



The 2006 vintage started late, as had the year before, but once the vines got started they took off like a shot. Due to late rains, excess available moisture in the soil led to vigorous canopy development continuing into the summer, with warm weather further enabling growth. The weather cooled somewhat after veraison, and the heat spikes that usually arrive in early September never showed.

A period of heavy morning fog and high humidity led to outbreaks of botrytis by mid-September throughout the North Coast. Our growers worked hard to combat the infection, clearing leaves and dropping fruit on multiple passes. As a result, the Chardonnay and Pinot Noir were picked cleanly with good phenological ripeness under cool, overcast skies. Finally, in late October, the weather cleared and turned warm again, just in time to finish off the Zinfandel and Syrah.

In fact, 2006 may prove to be the perfect season for cool-climate Syrah, which benefited from what some would call a “continental” climate pattern. Most of the heat arrived mid-season, ahead of schedule, and the weather turned moderate late, which is more common in continental climates. This pattern enhanced aromatics in the Syrahs and plumped up mid-palate textures significantly. Most of our wines, in fact, are more approachable in their youth than the 2005s, with a riper core of fruit and a less overtly structured palate.