

The Eola-Amity Hills

Bethel Heights Vineyard is located in the Eola-Amity Hills, an independent hill chain in the center of the Willamette Valley, home to many highly regarded vineyards. In July 2006, our hill-chain was granted a federally approved viticultural appellation of origin, recognizing a place name that is historically and geographically distinct.

We have discovered over the past three decades that Pinot noir more than any other grape is a creature of place, and while there are clear differences even between adjacent blocks within our own vineyard, we are now beginning to recognize broad similarities that distinguish wines grown in the Eola-Amity Hills from wines grown in other parts of the Willamette Valley.

We do know the geography is unique. This freestanding hill chain stretches about sixteen miles from just south of McMinnville to the Willamette River in West Salem. The soils are typically volcanic in most areas, and significantly shallower than in the Red Hills and Chehalem Mountain.

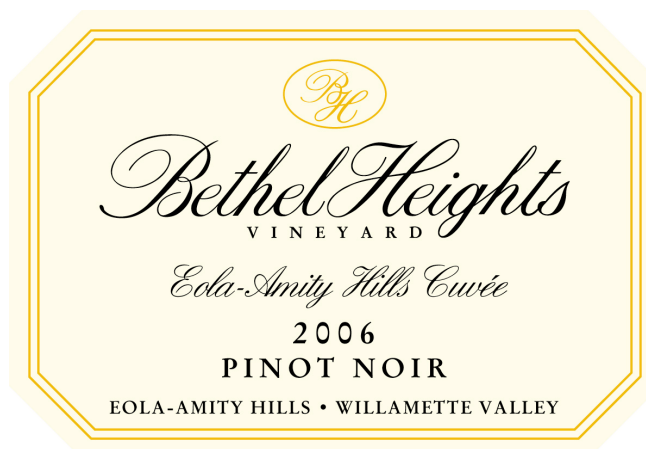
Another defining characteristic is the Van Duzer effect, created by a low point in the Coast Range directly to the West. That unique break in the mountains funnels cool air from the Pacific into the valley and lines up directly with the Eola-Amity Hills. The late afternoon cooling breeze and relatively cool nights help the grapes retain freshness and acidity, allowing us to leave our fruit on the vines longer into the fall than vineyards in the north end of the Willamette Valley.

Our Eola-Amity Hills Cuvée celebrates the new appellation,

blending fruit from five vineyards in the AVA: Elton Vineyards located 6 miles to the North of Bethel Heights, Jesse James Vineyard located 8 miles to the North, Seven Springs Vineyard located 2 miles to the North, Lewman Vineyard which sits adjacent to Bethel Heights to the South, and a small component from our own Estate vineyard.

BETHEL HEIGHTS VINEYARD

6060 Bethel Heights Road NW
Salem, Oregon 97304 USA
Phone (503) 581-2262
Fax (503) 581-0943
www.bethelheights.com



2006 PINOT NOIR ♦ EOLA-AMITY HILLS CUVEE

Harvest dates: October 2nd – 7th, 2006

Source: 32% Elton Vineyard, 28% Seven Springs Vineyard,
20% Jessie James Vineyard, 10% Lewman Vineyard,
10% Bethel Heights Estate Vineyard

Grapes at harvest: Brix 24-24.5; pH 3.0-3.4

Finished wine: Alcohol 14.2%, pH 3.61, TA 6.2 gr/liter

1625 Cases produced, bottled July 18th, 2007

Suggested retail \$30

WINEMAKER NOTES: Twenty percent of the fruit was fermented whole cluster and the remainder was destemmed into 1.5-ton fermentation bins, then chilled and kept cold for five days before fermentation began. Following ten to fourteen-day fermentations, the new wine went into French oak barrels (35% new) for ten months. Each lot was kept separate until the final blending of the cuvée.

THE 2006 VINTAGE: As a general rule a large crop usually means a bit less concentration in the wines, but 2006 was an exception. Mother Nature provided the extra heat and light necessary to ripen a larger crop, and there was plenty of moisture in the soil at the beginning of the season to carry it through. 2006 reminds us of 2003, another exceptionally warm vintage. The difference in 2006 was that all the heat came in early to mid-summer (five days over 100° between May and July). Since the heat came before color change, rather than at the end of the season, the grapes actually ripened in relatively cool conditions and therefore have more expressive fruit and more freshness than one might expect from a hot vintage. There was no rain to threaten the integrity of the fruit before the harvest.

TASTING NOTES: Initial aromas of clove and anise give way to dusty raspberry, oak spice, and plum as the wine opens in the glass. The entry is juicy with Royal Anne cherry, hints of citrus, and firm yet balanced acidity carrying the wine to the finish. The tannins are fine grained and suit the wine in its youth, but are robust enough to balance this wine for aging over the next 5-7 years.