



2010 CARGASACCHI PINOT NOIR, CARGASACCHI VINEYARD, STA. RITA HILLS

Tasting Notes: Aromatics of darker fruits in the nose with hints of lavender and sage. Flavors are full bodied and savory. First flavor impressions are of blackberry, tea leaf and cedar. The mouth feel is ripe and plush with suggestions of minerality. Tannins are soft and add a layer to the sensation of texture, finishing earthy, with chewy hints of toast and cocoa.

Vintage Notes: The 2010 Vintage was punctuated by several heat spikes that began at veraison and affected fruit that was not protected directly by leaf coverage and the vine canopy. In some vines even protected fruit withered on the vine and was lost. On north south oriented rows at flowering we typically leaf pull the morning side in order to get cooler morning sun on the grape skin, reducing green flavors and increasing skin thickness. But with the heat spike that “normal” level of leaf pulling left the fruit overly exposed in September’s heat spikes. As a result, the vines received morning sun until near midday. To protect the fruit on the north south oriented rows we reacted by repositioning the upper canopy wires at the top of the trellis and pushed the wire over and behind the canes, where they exit the trellis. By leaning the canes toward the east, this created more shade on the fruit and limited the late morning sunlight from striking the fruit.

2010 followed three previous drought years with 29 inches of rainfall that was equivalent to the total for the three previous years combined. (Historic average rainfall is circa 14 inches per year.) The vines started the season with abundant moisture but ended the season with depleted soil moisture through using the cover crops and frequent high mowing before seeds formed. This kept the cover crop in a vegetative phase to evapo-transpire water out of the soils and helped control vine vigor. The retained cover crop also helped to lower vineyard temperatures during the heat spikes by insulating the soil from absorbing solar energy, and minimized the conduction, storage and radiation of heat energy as compared to clean tilled exposed mineral soil.