



Oct. 19, 2016

Bericht zur kalifornischen Weinernte 2016 *Früh, normaler Ertrag, exquisite Qualität*



Die 2016er Kalifornische Weinernte ist von hervorragender Qualität dank des Niederschlags im vergangenen Winter und einer relativ gleichmässigen Wachstumsperiode.

SAN FRANCISCO -

Die kalifornische Weinernte hatte 2016 einen frühen Start und ergab im gesamten Bundesstaat eine grösstenteils normale Ertragsmenge von aussergewöhnlicher Qualität. Eine relativ gleichmässige Wachstumsperiode folgte dem willkommenen Winter-Regen welcher die Auswirkungen der Dürre gemildert hat.

Die niedrigeren Tages-Durchschnittstemperaturen und die kühlen Nächte haben für eine exzellente Qualität der Weintrauben gesorgt. Im August 2016 wurde der Gesamtertrag vom California Department of Food and Agriculture auf 3.9 Millionen Tonnen geschätzt (nahe dem historischen Durchschnittsertrag). "Ein weiterer qualitativ hochwertiger Jahrgang ist eine gute Nachricht für Weinkonsumenten im In- und im Ausland, die für anhaltende Rekordabsätze sorgen", sagte Wine Institute Präsident und CEO Robert P. (Bobby) Koch.

Weiterlesen für die vollständige englische Pressemitteilung (insgesamt 6 Seiten):



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2016 California Wine Harvest Report

Early, Normal Yield, Exquisite Quality



The 2016 California wine harvest is of exceptional quality, thanks to rains last winter and a relatively even growing season.

SAN FRANCISCO — The 2016 California winegrape harvest was early, with a mostly normal yield of exceptional quality fruit throughout the state. A relatively even growing season followed welcome winter rains that helped to alleviate the drought. “It’s been a good season so far—the grapes are in great condition, showcasing spectacular flavors,” said **Randy Ullom**, winemaster at Kendall-Jackson Wines, with vineyards in Sonoma County and statewide. **Cathy Corison**, owner/winemaker at Corison Winery in Napa Valley is equally pleased: “2016 was early, small and delicious. The entire ripening season enjoyed cooler than average daytime highs and cold nights—perfect for inky, complex wines. Measured in pace, it was also easy on the winemakers.”

The overall state crop was estimated to be near the historical average of 3.9 million tons by the California Department of Food and Agriculture in August 2016.

“Anticipated El Niño rainfall was less than hoped for (eight inches) in Paso Robles, but still greater than the prior four vintages of drought, and appears to have had a positive effect on yields and quality in our Bordeaux and Rhone varieties in 2016,” said **Jeff Meier**, director of winemaking/president, J. Lohr Vineyards & Wines. “Yield projections for 2016 were slightly below long-term averages, but most varieties are coming in at or above estimates—a welcome outcome for Paso Robles growers. Overall, the vintage of 2016 is delivering high quality, high color density Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon from the cooler microclimates and fruit-intensive Rhone varieties.”

In Lodi, Michael David Winery hit the halfway mark at the end of September. “The harvest pace was steady and extremely level with little peaks of chaos. Small heat spikes followed by fairly moderate weather pushed sugars up in vineyards where needed and then allowed time for growers and wineries to get fruit off in a timely manner, without major fruit breakdown or raisining. Fruit looks exceptional so far—probably the cleanest Zinfandel crop I have seen in some time. The wines are coming out beautifully, and it’s another fantastic harvest in Lodi,” said **Adam Mettler**, director of winemaking.

“Here in Santa Barbara, we have seen another early harvest, and much of the Pinot Noir and Sauvignon Blanc was harvested in the last two weeks of August,” said **Frank Ostini**, owner/winemaker of Hitching Post Wines. “We had a very warm spring and early summer, but July and August brought cool nights and gentle warmth that allowed the medium-sized crop to mature perfectly—small berries in pristine condition. We are excited to be making some of our best-ever balanced wines with fine color and intensity.”

“The 2016 harvest in Sonoma County looks a lot like the 2015 harvest,” said **Ryan Decker**, winegrower at Rodney Strong Vineyards. “We started early, we will finish early, and the winemakers are very excited with what they are seeing in the fermenters. One of the main differences— a welcome one—was the seven to 10-day break we had between the Pinot/Chardonnay harvest and the Merlot/Cabernet harvest. This year we had some unseasonably cool temperatures in mid-September that put the brakes on harvest, albeit temporarily, allowing us to free up some tank space. The yields are down just a bit from the long-term average, but wine quality looks to be stellar.”

