

THE 2016 VINTAGE

From start to finish 2016 was the earliest vintage we have ever seen in the Willamette Valley. At Bethel Heights we were almost a month ahead of “normal” at every turning point in the growing season.

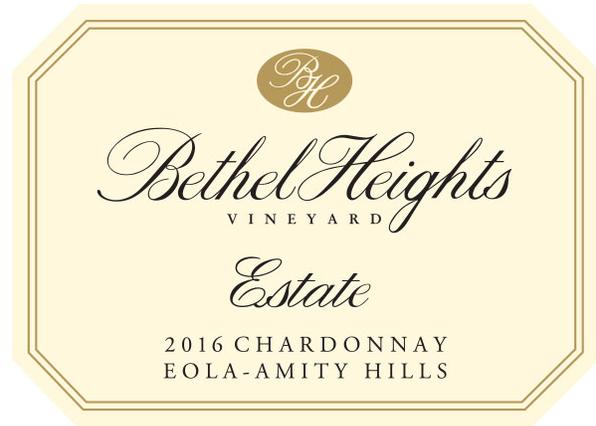
The growing season was warm and wetter than usual, leading to veraison beginning in our young vines in early August, with the rest of the vineyard quickly following suit due to hot August temperatures. Harvest started on August 27, the first time ever that we harvested fruit in August. Our last fruit was harvested on September 24, the first time we ever finished harvest before the end of September.

Surprisingly, the wines of 2016 are not the uniformly opulent offerings one would expect from a year defined by its precociousness. Ripeness came early, but not at the expense of purity and elegance.

91 WINE ADVOCATE

The 2016 Chardonnay Estate is scented of fresh cut hay, hazelnuts and honey toast with white flowers, lemon confit and cream nuances. Medium-bodied with a lovely creamy texture, it fills the mouth with warm apple pie, cinnamon stick and crème fraîche flavors with accents of honey, citrus blossoms and toast, with juicy, mouthwatering acidity and a touch of pleasant texture on the long finish.

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2016 CHARDONNAY ESTATE

Certified Sustainably Grown and Produced

Dates picked: September 10 - 19, 2016

Grapes at harvest: Brix 21, pH 3.2, TA 7.1 gr/Liter

Finished wine: Alcohol 13.1%, pH: 3.3, TA: 6.0 gr/Liter

Fermented and aged 11 months in French oak, 35% new barrels

Bottled unfined in September 2017

455 Cases produced

FRUIT SOURCE: Six unique blocks of Chardonnay planted between 1977 and 2001 to various clones and rootstocks in various sites around our Estate vineyards.

VINIFICATION: The grapes were whole cluster pressed at low pressure for four hours then settled at 45 F for 3 days. The juice was then racked to barrels of varying sizes (228L, 350L, and 500L) and fermented for 35-40 days with minimal battonage (lees stirring). The new wine went through full malolactic fermentation and was aged on the lees for 11 months prior to bottling.

WINEMAKER NOTES: The Estate Chardonnay represents our entire planted acreage, thus provides the most complete expression of Chardonnay from our estate in each vintage. We make our picking decisions with tension and vibrancy favored over opulence and richness, as we believe this gives us the best expression of our sense of place. This wine will benefit from cellaring for at least three years and/or decanting a few hours ahead of time.