

HARVEST REPORT 2005 No. 2 September 6th, 2005

The Beaujolais harvest began this Monday, September 5th.

After a dry and cool August, the last ten days of very hot and sunny weather paved the way for exceptional grape-ripening conditions.

The grapes are splendid.

The vines are in a perfect sanitary state : no trace of rot, no disease.

The foliage is still green and has not suffered from the lack of water and therefore this encourages photosynthesis and gives rise to optimum maturing conditions.

The grapes are aerated and there are not too many of them.

Millerandage is present in some areas : this is always an indicator of quality.

The grapes are spread out and in long bunches which should enable good ripening conditions without fear of rot at the end of the harvest.

The skins are thick and firm. The grapes are crisp, sweet and upright.

Grape harvesting will last until approximately September 20th.

In plots in St Etienne des Oullières where harvesting is most advanced, picking began on the lower slopes on September 5th in the rain.

Better weather and the arrival of an anticyclone is forecast for September 7th, and the entire Beaujolais region will start harvesting around September 10th/12th.

More than 35,000 grape-pickers are expected in Beaujolais over this period since almost all the harvest is hand-picked.

The initial vats are promising

The first juices have a very strong colour, a high degree of alcohol and are noticeably acidic.

The pH is low which is a indication of an easy vinification and good wine structure.

The malic acid content is high which indicates great suppleness.

It is up to us to take advantage of these fantastic resources by extracting the most aromas, and the maximum richness and silkiness from our Gamay.

It will be an average to small crop in terms of volume.

The vine stocks are not very heavy and the grapes are small.

The crop has not been the victim of a recent hailstorm.

The rain which fell on September 5th and 6th is welcome as it yields a small amount of juice without damaging the superb analytical balance of the crop.

The harvest yields will be much lower than those of 2004.

Beaujolais yields reduced:

Following numerous meetings and events, the Beaujolais wine-growers have decided to strongly lower their production yields in 2005.

The beaujolais wine yield has been decreased from 58 to 53 hectolitres per hectare, and the beaujolais villages, from 57 to 52 hectolitres per hectare.

The part of the harvest which can be released as Beaujolais Nouveau has been decreased from 45 to 40 hectolitres per hectare for the beaujolais wines. Prices will undoubtedly be dropping slightly, reflecting the economic situation.

Unless there are unexpected disastrous weather conditions, we are therefore very optimistic for this year's harvest. With grapes of this quality, we ought to obtain juices which have very promising qualities and which will hopefully produce wines with character.

Philippe Bardet Mommessin