

Tiedote
25.11.2004

Harvest Report:

Sun-filled Year Fulfills Wine-growers' Wishes

Grape Harvest Ends Extremely Early / Quality is Well Above Average / Volume is ca. 10% Less than Previous Year

The current mood in Germany's wine estates and cooperatives is one of great satisfaction – not least because the 2005 vintage is already acclaimed as being exceptionally good.

"This year is unique: seldom has there been such unanimous praise from all 13 wine-growing regions about the quality of the grape crop," reports Armin Göring, managing director of the German Wine Institute in Mainz. "The majority of must weights are of Prädikat wine quality and some come very close to those of vintage 2003."

Göring attributes this positive outcome to the extraordinarily sunny year. According to the German Weather Service, the collective number of sun hours recorded from March through October exceeded the long-term average for an entire year. This enabled the grapes to ripen about two weeks ahead of schedule. Precipitation during the harvest in September helped speed up the harvest so that the grapes could be gathered while still healthy. Franconian wine-growers claim that it was the shortest harvest in history.

Below-average Yields

At the beginning of the harvest, the average volume of the crop was overestimated. Ultimately, the quantity of must pressed from the grapes was surprisingly small and in general, growers harvested very selectively. Göring estimates that the 2005 vintage will be about 9 million hectoliters. This is nearly ten percent less than the previous year and some six percent below the ten-year average of 9.6 million hl. Since cellar stocks are virtually depleted, this prognosis is not particularly promising for many growers. Water supplies during the growing season were generally better in Baden and Württemberg than in the more northerly regions. As such, yields in the south are approximately the same as last year.

Ahr

Growers in the Ahr Valley profited from the sunny year. The grapes developed exceptionally well and remained quite healthy. In August, however, hail reduced the crop by about 40% in vineyards between Bad Neuenahr and Heimersheim. Sunny periods in September and October enabled growers to harvest very ripe grapes. Volume is estimated at 39,000 hl.

Lisätietoja: Saksan Viinitiedotus, Monika Halén, puh. (09) 241 1410
monika.halen@zaraband.fi

