



VALLI
VINEYARDS LIMITED

March 2010

I think the March newsletter has a right to be late, it is a very busy month, and before writing about something we need to get it done.

Early March takes us out of the vineyard and into the cellar, it brings pure joy, pulling the 2009 vintage out of barrel seeing how great it really was, then getting it safely bottled, it's done! Almost two years hard work captured for enjoying over the next few (a year of growing grapes then a year of babysitting once the wine has been made).

While that's happening we are putting bird nets on in the vineyard. Who said winemakers can't multi task?

For those of you wishing to purchase a vineyard I offer the following advice: put in your offer the day nets are going on, you will never get it cheaper; in fact it's even possible you will be paid to take it.

It can be the most frustrating day of the year.

Large multi row nets even though they are mainly small holes bordered by thread are like the sail on a yacht.

The wind can play havoc, I've seen them picked up by little tornado like winds, twisted, knotted then dumped in the tallest nearby trees.



I've seen them put on, left to be tied down after lunch only to be found a kilometer away, up a hill wrapped around high tension power lines. We did manage to find a wind free day and have them successfully on; all that happens now is removing all fruit that has not fully changed to purple.

You may have seen nets that cover the whole vineyard and you may have seen nets that go only down the side of each row. Why?

Like all things viticultural there are two ways of doing things: cheaply or correctly, netting is no different.

With multi row nets, i.e. ones covering the whole vineyard, it is possible to go underneath and work on the vines, eg remove leaves for better light exposure and air movement and also to remove inferior quality grapes.

When it is time to sample and make harvest decisions, you have full access to all grapes and can get a proper representative sample.

The other option is the cheap but nasty side nets, which are just that, they make it very difficult to access the vine and to do work that will help improve wine quality, so it's simply not done.

You get what you pay for, which really is the way it should be.

Next newsletter will be from early harvest, the next three weeks weather is what will determine the quality of the 2010 vintage; I look forward to reporting good news.

Cheers
Grant