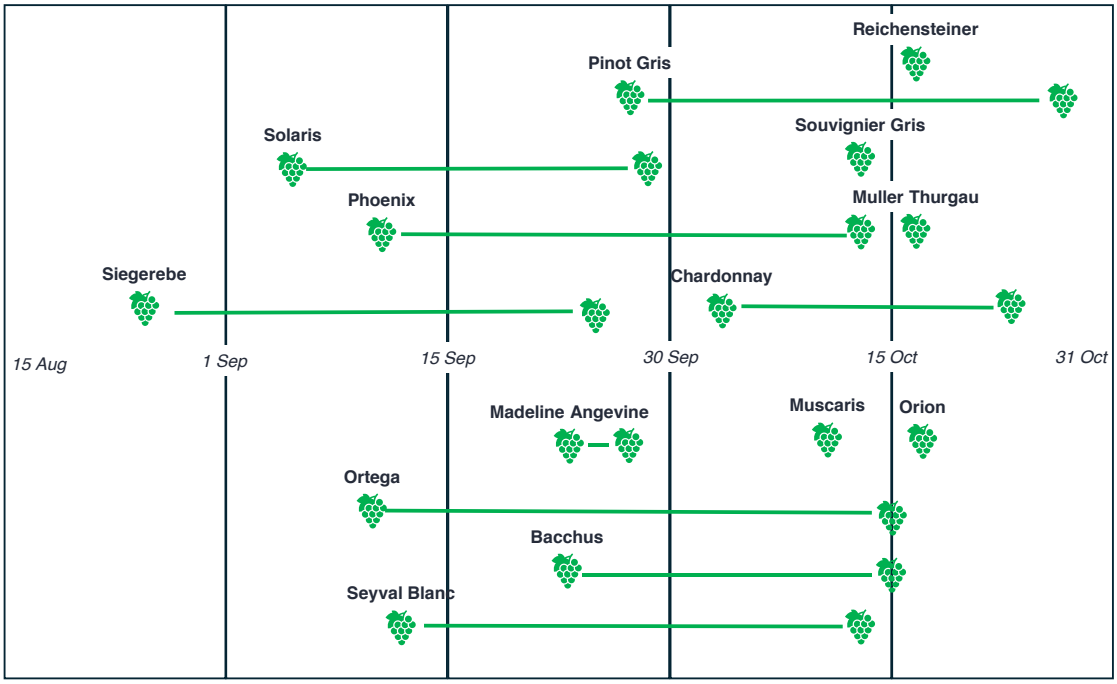
There were numerous picking sessions with all the grapes in the region being hand harvested by vineyard and volunteer teams. The hand harvested process enables quality grapes to be selected. It also allows for rows to be picked specifically to the quality of the harvest.

Several vineyards had community picking days this year which brought large numbers of local people into their vineyards.

The grapes were picked over a typical picking window for Yorkshire harvest. The broad consensus this year was that grapes were able to be picked when riper and acids were at the right point for harvest. This was due to the ripening cycle being accelerated in 2026 due to the better weather with veraison being 5 to 7 days earlier than average and starting in July 2026 for some varieties.

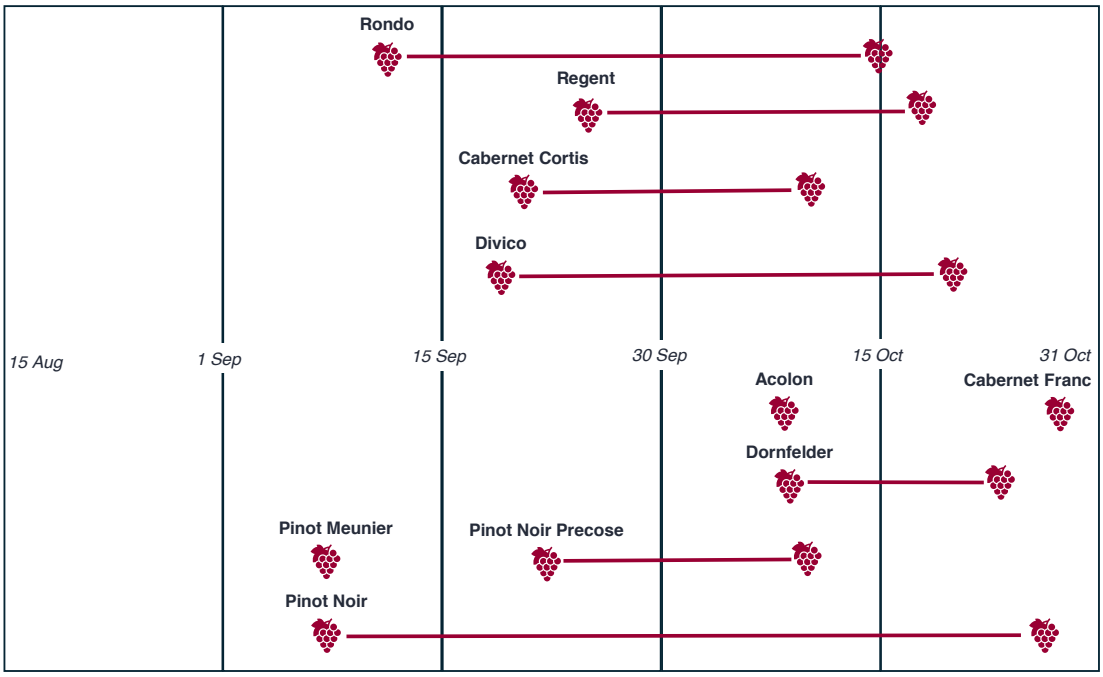
White Grape harvest dates.

