

2018

"One of the penalties of an ecological education is that one lives alone in a world of wounds. Much of the damage inflicted on land is quite invisible to laymen. An ecologist must either harden his shell and make believe that the consequences of science are none of his business, or he must be the doctor who sees the marks of death in a community that believes itself well and does not want to be told otherwise." --Aldo Leopold

When a child is touched by the hand of nature it is both blessing and curse. The touched child can hear the conversation between land and life, feels the pulse of the very earth beneath bare feet. That touch also opens an eye that can never be closed to unspeakable distress of one most beloved.

The Leopold quote has been the background music of my path. The way I have chosen to harden my shell is to build it, physically, with the work we do at Hope Well.

2018 began warm and the tiresome words of drought, fire, and heat dominated the talk of the growing season. The only balm to the abrading effects inherent to the acceleration of climate change is redoubling the effort to build the alternative way forward. Every year that passes we see more resilience in the land, we study success and celebrate it, but never allow that to dampen the urgency of this work.

As warm as it began, we were granted reprieve by reliably cool nights, and while the drought persisted, the ongoing improvements in soil water retention due to years of increasing diversity and feeding soil were appreciated by all the life at Hope Well. Tasting grapes as September grew old it was clear that the message of the vintage was a powerful one.



Hope Well 2018 Chardonnay Eola-Amity Hills

Harvested September 18, 2018

100% Chardonnay

100% organically farmed

Whole cluster pressed

No commercial yeasts or bacteria were used.

20% new french oak

Alcohol 12.5%, pH 3.46, TA 6.4 g/L

250 six-bottle cases produced

Bottled July 23, 2019

Our second year with Chardonnay from Hope Well revealed a more refined version of what promises to be a distinctive voice. Pressed cold, the juice went to tank for one day, then straight to barrel with all but the green lees, and fermented cooler and more slowly than the 2017. The result is a definitive aromatic expression and nuance of flavors that ramp up the excitement for the years to come.

Managing to make it through another drought year with the power to cross the finish line with nuance and finesse felt very gratifying. The beauty of October brought many moments of gratitude-guided work as we laid the farm to rest.

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