

2009

Vintage Report



The last grapes of the 2009 harvest were picked in vineyards near Haro on 26 October 2009, making this one of the earliest harvests in the history of the Rioja region, having started two months earlier in Aldeanueva del Ebro on 27 August. The total production was of 412.3 million kg of high quality grapes. The growth cycle ran around 10 days earlier than previous years, starting with flowering in May/June. High summer temperatures of up to 35-37°C meant that alcoholic maturity was reached earlier than usual, although phenolic ripeness took longer to develop. Low rainfall in the summer months reduced expectations in terms of quantity although the majority of the vineyards developed well despite the lack of water, except those in arid and very stony soils.

Hydric stress was lessened by rainfall on the 16-18 September, when only around 5% of the grapes had been harvested; largely white grapes in the Rioja Baja. This rainfall also helped balance the phenolic and alcoholic maturity of the grapes. From this point onwards the weather conditions were sunny and dry until the end of the harvest, allowing the grapes to reach perfect maturity with little incidence of vineyard diseases. Around 1,700 ha of vineyards in the Rioja Baja were damaged by a hail storm on 24 May but other than this, weather conditions allowed a very healthy production both in terms of quantity and quality.

The final production of 412.3 million kg of grapes by 657 wineries was the same as that of 2007, and somewhat larger than last year's harvest. Given the excellent conditions at bud break and fruit set, a green harvest was carried out in many vineyards in order to keep yields within limits set by the Consejo Regulador. These limits, set at 6,500kg/ha for red grapes and 9,500kg/ha for white, optimise the quality of Riojan wine.

Production levels, along with quality and levels of ripeness, are controlled by 180 harvest auxiliaries who visit the weighing stations of every single winery in the region. Magnetic cards are issued to each of the region's 19,000 vineyard owners allowing the Consejo to trace the source of every single grape that arrives at a Rioja winery for processing and therefore the yields and production of each and every vineyard in the DOCa.

Further information:

PRODUCTION IN THE THREE SUBREGIONS OF RIOJA (MILLION KG)

2009 VINTAGE	REDS	WHITES	TOTAL PRODUCTION
	Total m Kg.	Total m Kg.	Total m Kg.
La Rioja	257	23.87	280.86
Álava	78.25	8.12	86.37
Navarra	43.52	1.54	45.07
TOTAL D.O.	378.77	33.53	412.30

