VINTAGE FACTS 2017

After a few dry winters, the 2016 - 2017 winter provided ample rain and snowpack statewide. The winter gave way to a relatively cool and wet spring compared to the last few years. As a result, bud break in Oregon started closer to normal in mid-April. The spring warmed up with record heat in late May that initiated flowering in most areas of the state. However, a cool down in early June slowed flowering through the second and third week of the month then was followed by a few days of record high temperatures. Growers noted that flowering was very complete and produced a very good fruit set. Many also indicated that the warm conditions in 2016 set the stage for increased fruitfulness, producing more clusters per vine and larger clusters.

July ramped up the heat moving the vintage rapidly to véraison. However, August saw multiple one day records for maximum daytime temperatures with heat stress events early and late in the month. The result was that August 2017 was the warmest August on record in the state and the majority of the western US. Growers noted that the heat stress did not produce much sunburn but may have delayed ripening in some varieties. There was no impact of smoke from forest fires on Willamette Valley producers, unlike Southern Oregon and the Columbia Gorge AVAs, except that the possible disadvantages of the hazy weather during early stages of ripening reduced sunlight intensity and could have caused reduced photosynthesis.

A warm early September accelerated fruit development, but was slowed by a cool down mid-month. Feeling that the harvest was going to be fast and furious, growers breathed a sigh of relief with the cooler conditions and proceeded to have a slow and steady harvest. From grower reports, 2017 ended with near average to slightly higher than average sugar and acid levels with many touting beautiful flavors and well-balanced fruit.

Courtesy of the Oregon Wine Board.

THE VINEYARD

Tualatin Estate Vineyard: Established in 1973, Laurelwood soil covers most of the vineyard — formed over thousands of years on layers of wind-blown, glacial silt called loess. High concentrations of rusted iron balls called pisolites riddle the top layer and are caused by the weathering of minerals in the soil. This unique soil profile contributes to the wine’s complex nature and rose petal aromas.

WINEMAKING NOTES

The stylistic vision of this wine is based on the Italian Moscato, Moscato d’Asti, which is light, fresh and low in alcohol. The grapes were picked at peak ripeness and lightly whole cluster pressed to avoid phenols. The juice was cold settled and racked to another stainless steel tank for fermentation. It was inoculated with a selected yeast strain, which promotes high fruit tones. Fermentation lasted approximately two weeks at 52° F. The wine was racked and bottled at 30° F to preserve the natural CO2.

FOOD & SERVING SUGGESTIONS

Delicious on its own or on the patio with a picnic. This wine is perfect for brunch and dessert pairing. Enjoy ice cold to preserve the bubbles and serve with fresh fruit salad, blue cheese, peach cobbler, lemon tarts or key lime pie.