

KANONKOP

WINE ESTATE

Vintage Report - 2018

The extreme warm and dry climatic conditions of this vintage led to the size of the crop being considerably lower than that of 2017. It will be remembered as one of the driest seasons in Kanonkop's history. Fortunately, the temperatures were slightly lower which helped to reduce the stress on the vines.

Uneven budburst, shoot growth and ripening tested our ability and management skills to harvest at optimum ripeness levels and how to handle the grapes correctly in the cellar. From the start of the season the bunches in the vineyards looked uneven, and plenty of green grapes were dropped to get the vineyards in balance again. Cooler night-time temperatures and sporadic light rain showers alleviated the challenging conditions. Pests, like snails and katydids, were also a problem.

Due to the drought conditions and restricted availability of water, the grape bunches weighed lighter than normal, with less and smaller berries per bunch. The dry soils hampered the preparation for planting of cover crops after the harvest.

Winter in 2017 started later than usual, and we received only 80% of our expected rainfall during this period. Above average rainfall during flowering and berry set had a negative impact on later ripening varieties like Cabernet Sauvignon, and led to uneven berries and bunches. This rain, together with high temperatures and thunder in the middle of the growing season, resulted in rapid shoot growth, which prompted us to practise intensive canopy management. During the ripening phase the night-time temperatures were cooler than normal, which brought good colour and flavour development. A hailstorm on the 13th of February caused some damage too.

Harvest started slightly later than usual – earlier pickings was frenetic due to above average warm days, but changed later in the season after some light rain showers and cooler night temperatures. Although the average day temperatures were 2oC warmer than the long term average, heat waves were very limited to only short periods in December, January and February. The appearance of sunburn on the grapes was limited due to cooler night temperatures, proper suckering methods and some light showers. Overall the vineyards looked very healthy for such a dry year, there were still plenty of leaves on the vines, way more than we expected. Despite the dry conditions, the bunches still looked fresh, and the texture of the skins were soft, even though the pips were still green.

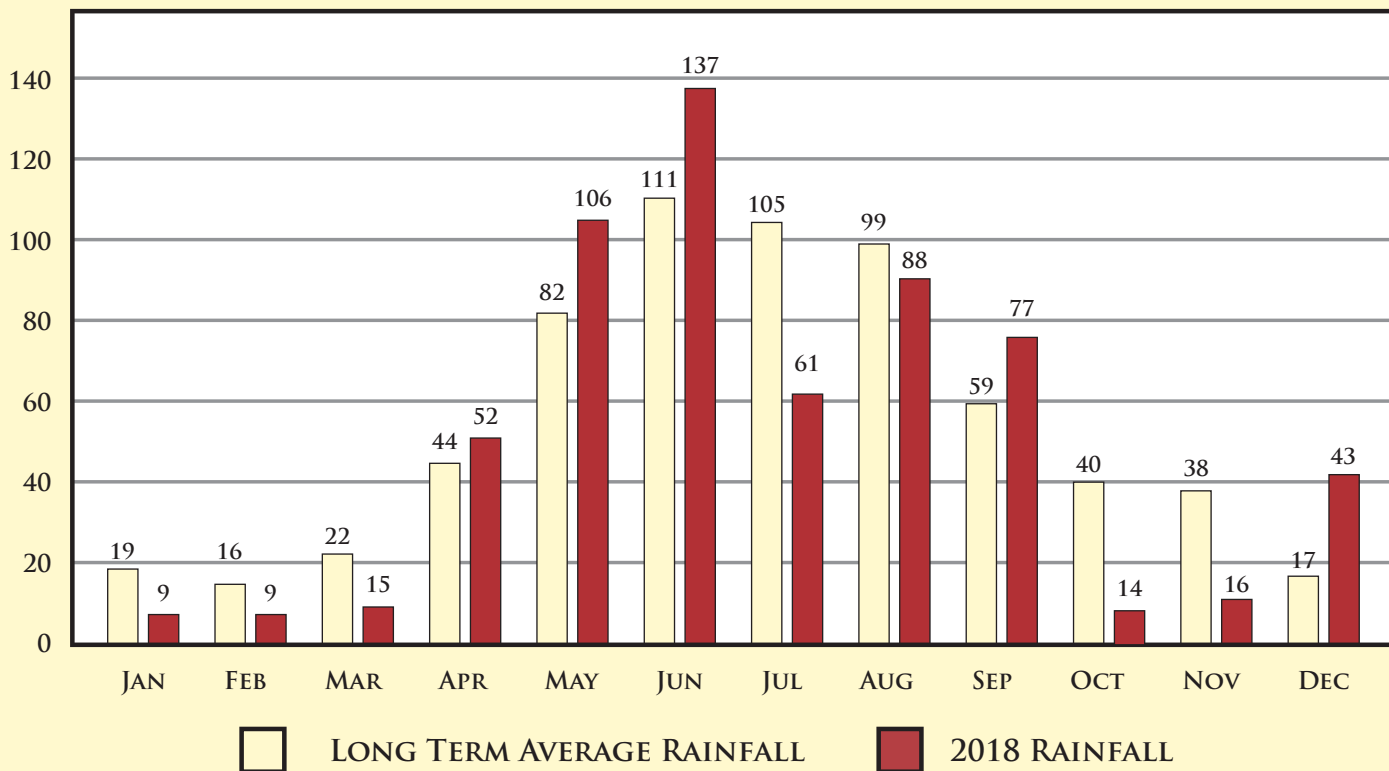


During the first half of the season grape analyses looked promising with higher acid levels, and ripening at lower sugar levels than normal. Later in the season ripening slowed down, and the acids from this period were generally lower.

This challenging vintage, with its lingering drought that required particular focus on optimal picking times, produced sound, concentrated wines that should peak earlier.

KANONKOP VINTAGE RATING: 3½ STARS

KANONKOP WINE ESTATE RAINFALL (MM): 2018 VS LONG TERM AVERAGE



KANONKOP WINE ESTATE AVERAGE TEMPERATURE (°C): 2018 MIN & MAX

