

2009 Piña Cellars Harvest Summary

The 2009 growing season began with lower than average rainfall for the third year in a row. Apart from a couple inches of rain in early May, there was no other rainfall in the spring and summer. There were only a few occurrences of frost in the spring, sparing us from the losses that we endured during the 2008 season.

We had very moderate temperatures throughout the spring and summer. There were only five days over 100 degrees during the pre-harvest growing season. We encountered a few short-lived heat spikes between the end of August and the end of September during the first half of our harvest. Thankfully they generally only lasted for two days, allowing the vines and the fruit to recover from the heat.

We began harvesting at Piña Cellars on September 16th. We made a couple of passes through the Wolff and Ames vineyards just to harvest select clusters that were being affected by the heat spikes. We then went on to harvest the majority of the Rutherford Firehouse, Oakville Ames and Yountville Wolff vineyards during the end of September/beginning of October. This was followed by harvesting the Napa D'Adamo vineyard the first half of October.

We had a major rainstorm on October 13th with 4.25" of rainfall. This was a substantial amount. We had to check on the vineyards that still had fruit on the vine every other day as the humid temperatures following the rain caused perfect conditions for mold growth. Thankfully we had previously gone through and deleafed the entire Buckeye vineyard on Howell Mountain to help circulate the air and dry the grapes. We harvested the Buckeye vineyard on Howell Mountain at the end of October along with a few parcels of the Wolff vineyard.

Overall the 2009 vintage produced an average crop size, though it was much larger in comparison to the tiny 2008 crop. The 2009 fruit had very bright fruit flavors. We achieved good phenological ripeness of the tannins and flavors before sugar levels got too high. The corresponding wines have beautiful ripe fruit aromatics and are impeccably balanced with good acidity and alcohol levels.