

MONTE BERNARDI

2005 HARVEST

The 2005 vintage was certainly a challenging one! We had an abundance of rain in August, and then a fair amount in September as well as early October. As a result, we decided to go through the vineyard several times more than normal. I felt the best defense against potential mold was to open up the canopy so as to allow as much sun (UV) and air exposure as possible (UV light being the best defense available)! Several other farms used mold treatment sprays, but, in the end, we were one of the last farm in our area to see mold amongst its berries!



Anti-fungicide sprays have short term effect. As rain reoccurs further applications are required, and of course, even though many such sprays are 'biological', they still aren't something we want to put on our food! Mold spores are always in the vineyard. However, they don't pose a real threat unless there is a level of humidity sufficient to foster growth, or something causes the skins to rupture exposing the sugars.

Years like this offer the perfect conditions for mold growth; Excess water from constant rain can cause the berries to rupture. Add to this, the ever prevalent threat of animals (wild boar and deer) chewing on bunches, leaving grapes with broken skins. For us this meant entering the vineyard several times to drop moldy bunches as well as imposing extreme selection in both the vineyard and at the sorting table.

We reviewed every single bunch at the sorting table, twisting them open to ensure there wasn't any mold hiding in our midst!!



So in the end...we have produced only a small quantity of wine (down 30 to 40% on years prior); we invested more time, energy and money to make it, but despite our efforts, 2005 will likely be disparaged as a bad year across Chianti Classico.

Some enologists have said that they are witnessing wine of a quality similar to 2002. For Monte Bernardi it surely isn't comparable to 2002; the Sa'etta ferment (in the 30HL botte/cask) is excellent and Tzingana is proving similar to the 2004. As for our Chianti, it is a bit more difficult to judge; I am confident it will be a good wine, but it's probably not going to be an exceptional vintage.

Best regards, Michael