



2009 Vintage Weather Journal

Although drought conditions persisted throughout many of the north coast appellations towards the end of 2008, rainstorms began in January of '09, and with it a great sigh of relief. February followed suit with heavy storms, high winds, and bountiful rainfall.

March began wet, but by mid-month the sun's warmth initiated budbreak for north coast vineyard sites, many in Sonoma Coast, Russian River, and Anderson Valley. True to form, late March yielded cooler temperatures, setting off frost alarms and dusting higher elevations with snow. April was similar, exhibiting both warm and cool temperatures, typical behavior of these moody spring months. Vine growth was healthy during the month of May, and the Petaluma wind gap delivered persistent early evening fog, blanketing many of our coastal sites well into the late morning.

June started calm, and towards the end of the month temperatures meandered in balanced cadence of modest highs and lows. The vines welcomed the weather, flourishing with the sun and resting with the mild balminess. A generally cooler yet consistent July came and went with little extremes in heat or cold, and the plants maintained their vigor and growth.

August brought consistently warm temperatures and perfect ripening weather for earlier coastal varieties. Spanish for fog, La Neblina rolled in daily, cooling and maintaining balance and fruit integrity. By the end of August, the climate had provided enough balanced heat to ripen the fruit in a healthy manner, and we harvested our first 2009 grapes on August 29th. September provided more heat to ripen most of our sites. The harvested fruit had exceeded expectations. Radio-Coteau focuses on cool-climate vineyard sites that can produce great wine, yet can also succumb to the vagaries of nature. Our season came to a soggy close when the El Nino driven weather pattern started the first storm of the year in mid-October, and the skies dropped over 6 inches of rain.