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SPRING 2009

Biodynamic Spring Activities in the Vineyard

Guy McMaster, Viticulturist and Winemaker

Following a busy winter of making our specially brewed nutrient teas of seaweed, broom, ragwort, willow and thistle; we watch expectantly as the vineyard begins to wake-up. These tea preparations (steeped in our own oak barrels) will be applied during a descending moon, returning nutrients such as sulphur, magnesium, copper and nitrogen to soil and vines.



And on to Spring itself. We spread the compost made from our own grape skins, stalks, seeds, some added straw and cow manure. This has matured over a 16 month period and is spread evenly over the vineyard floor. This is an outstanding source of food for all the micro-organisms living in the soil.

We then apply Preparation 500 - cow horn manure harvested from our own herd of Highland cows. This is sprayed directly to the soil late in the afternoon during a descending moon to coincide with the earth breathing in. This spray encourages the roots to extend down further in the soil as well as providing an inoculum of fungi and bacteria. Superb for the soil structure.

Our sheep have done a great job of weeding throughout the winter months. They are now moved from the vineyard as the vines prepare for bud burst (those succulent new shoots being too tempting for the sheep).

We are also turning our attention to the interrow crops. Every seventh row is sown with lucerne, plantain and clovers. But, most importantly buckwheat and phacelia are sown which act as a host for the tasmanica wasp. This wasp helps us keep the leaf roll

caterpillar at bay which if left unchecked can cause an entry point for botrytis and other moulds to infect our fruit later on in the season.

We are ever watchful for spring frosts and use water applied via overhead sprinklers as our form of frost control. After such an event we spray our thistle tea. This is a stunningly effective health tonic for the vines to ward off any ill effects from the stress of frost.

Home cooking with Urlar

Wine is always enjoyed best with food. The promise of spring and seasonal fare means you can enjoy our full range of bright aromatics – Riesling, Pinot Gris and Sauvignon Blanc with starters or as aperitifs. Our elegant Pinot Noir is superb with Spring Lamb dishes. Click here to view the easy family favourite or glam it up for the next time you are entertaining. It is our spring favourite www.urlar.co.nz/features.asp.



Help us support Catwalk Spinal Cord Injury Trust

For our Wellington customers, or next time you are in the capital, pop in to Monsoon Poon. Enjoy an Urlar Pinot Gris or Riesling with their stunning Asian fare. And, right next door is SOUP a small shop with ladies designer clothes at rock bottom prices.

Oh, and our BioBlog will start next newsletter so you can follow vineyard happenings.

We are delighted to report over 100 leading restaurants, cafes, quality liquor and bottle stores and selected supermarkets in New Zealand are now stocking our range.

Very last word, if you are travelling to or from New Zealand, stop in Singapore or Hong Kong and keep an eye out for us. Yes we are there too. Click here to see where www.urlar.co.nz/distributors.asp.



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