



## 2013: very first impressions after the harvest

We just finished the 2013 harvest and here are my first impressions as the last press is still running.

It has been a complicated year, with the winter eating the spring and the cold lasting until the end of June. Happily we had a true summer that helped to catch up with part of the delay, but in spite of this 2013 is definitely to be considered a late vintage.

Once again the flower was hindered by the bad weather conditions and this time the Riesling, Muscat and Gewurztraminer have suffered from it, showing a lot of *coulure* and *millerandage* (hen-and-chicken).

On the other hand we have been spared by the numerous hail storms and the summer has been rather calm, unlike the autumn which has been soaked and was alternatively hot and cold.

We started picking on the 7<sup>th</sup> October with the Pinot Gris and have kept picking until the 25<sup>th</sup> without any break, since the weather and the quick evolution of the skins didn't allow any waiting. We didn't even try to make a *vendange tardive* with the Fronholz's Gewurztraminer as the grapes were so delicate they could barely hold on the vine stocks.

There's not a lot we can say about this vintage yet, but what is sure is that it shares with 2012 a difficult flowering, yet the yields are even smaller. It also has alcohol levels from before global warming and pronounced acidities, and remembers me of musts from the early '90s with a greater feeling of achievement as, since then, biodynamy has come into play.

Indeed, even if the berries were hanging by a thread, the juices flowing out of the press were clear and tasted pure and clean ; it is worth mentioning that we sprayed a silica 501 preparation before the September rains, in order to strengthen the skins and enhance the grapes' ripening. And our seeds were ripe despite sugar contents lower by 1° to 1.5° in potential alcohol, compared to the recent vintages.

This is where I make the analogy with vintages before global warming, that I set in 1997, and we can already say that 2013 will make lighter wines with a thirst-quenching freshness that will fulfil those who have nostalgia for the wines of yesteryear.

After all the real concern of the 2013 vintage will be about the yielded quantity : it is indeed the smallest of my 34 harvests, equal to 2010 ; and if we add 2012 it makes 3 crops out of the last 4 years that have been in deficit !

André Ostertag, Vigneron  
Epfing, le 30 octobre 2013