



GUERRIERI RIZZARDI

NEWS FROM THE VINEYARDS - July 11th 2008

At the end of harvest 2007 (in Bardolino - 13th of October (Dògoli Vineyard), in Valpolicella - 4th of October (Pojega Vineyard) and Soave - 9th of October (Costeggiola Vineyard)), we began the pruning of the vines which lasted from November 2007 to the end of February 2008. The weather during the first three months of 2008 was quite normal with a few rainy days.

By March 10th, we ended the “binding” of the vines in our Pojega Vineyard with Rondinella vines, which was one of the last vineyards harvested in 2007 (October 1, 2007).

After the first sign of bud-break, work in the vineyards continued with the suppression of the double buds. In certain very productive vineyards, we also reduced the shoot numbers according to the production objectives. We tried to concentrate this operation fairly early in the spring, when the shoots were 5 to 15 cm long and when the clusters were already visible.

The operation of removing the side-growths from the vine principal shoot, is done nowadays with the goal of controlling the vine’s vegetative growth. This procedure was done just before the flowering phonologic stage, between the end of April and May 23rd. The months between May and June, had been particularly rainy which resulted in the slowing of the vine flowering: the flowering started May 28th and ended around June 9th for all the red grape varieties. With the cool temperatures and all the rain, we in turn, are expecting to harvest quite late. The abundance of rain created a deposit of water in the soil, which will probably be helpful during the hottest days of July and August.

We completed the shoot reduction by June 6th. We then started the summer hedging, with a cutter bar. The summer edging is done by machine in the cordone speronato and simple guyot trained vineyards, which usually starts after the end of the flowering. By cutting the long vertical shoots, we want to maintain a good balance between leaves and fruit and to have a better distribution of the nutritive substances created by the leaves. By having a better bunch exposure, the vines reach an ideal height, where the canopy should be cut, according to the distance between the rows and according the height of the cordon fruiting wire. We usually do 2 summer edgings per year: in 2008, we did the first one between June 6th and June 16th (at the end of the flowering) and the second, in the first week of July (during bunch closure). After the second edging, the climate was warm and dry, even if sudden storms can now and then bring some water: the vines grow less and until just before the harvest, we in turn will not do any edging.

During the summer months, we sprayed vines in order to prevent the downy and powdery mildew (oidium). We used the Bordeaux mixture and began the process on May 5th 2008. We sprayed 10 times with sulphur and copper and usually spray between 10 and 13 times. We stopped the spraying process approximately 30 to 40 days before harvest in order to avoid pesticide residues on the grapes.

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