

KNEWITZ

WEINGUT KNEWITZ APPENHEIM



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VINTAGE REPORT 2021

The 2021 vintage – a *classic* year? Or rather an *exceptional* year? That's open to debate as we look back at last year's vintage. What is certain in any case is that in our current vintage report we will not be reporting on the challenges caused by the extreme drought and heat as in previous years. The latter has increasingly become the new normal over the years, and we have learned to deal with it. The key for us is a well thought-out soil management which leads to an optimal nutrient balance as well as an improved soil structure that can store more oxygen and water. Only in this way can we maintain and promote the vitality of our vines and harvest grapes rich in extracts at perfect ripeness.

In fact, this year we have come to realize that a year with cool, almost „normal“ temperatures – a classic vintage as we used to know it – is no longer a classic, at least for us, but after all the hot and dry years of the last decade is now probably considered exceptional. Exceptional was also the amount of rain that kept us on our toes throughout the year and gave us a lot of work in a mean way. But Mother Nature is and always will be the one to set the pace of our work and is the foundation of our wines.

Each wine has a certain potential in the light of its origin and the weather pattern of that year, which we can fully exploit if we have done our job well in the vineyard.

Especially in such a difficult year, which demanded a lot from us and put us to the test, we were incredibly proud of our premium parcels in our great single vineyard sites. They did not let us down. On the



contrary: In this unusually cool and wet year, they were at their best. Why is that? We think it's because of our experience. We know our vineyards really well by now and feel in tune with them. A mixture of

experience, knowledge and gut feeling tells us what our vineyards need. We have been farming them organically for a few years now and are currently in the three-year conversion phase to obtain certification. Due to this ecological cultivation, an intensive examination of our soils is indispensable. It is good for the vines; this is noticeable now even after these few vintages. The more thoughtfully and considerately we work with nature, the more honest are the wines that are created.

The wine year

The year 2021 basically started very changeable, cold and wet. There was a lot of precipitation in the form of rain and also snow again and again – the kids were getting all excited, but unfortunately it was not really enough for sledding. At least the water reservoirs could be filled up again after the previous dry years, and you could really watch nature recover.

Due to the cool start of the vegetation phase, budbreak took place between April 30 and May 10. For comparison: In the previous year, budbreak had been between April 12 and 18. Thus, already at that time, one could anticipate a later harvest.



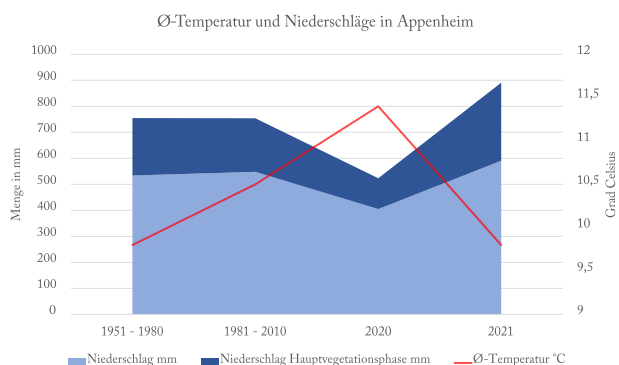
During the vegetation period it remained wet, so an early and thorough pruning of the head and the removal of excess shoots was our first foliage work for this year. With the resulting canopy we achieved better air circulation and thus better drying of the grape zone. It also ensured a better application of our plant strengthening agents. Through targeted defoliation during blossoming we were able to achieve a slightly reduced fruit set, which later resulted in less compact bunches with really flavorsome and aromatic berries.

This was followed by a relatively cool and, above all, wet summer. This time was incredibly labor-intensive and demanded a lot of stamina from us. Plant

protection was THE topic that kept us busy throughout the summer and hardly allowed any free time. Especially when the temperatures became warmer from June on, the risk of infestation with the so-called downy mildew increased. No matter what form of plant protection was used – conventional or organic – it was almost impossible to keep up. Although organic crop protection is never easy, it must be said that it was even more labor-intensive in 2021. Conventional pesticides penetrate the plant. In contrast to that, organic agents such as orange oil, sulfur or baking soda have a preventive effect on the plant, but are washed off with every rain and then have to be reapplied.

Despite all the work, this wet summer, or rather powdery mildew, cost us some grapes. In the end, it was just a matter of keeping the loss as small as possible.

To illustrate the amount of precipitation, here are some data from our weather station in Appenheim. The diagram shows the temperature and the precipitation in the years 2020 and 2021, as well as the long-term average from 1951 to 1980 and 1981 to 2010. With precipitation we distinguish between total annual precipitation and precipitation in the main vegetation period from May to August.



The grape harvest

It was not until the beginning of August that the situation relaxed and we were able to enjoy fantastic summer weather that lasted into October. In parallel to further defoliation measures, the entire team had to get to work on the green harvest. And this had to be carried out particularly meticulously in view of the weather conditions of 2021. In order to harvest only healthy and fully ripe grapes, all berries affected by mildew were removed. In addition, and due to the low temperatures in this year, yields were further reduced so that we could achieve better sugar accumulation in the grapes and full ripeness. We had rarely done such a large yield reduction before, and

we felt on edge about it on some occasions. But in retrospect it was absolutely important and appropriate, because it was the only way we could harvest 100% healthy, fully ripe grapes of top quality.



We started harvesting our Chardonnay and Pinot Noir grapes on September 25, while the Riesling was given two weeks longer to accumulate even more flavor and extracts. They were harvested from October 9. In total, picking stretched over six weeks and was labor-intensive but overall relaxed due to the longer time we took. The grapes in the Honigberg were the last to be harvested on October 28 and joined the ranks of the other premium grapes with incredibly great aromas and flavors.



Overall, the 2021 vintage is currently very strong and we look forward to presenting to you wines with finesse, tension, lots of structure and an exciting acidity backbone. In our opinion, a great Riesling vintage with a long storage potential that currently reminds us of the 2016, 2008 and 2004 vintages. A vintage with power and a lot of density, which we were able to achieve due to the low yields. Especially with the top wines, however, it is a very small vintage – here the grapes yielded just 18 to 20 hl/ha.

All the more pleasing are the quality and the great potential that this vintage brings with it.

