



Perfecting Pinot noir - winemaking on the Mornington Peninsula

Practical case study - Willow Creek Vineyard

1989



Vineyard establishment

East-west gentle slopes in Merricks North

5 Ha cabernet sauvignon, 3 Ha each of chardonnay and pinot noir

Vine density 1610 vines/Ha



Vineyard establishment

Hanging cane trellis

Early yields around 10T/Ha

Clones D5V12, D2V5, MV6



Vineyard conversion

3.5 Ha cabernet grafted or replanted to pinot noir

Replants increased vine numbers by 25%

Entire vineyard converted to VSP trellis from 2002-2009

Average pinot yield down to <2kg/vine, around 3T/Ha

Increased MV6, 115, 777 clones



Harvest decisions & fruit handling

Bunch sample weekly from veraison

As far as possible, do it yourself



Pinot parameters

Analyse for brix, pH, TA

Aiming for 22.5-23.5° brix for most blocks - finished wine between 13-13.5% alc

Pragmatic approach if grape condition or acidity declines

Handwritten notes on lined paper showing pH and TA values for Pinot. The notes include a list of pH values (21.0, 16.9, 17.2, 18.4, 19.4, 17.6, 17.8, 17.3, 17.0, 16.7) and corresponding TA values (3.0, 2.80). The phrase "ACID = LOADS" is written multiple times, indicating high acidity levels.

pH	TA	Notes
21.0	3.0	
16.9		ACID = LOADS
17.2		"
18.4		"
19.4	2.80	
17.6		ACID = LOADS
17.8		"
17.3		"
17.0		"
16.7		ACID = LOADS

Don't stuff it up - fruit handling

Winery set up for general red
winemaking, not pinot specific

Destemmer with crusher

Must pump with high speed auger

Large fermenters; opens >3T, overhead
fermenters >6T



Current receival

Fruit elevator -able to sort at slow speeds

E2 destemmer with pinot specific cage

Peristaltic must pump

Small fermenters



Whole bunches

Two oldest blocks - not every year

100% whole bunches

Less physical maceration



Love the one you're
with

