

## **Press Release**

**January 28, 2009**

### **Marlborough Looks Forward to Quality Vintage**

#### **Variable Flowering of Sauvignon Blanc in Marlborough**

#### **Wineries and Growers Work Towards Highest Quality Vintage Ever**

Cool conditions during late December in Marlborough have created variable flowering of the region's flagship variety Sauvignon Blanc.

The later ripening areas of the province were most affected when cool southerlies hit just prior to Christmas, resulting in lower than expected fruit set for some. The earlier ripening areas of Marlborough had the opposite scenario, with excellent fruit set, according to Dr Rengasamy Balasubramaniam, (Bala) from Delegat's Wine Estate. With quality being the mantra of the 2009 vintage, companies have been working with growers to ensure controlled yields. Some growers have chosen to drop canes to limit the vine's fruit, while others have been shoot thinning.

Wine Marlborough Board Chair, Blair Gibbs says the industry has responded well to the call to limit yields, following a much larger than expected 2008 vintage.

"Everyone is working towards making the 2009 vintage one of the best ever, in terms of quality."

Workshops on yield forecasting have been held by all the major companies, according to Pernod Ricard's Commercial Manager of South Island Vineyards, Peter McLeod.

"We have had a very good response to our requests to control copping levels and from our perspective the vines and fruit are looking very good."

That sentiment has been echoed by Mr Gibbs, who says the crops and vines are in balance, as the region heads into the hottest months of the year.

"People have only just started irrigating, which is late for Marlborough. It means there won't be any pressure on resources later on in the growing season."

He says with all the work undertaken on canopies, it's likely ripening will be earlier than normal.

“Things are looking good out in the vineyards and barring some bad weather scenario, we are looking at a high quality vintage.”

For further information:

Marcus Pickens

Marketing Manager Wine Marlborough

Ph +64 357 79299

Mob +64 21 831 820

Email: [marcus@wine-marlborough.co.nz](mailto:marcus@wine-marlborough.co.nz)