

KANONKOP

WINE ESTATE

Vintage Report - 2015

Kanonkop winemaker, Abrie Beeslaar, had the following to say about the 2015 vintage:

“It was as perfect a vintage as I have ever seen. The vineyards experienced no moisture stress whatsoever during the growing season and during December there was just the right amount of strain placed on the vines to prevent excessive vigour in the final stages of the growth cycle. Summer conditions were mild with one or two days we could classify as hot. This temperate weather led to even ripening of the grapes without any sudden surges in sugar levels. Although the grapes were ripening in perfect weather, selecting the right time to harvest was crucial. A few hours can make a difference. If we hadn't got it right in 2015, we would not have done justice to the great hand nature gave us.”

The Stellenbosch region produced a slightly smaller crop than in 2014, but with exceptional quality, which was taken in earlier than previous years. Viticulturally speaking, 2015 is regarded as one of the best – the type of vintage you only dream of. An above-average wet winter and sufficient cold units had been accumulated for the full breaking of dormancy. Bud break was about two weeks earlier than usual, and was generally even.

Just as the soil started to become dry, we had 15mm of rain on the 5th of November. In that same week we also started using a pressure bomb for the first time to measure soil moisture levels. On the 12th of November we had another 65mm of rain, and some hail which caused damage to the Pinotage on the north-west slopes. Very dry and strong winds during December dried out the soil quite significantly, and the vineyards showed signs of moderate stress quite early.

Temperatures increased gradually in January at the start of the season, causing grapes to mature earlier and the harvest to kick off earlier than usual with the Pinotage. On the 7th of January it was noted that the soil was very dry, and we started irrigating the Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon for 24h periods. The decision to irrigate around Christmas time now proved to be invaluable, and is a practice to be continued in dry years.

It was cooler during the earlier maturation phase in February, but very high temperatures during the first week of March picked up the rapid harvesting pace. There were no significant heat waves during the maturation period and early harvest.

Early varieties like Pinotage produced good yields. Cabernet Sauvignon's yield was lower (this could be ascribed to rain during flowering and berry set period, causing uneven and weak berry set), and the berries were small due to stress conditions during the cell enlargement period.

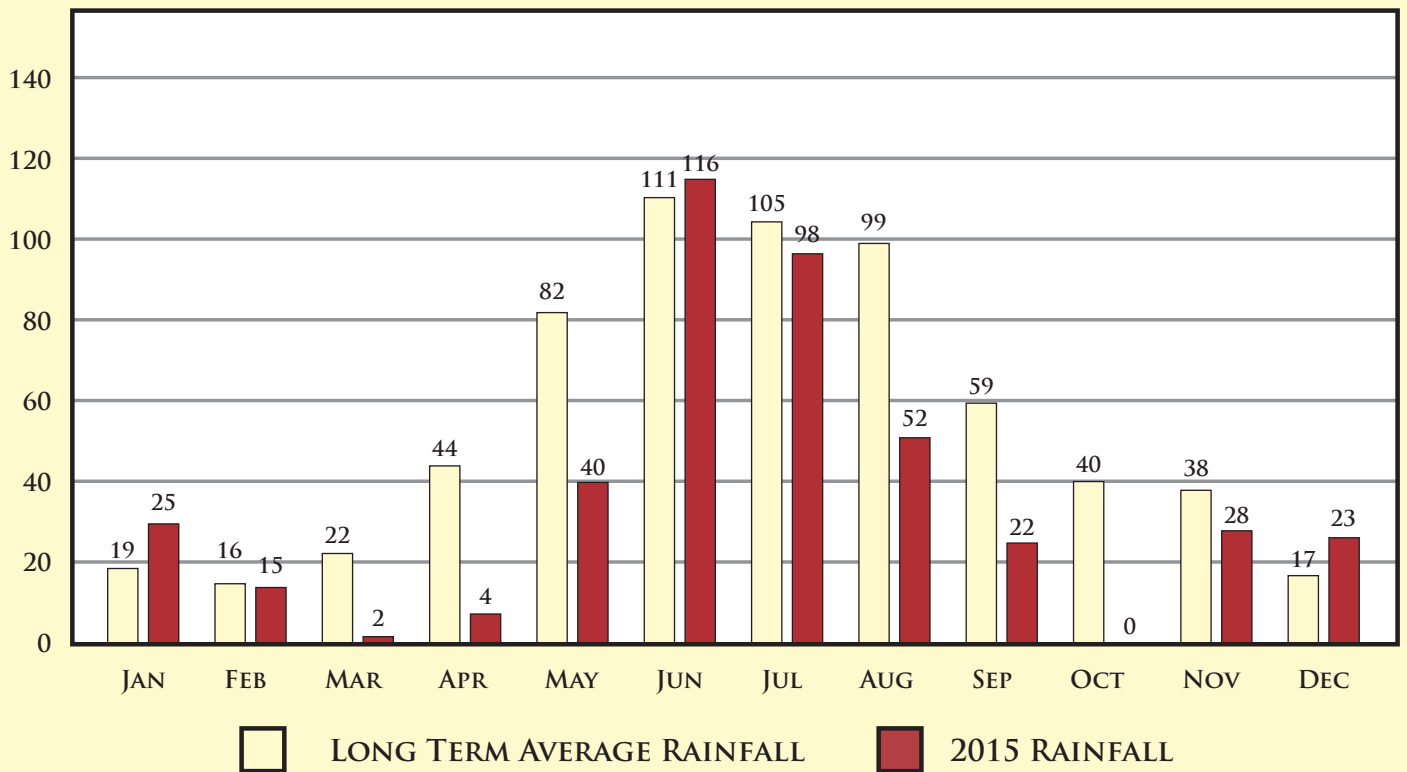
Grape analyses were good with low pH levels and good acidity and sugar levels. The colour extraction was excellent, and the acidity levels retained well during the harvest season despite the warm weather.



The wines from this vintage are destined for extended bottle maturation, and if stored correctly, will gain complexity for 15–20 years.

KANONKOP VINTAGE RATING: 5 STARS

KANONKOP WINE ESTATE RAINFALL (MM): 2015 VS LONG TERM AVERAGE



KANONKOP WINE ESTATE AVERAGE TEMPERATURE (°C): 2015 MIN & MAX