“Another high quality California vintage is great news for wine consumers here and abroad who continue to drive sales of Golden State wines to record levels,” said Wine Institute President and CEO **Robert P. (Bobby) Koch**. “With California wine’s economic contribution of \$57.6 billion annually to the state economy and \$114 billion annually to the U.S. economy, it’s also excellent news for our state and nation which benefit from jobs, tax revenue, hospitality, tourism and community enhancement.”



Editors: Harvest photos available for download at:
<https://app.box.com/s/i2ypmacv0bn6x1q6l1s4tuh39kkbsqix>

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California Quotes & Notes on Harvest 2016

LAKE COUNTY

Tracey Hawkins, co-founder, Hawk and Horse Vineyards

Lake County winegrape growers are proclaiming 2016 an exquisite year for quality. From bud break, through bloom and veraison, the county saw textbook weather patterns. Warm spring days, shifting to a hot, bright summer with cooling coastal breezes in the evenings, is typical of this mountainous region. Harvest was slightly early—not as early as last year’s vintage—but about two weeks earlier than normal. Countywide, growers are reporting even maturity and ripening. Yields for whites are slightly above average. Yields for red varieties have been more variable, with some yields above average and some slightly below average.

LIVERMORE

Mark Clarin, winemaker, McGrail Vineyards and Winery

The winter rains were a blessing after several years of drought. The vines woke up on time and had excellent growth. Our yields in the Livermore Valley have bounced back from the lighter 2015 vintage. The flavors are great, fruit is ripening perfectly, and the color is excellent across the board. I anticipate a spectacular vintage in quality and quantity.

LODI

Joseph Smith, winemaker, Klinker Brick Winery

Klinker Brick Winery started harvesting eight days later than last year. The quality for the whites is excellent, with uniform, flavorful grape clusters and all analysis in balance. As for the reds, yields—especially Zinfandel—seem to be a little heavy, but the quality is showing well; fermentations are all healthy, and colors across the board are great. Cabernet Sauvignon seems to be average with small concentrated berries and nice loose clusters. This harvest was more of a steady but manageable pace compared to last year. We had an amazing growing season in Lodi with just enough heat during the day and cool nights to keep the grapes hanging until peak ripeness. I am really eager to see the development of this vintage, which I believe is going to be great!

MADERA

Ray Krause, vinificator, Westbrook Wine Farm

Madera County, and the Madera Appellation-grown fruit, enjoy a variation of altitudes from 200 to 1500 feet. After five years of accumulated drought effects, the 12 inches of valley and 34 inches of foothill area rainfall were welcomed by plants and people alike. Yields from foothill vineyards were lower than average as were sugar levels at physiological maturity. There was some early season mildew pressure, minimal bird damage, “hen and chicks” in some varieties, such as Cabernet Franc, but little raising or sunburn. Good color, pH and solids to juice should contribute to this vintage’s

balance and structural stability. A harvest spread from early August (whites) through late September (reds) has given vintners adequate windows for proper processing.

MENDOCINO

John Killebrew, winemaker, Z. Alexander Brown Wines

Sufficient rainfall last winter has allowed the vines in the North Coast to develop strong roots and produce full canopies. This has really helped the vineyards in Mendocino, Red Hills and Alexander Valley thrive through the late season heat that pushed our Cabernet, Petite Sirah, Zinfandel and Syrah to ripeness after a long, cool summer of even and steady fruit maturation. We are pleased with the excellent flavor development, acid, and tannin balance that we will reap from this excellent vintage!

George Phelan, director of winemaking/winery manager, Dunnewood Vineyards & Winery

Oct. 2 marked the first storm of the 2016 harvest and followed a near-perfect growing season, coming after the majority of the fruit in Mendocino County had been picked. The 2016 growing season started with winter and spring rains that were near normal, compared to the drought conditions of 2012-2015. The warm and dry summer contributed to an early harvest. The resulting wines are flavorful, and the red wines deeply colored.

MONTEREY

Sabrina Rodems, winemaker, Wrath Vineyards

In the Monterey area, we had an earlier-than-normal start of harvest because of early bud break. Due to little rainfall and warm spring temperatures, bud break was as early as mid-February in some areas. The Pinot Noir shows great color, sugar acid balance and flavor. We can taste the concentration of flavors and are thrilled with the quality of these young wines.