Picking for sparkling wine production started in the first two weeks of September. The bulk of still wine picking took place between 24 September and 16 October 2026. Classic varieties, such as Chardonnay and Pinot Gris, where picked primarily in October to allow for the grapes to hang to reduce acidity levels.



Black Grape harvest dates.

PIWI varieties did well again with good ripening windows this season.







YIELDS

Yields in weight were significantly up on 2025 which was an exceptional year. It reverses the trend of 2024 where we had terrible weather and a year to forget.

Varieties such as Solaris, Rondo and Regent had excellent years with fruit production per vine in some vineyards reported up by roughly 25% year on year.

However, litres per Kg of fruit were below or at the average level, given the near drought conditions.

Summary

- 27 varieties were harvested across the region
- Total weight across the vineyards surveyed was 143,000 Kg, with established vineyards reporting equivalent or better weights than 2025.
- There is potentially another 30,000 to 50,000 Kg of fruit from Yorkshire which is not in the survey data. This weight is primarily Solaris, Rondo, Regent, Pinot Noir and Seyval Blanc.
- Overall we have circa 180,000 Kg from Yorkshire Vineyards this year, which we believe is a record weight. This breaks down as:
    - 86% of the weight of grapes picked were PIWI varieties, showing Yorkshire is building a reputation for these new grape varieties.
    - 68% of grapes were white grapes, 2% 'grey' grapes and 30% black grapes.

- 70% of weight of grapes was in three varieties - Solaris, Seyval Blanc and Rondo - reflecting the plantings across numerous vineyards and the use of these grapes in both sparkling and still wine production.
- Only 3% of grapes were classic French varieties - Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier, Chardonnay, Gamay and Cabernet Franc.

- Based on the weights picked and juice volumes created, there is a potential for circa 125,000 to 140,000 bottles of Yorkshire 2026 wines which will be a record.

Harvest Weights by Variety

The table reflects the data collected from 11 of the 19 vineyards in the region.

Variety	Kg	%
Solaris	34290	24.0%
Seyval Blanc	34980	24.5%
Phoenix	10108	7.1%
Ortega	8179	5.7%
Madeline Angevine	4425	3.1%
Bacchus	3521	2.5%
Chardonnay	1316	0.9%
Muscaris	778	0.5%
Orion	531	0.4%
Hibernal	414	0.3%
Richensteiner	250	0.2%
Muller Thurgau	125	0.1%
Pinot Gris	1414	1.0%
Siegerrebe	741	0.5%
Souvignier Gris	490	0.3%
Rondo	24764	17.3%
Regent	3452	2.4%
Pinot Noir Précoce	4380	3.1%
Cabernet Cortis	2775	1.9%
Divico	1580	1.1%
Pinot Noir	2121	1.5%
Acolon	1047	0.7%
Dornfelder	88	0.1%
Pinot Menier	1150	0.8%
Cabernet Franc	60	0.0%
Gamay	10	0.0%
Total	**143,000**	

Data includes: Dunesforde, Goose Beck, Helme Edge, High Cayton, Knotfield, Laurel Vines, Little Wold, Malton, Ryedale, Towthorpe, Yorkshire Heart

We believe this covers over 75% of the acreage and vines in the region.

Estimated Grape Harvest

Where vineyards in the region have not been able to provide data or information, we have looked at the varieties in their vineyards and created a rough estimate of incremental weight based on this season's metrics. Our current estimate is an additional 30,000 to 50,000 Kg. This helps to provide an overall picture for the region.

Variety	**Kg**
Solaris	20000 – 30000
Seyval Blanc	2000
Chardonnay	1000
Auxerrois Colmar	500
Rondo	8000 – 11000
Pinot Noir	3500
Regent	2500
Total	**Approx. 30,000 - 50,000**

Data estimated for: Bolton Castle, Bay, Carlton Towers, Farthings, Holmfirth, Leventhorpe, Loversall, Westow





©Olivia Braggs

GRAPE QUALITY

The quality of the grapes for wine production this year is considered very good. Sugar levels were good for the northern cool climate. Acidity levels were OK too, with a long enough season to get phenolic ripeness. Stalks were brown, not green, and berries were often left to hang to improve quality.

Sugar Levels

All varieties enjoyed the climate this year and reached full sugar ripeness. Grapes for sparkling wine were picked early, and given the benign weather in October grapes were left to hang to get better phenolic ripeness.

