



Cartograph News: August 2018

Alan & Serena <info@cartographwines.com>

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Hello

As summer comes to an end, we're getting really excited to start the harvest. We've decided to do another sparkling wine this year, so that will be our first pick at the Cartograph Estate vineyard — probably in about a week.

AUGUST 2018

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READY, SET, HARVEST!

The grapes for our next sparkling wine might come in before the end of August, but the first fruit for still wine will come in early September. This breaks a pattern of early picks in recent years that have had us picking in August, when the threat of heat waves is more likely to push fruit to the finish line in a rush.

So, are we ready for harvest? If we look at our checklist, (which we immortalized on our 2013 harvest shirts) we're ready to go! We've loaded up the freezer with lasagnas, meatballs and tomato sauce, mac and cheese, quiches and lots of hearty soups, all ready to go for harvest meals. Our boots are sitting in the sun drying from an application of waterproof goo. Pick knives have been sharpened and the pick bins are being cleaned. We've tested our headlamps and stocked up on extra batteries. So, we're ready: Bring on harvest 2018!

2013 Harvest Checklist

1. find refractometer
2. get ziplock bags
3. sharpen pick knives
4. clean pick bins
5. bake lasagna
6. program coffee maker
7. get headlamps
8. cut hair really short
9. move office into truck
10. stock up on beer



END OF VINTAGE ALERT



Summer is dwindling, and so is our stash of rosé! We have just 15 cases of our [2017 North Coast Rosé of Pinot Noir](#) remaining. If you'd like to be sure you get some, call us at 707.433.8270 or place an order online. Rosé is one of our favorite wines to sip while cooking Thanksgiving dinner!



FROM THE WINEMAKER: Farming for Climate Extremes

Whatever your views on climate change, the one thing I can say about conditions in the vineyard is that things, they are a-changin'. In all the areas from which we source fruit, we're seeing more and more extreme weather conditions.

While volatile swings in temperature and rainfall across the region are becoming more common, the changing weather patterns are showing themselves most on the AVA margins where ideal ripening conditions are not always as much of a given as they're often assumed to be in Northern California. Our estate vineyard is on the southern boundary of the Russian River Valley AVA, right up against the boundary of the new Petaluma Gap AVA. This southern tip is quite cold and is affected by the winds that barrel through the Petaluma Gap every afternoon, as well as by the drenching wet dew that's often pulled inland overnight through the Gap. We learned quickly in our first year of farming there that canopy management was critical to a healthy crop in this vineyard.

Read on for a few lessons we've learned and some info about how we're using precision farming to meet the challenges of these weather patterns.

Year One: 2016

The vineyard was fully mature when we bought it in 2016. That year, we trained the vines in a fairly conventional way, positioning the canes in a vertical position tucked between sets of wires. This training method is called Vertical Shoot Positioning (VSP), and it's a good way to get sun exposure to all of the canopy for the best shot at ripening the crop.

The unintended consequence of this tightly managed system was that it funneled all the dew from very wet overnight fog directly onto the clusters. We figured out what was going on, but had to be very diligent about our sugar sampling to take into account that the clusters were fattening up by absorbing moisture through their skins. It made for some interesting exchanges with the team that was scheduling the picks. "Go overnight Tuesday. Wait, make that Thursday. Never mind, I'll check in again Friday." The wet conditions made picking decisions very difficult across the whole Russian River Valley that year.

Year Two: 2017

After the lessons of 2016, we decided to adjust our canopy strategy a bit. Instead of hedging the vines to remove lateral shoots and some leaves, we ran the hedger down the rows to top the canes that were well above the trellis wires, and loosely trimmed some



laterals off the morning side of the vines. Next, we had a crew thin some leaves from the morning side and in the middle of the vine row to create airflow. On the side of the rows that sees afternoon sun, we didn't pull any leaves and tipped the lateral shoots about six inches out from the fruit. It's a little tough to see in the photo because I wasn't documenting the canopy strategy. There's a damn deer in that row. It was a challenge but we got him out with no damage done.

The net effect: We created a way for the overnight dew to drip down the canopy outside of the fruit zone, keeping the fruit from getting soaked. We also let more of the tall canes droop out into the rows on either side of the vines. With that done, we were ready for the soupy stuff.

And then nature happened. Most of the growing season was uneventful, but as we approached harvest we started to see some serious heat spells. Over Labor Day weekend, high temps topped out over 100°F for three days, with two of those days hitting 110 — almost unheard-of temps for a location that's so heavily influenced by coastal conditions. We had managed our canopy to protect the fruit from wet conditions that never arrived ... but the extended reach of the canopy and the vines stretching out above the top wires was also a perfect guard against the punishing sun. As a result, we didn't see any heat damage that would have been a problem without that extra bit of shade.

Year Three: 2018

We've continued to leave the canopy a bit shaggy to protect the clusters. It's expensive to make so many passes to manage the canopy by hand rather than by machine, but it's nice to know that careful canopy management solves a couple of different problems that can arise out of extreme weather conditions.

Cheers,

Alan



UPCOMING EVENTS

Our partnership with the Green Music Center at Sonoma State University continues; see below for upcoming Cartograph-sponsored events. And don't forget that Cartograph Circle members receive special pricing on all 2018–2019 events at the center!

Sept 15: [2014 Pinot Noir Magnum Release](#)

Sept 30: [Brentano String Quartet](#) at the Green Music Center

October 7: [Fall Release Party](#) — invitations were emailed to Circle members, if you have not received yours, please [let Serena know](#)

Nov. 3: [Harvest Celebration at Valette](#)

Feb. 22: [Wild Up](#) at the Green Music Center

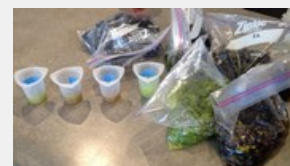


BACK TO WORK WE GO

Back to final preparations for the pick and sugar sampling!

Cheers,

Alan and Serena



Cartograph Wines

[340 Center St., Healdsburg, CA 95448](#) | (707) 433-8270

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