NAPA VALLEY

Marcus Notaro, winemaker, Stag's Leap Wine Cellars

Although bud break in Napa Valley was early this year, it's been a cooler season. We didn't get the normal high heat in July and August, which provided for a longer hang time for the grapes. Overall, quality is high and particularly at our FAY and S.L.V. estate vineyards, where we are harvesting Cabernet Sauvignon. The grapes ripened uniformly and, while yields are a bit lower than normal, the flavors are great. The harvest has been smooth and progressed from varietal to varietal. For the whites, the Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay are crisp and allow you to taste the coolness of the season. It's been interesting that the grapes—from the cooler Coombsville area up to the warmer parts of St. Helena—are ripening at the same time.

SAN LUIS OBISPO/PASO ROBLES

Jason Diefenderfer, director of winemaking, Treana Winery

The 2016 vintage started off with respectable weather through bloom and set. Our first bit of 100-degree weather came during the sizing phase which effected berry growth on many of our varietals. In September, the ripening was lengthened with the hot and cool temperature swings. These fluctuations caused some varietals to ripen earlier, while Cabernet reached maturity within the last week of September.

SANTA BARBARA

Wes Hagen, brand ambassador, raconteur, J. Wilkes Wines, Turn Key Wine Brands

As of Sept. 30, Santa Barbara County was more than half picked-out, yields are slightly lower than average and quality seems strong to excellent. Pinot noir is nearly all harvested, and yields have been mostly around two tons per acre. The extended hang time has produced the darkest color I've seen in Pinot Noir since 2010. The young wines show intense ruby color, good extract and dense blueberry and blackberry fruit with excellent grip, acidity and a "sauvage" character. I expect the 2016 vintage of Chardonnay will show excellent consistency, cut, balance and flavor. The Santa Barbara County vintage can be described as long and cool with a heat spike in September that helped define the harvest window and the quality. The color, quality and depth of the 2016 vintage were strongly impacted by the cool July and August that the county enjoyed.

SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS

Bill Cooper, winemaker and sales, Cooper-Garrod Estate Vineyards

In the midst of nearly normal winter rains, much of the Santa Cruz Mountains experienced a warm January that advanced bud break. A cool summer then delayed harvest to give vines a long hang time and ideal phenological ripeness, at sugar and acidity levels that are expected to produce balanced and age-worthy wines. **Ben Cooper**, assistant winemaker at Cooper-Garrod Estate Vineyards, added that "yields are almost back to normal after the drought. We brought in seven varieties, nicely spaced through the harvest, all with long hang times and excellent fruit development."

Valeta Massey, owner & assistant winemaker, Clos de la Tech

Our Pinot harvest will be about 25 percent of normal due to rain during flowering, but the quality is excellent.

Jim Schultze, proprietor/winemaker, Windy Oaks Winery and Vineyards

Overall, quality is excellent, with fully developed clusters and even ripening.

SIERRA FOOTHILLS

Chaim Gur-Arieh, Ph.D., winemaker/proprietor, C.G. Di Arie Vineyard and Winery

The 2016 harvest lasted three weeks—from Sept. 7-28—and had the highest yield in six years, 34 percent higher than 2015. In general, harvest was very short and intense with exceptional quality. In my experience, the quality in the last six years has not varied very much, with the exception of 2011 which was cooler and took a longer time for the fruit to ripen. Judging from what I see now, 2016 will be known as an outstanding vintage year.

SONOMA COUNTY

Paul Ahvenainen, director of winemaking, F. Korbel & Bros.

The 2016 sparkling wine harvest for Korbel started early and went by quickly. Statewide, we started on July 29 and ended just 43 days later. In the lower Russian River Valley, the harvest was even more compact, with Pinot Noir starting on Aug. 9, and Chardonnay finishing 24 days later. Overall quality and balance seem to be quite good.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA/TEMECULA

Les Linkogle, owner/winemaker, Briar Rose Winery

This year's harvest in Temecula Valley was unusual, because a heat wave brought extreme temperatures in the triple digits just weeks before harvest. The heat brought intense flavor to the fruit and in some cases a slightly early harvest. Due to the unexpected prolonged heat and good defoliating, many wineries experienced sunburned grapes. Every vineyard was affected to some extent, resulting in a loss of yield that ranged from 30 to 50 percent. However, the fruit that survived the heat was harvested and is exceptional in quality. Wines from this appellation and vintage year will be stellar.

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