Variety	SG (Min)	Potential Alcohol	SG(Max)	Potential Alcohol
Solaris	1087.4	11.8%	1103.8	14.1%
Seyval Blanc	1062.9	8.4%	1084.0	11.3%
Phoenix	1061.1	8.2%	1082.0	11.0%
Ortega	1081.0	10.9%	1082.0	11.0%
Madeline Angevine	1069.8	9.3%	1090.0	12.4%
Bacchus	1069.8	9.3%	1088.8	12.0%
Chardonnay	1080.8	10.9%	1088.0	11.9%
Reichensteiner			1080.0	10.7%
Muller Thurgau			1076.0	10.2%

Variety	SG (Min)	Potential Alcohol	SG(Max)	Potential Alcohol
Pinot Gris			1088.8	12.0%
Siegerrebe	1079.0	10.6%	1086.0	11.6%
Rondo	1078.5	10.5%	1084.0	11.3%
Regent	1076.0	10.2%	1087.4	11.8%
Pinot Noir Précoce	1078.5	10.5%	1087.4	11.8%
Cabernet Cortis	1081.0	10.9%	1091.9	12.4%
Divico	1083.0	11.2%	1085.2	11.5%
Pinot Noir	1073.3	9.8%	1080.0	10.7%
Acolon			1083.0	11.2%
Dornfelder			1079.4	10.7%
Pinot Menier			1072.0	9.7%
Cabernet Franc			1070.2	9.4%

Acidity

Acidity levels were reported to be good for the grapes and measured in the standard expected acid ranges (3.0 to 3.2 for sparkling, 3.1 to 3.3 pH for white wines and 3.2 to 3.4 for red wines). There was some anecdotal evidence that due to the lack of rain in September acid levels remained higher than expected delaying harvest dates back a little and reversing some of the gains from the early growth in Spring. The natural dilution of sugars and acids caused by grape swelling had not happened to the same level as previous years.

Variety	Min pH	Max pH	Min TA	Max TA
Solaris	2.97	3.18	8.0	11.1
Seyval Blanc	3.00	3.03	9.0	9.0
Phoenix	2.95	3.10	8.5	10.0
Ortega	3.13	3.13	7.0	7.0
Bacchus	3.17	3.34	7.6	9.5
Rondo	3.00	3.30	7.0	9.0
Regent	3.21	3.30	8.0	8.5
Pinot Noir Précoce	3.48	3.62	7.7	9.3

Overall

The overall consensus is we have produced a good set of grapes to make wine from this year which should carry flavour profiles associated with riper grapes.

OUR WONDERFUL VOLUNTEERS

The harvest would only be possible with the volunteers that come each year to support our vineyards. We would like to thank them all. We believe we have probably had over 500 volunteers working across the vineyards this year, making our extended family very special.



FINAL COMMENTARY

The 2026 harvest has been excellent for Yorkshire Vineyards.

As Yorkshire cements its position as a mature and viable region for viticulture, we have seen 2026 joins a series of recent years where we have had excellent results.

★★★★★ 2026	★★★★★ 2025	★★ 2024
★★★★ 2023	★★★★★ 2022	**Key** ★★★★★ - Excellent ★★★★★ - Very Good ★★★★ - Good ★★★ - Average ★★ - Below

The expectation is that the region will produce circa 125,000 to 140,000 bottles of Yorkshire wine from the 2026 harvest, which is another major set forward in the region's growth.

It is fair to say that getting the harvest in is only part of the story. The hard work in the wineries now starts to turn the great grapes into wonderful wines.

When reading this report, please also remember that even though we have had a very good harvest, the various vineyards continue to operate in a challenging market and need all the support we can get. We want to remind people that wine making is a capital intensive and highly variable industry, where any good year has to subsidise poorer years or fund major investments as we expand. The industry's call for duty relief on wine sold through the cellar door would deliver much needed investment funds for the Yorkshire wine industry. This relief would bring the wine industry in line with beer and cider producers. Cellar door activity contributes significantly to local tourism in Yorkshire.

For more details go to https://winegb.co.uk/create-new-traditions-back-british-vineyards/

Finally, we must say a big thank you to our customers and volunteers who come back each year, and to the growing numbers of people in media, social media and the industry who have championed Yorkshire Wine. We appreciate your support.

REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

Thank you to our Yorkshire Vineyard owners for sharing the data and commentary that has made this report possible.

Peter Kirk – Towthorpe Vineyard (Report Author)

James Townsend – Dunesforde Vineyard

Paul, Lisa and Antonia Chasney – Goose Beck Vineyard

Alan Calder – Helme Edge Vineyard

Kathryn – High Cayton Vineyard

Rebecca Sheveling – Bay and Holmfirth Vineyard

Laura Hibbert – Knotfield Vineyard

Ian Sargent – Laurel Vines Vineyard

Alice Maltby – Little Wold Vineyard

Viv Clarkson – Malton Vineyard

John, Kit and Jack Fletcher – Ryedale Vineyard

Tim, Georgia and Henry Spakouskas – Yorkshire Heart Vineyard

If you have any questions relating to the report, then please contact peter@towthorpe.com

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Rear Cover: Bay Vineyard.

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