

2006 pinot noir – “ρ” (rho) ampelos vineyards , sta. rita hills



harvest: we began picking on october 4th and wrapped up on october 18th – another late harvest which gave us a long hang time. the older blocks of clones 115 and pommard were the first to be picked and then we moved on to harvesting for the first time our new blocks of 777, 667 and 828 clones. these new blocks have been inter-planted with 4% pinot gris to facilitate co-fermentation and co-pigmentation – it is believed that the pigments from the white grapes creates a darker wine by working with the red grapes pigments. with the additional clones (adding to our spice cabinet) we are developing some really nice complex wines.

fermentation: we keep our clones separated throughout the fermentation process starting out in the cold room for one night after picking and then gently de-stemmed but never crushed. The wine is then fermented for 12-16 days using a variety of yeasts - BM45, RC212 and Assmanshausen. we administer 2 daily punch downs and check the brix level each day to monitor the progress of the fermentation. when primary fermentation (sugar converted to alcohol) is finished we gently press the grapes in our manual basket press and then rack to barrel. we then inoculate with malo-lactic (ml) bacteria and let the wines take a long nap.

aging: the 2006 rho consists of the top 20% of our estate pinot noir lot for the vintage. we tasted through all of the pinot barrels and determined which were of a caliber for the rho blend. the final blend consisted of 56% new french oak, which had been aged for almost two years. the barrels chosen were from coopers TW Boswell, Remond, Sirigue, Radoux and Marsannay. most of the barrels were from sections of the vineyard where we employ branch locks for parallel vertical shoot positioning. the rho is furthered aged, at least one year, in bottle before we release it. we feel this final step lets the rho achieve its maximum potential!

tasting notes: the nose of brown sugar, sarsparilla, and bing cherries on this garnet hued beauty captivate at first scent. offering a pleasing pallet of cinnamon infused molé , dark berries and bing cherries. the 2006 rho is lush, fruit driven and the big, long tannin structure will aid beautifully in aging.

production: 529 cases and 32 magnums produced

what is this greek thing? rebecca and peter love greece. they were married there and visit every year! ampelos is the greek word for the vine – this is where it all begins. each of our estate wines are given a greek letter as a name. “P” is a correlation coefficient – each year we will make different blends of clones to optimize this wine.