



November 4, 2014

Dear Friends,

We produced the # 1 wine on the planet per Wine Enthusiast this year, but please read on... As those who live here know, we experienced one of the warmest, driest and most beautiful years of weather in memory. It started early in the spring which led to a very early bud-break. Unlike many other years in Oregon, June was completely summerlike which gave us early flowering as well.

The concern we have in a very warm year is that the plant (Pinot noir) might race to ripeness and not have enough hang time required for the development of detail in aroma, flavor and texture. Pinot noir is the earliest ripening red wine variety and this normally necessitates weather conditions that prevent accelerated development.

The consistently warm days, as stunning as they were for us as human beings to experience, would have propelled the fruit forward at a rate of development that would have given us overly sugared and simple qualities in the resulting wine save one very significant fact. We had a bountiful crop.

As those who live here also know, we had a very cold spell this last winter. The low temperature in this region was 9° Fahrenheit. We were very concerned about damage to the dormant buds. All European varieties are susceptible to bud death when temperatures are in the single digits. After the cold event we checked on the health of the buds by cutting through them horizontally with a knife. Any buds damaged would show that they were destroyed by the cold by turning black. Each bud is in fact three buds: A primary, secondary and tertiary (3rd bud). When we cut through the buds we saw no issues. Hallelujah! This deep cold we incurred with no ill effects is an explanation for the natural high crop level we had.

There have been many studies that show the colder the temperature that fruit producing plants are subjected to, if the buds are not damaged, the more fruitful the plant will be. The deep cold certainly played a role in the plants setting a larger crop. This effect was not limited to grape vines. We saw large crops of apples, pears, apricots and plums as well. In a year that we were worried about abnormally quick development the increased crop was our friend. The work required of the vine to ripen this increased crop level put the brakes on the plants. Our year was extended by leaving the natural level of fruit and increasing the hang time.

No one, more than we, believe in thinning in years where it is appropriate. We began utilizing acreage contracts in 1987. These contracts gave us control over crop level and addressed the need to reduce crop in a cooler year. This ensured that in a year of limited heat we would still

harvest fully ripe fruit. This year the opposite approach was needed. Proof once more that you can't recipe the farming of wine grapes.

2014 provided an abundance of perfectly ripe Pinot noir. The wine exhibits great depth of color, intense and complex aroma and flavor. The textural profile is lush and balanced. Very beautiful.....very fun. We look forward to sharing this amazing vintage with you.

The Wine Enthusiast magazine has given significant recognition to our winery this year. We have been nominated as one of five wineries for "American Winery of the Year". In their review of the top 100 wines of the world our bottling of 2012 Tanager was rated 33rd. Our bottling of the 2012 Abbott Claim is their number one rated wine on the planet. We appreciate the recognition and that it puts Oregon on the world stage.

Best,

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