



VARIETAL & VINEYARD: This Syrah comes from a small section within our 6-acre vineyard located on the eastside Dry Creek Bench. The vines on this little knoll are much less vigorous, due to the well-drained soils, and as such produce smaller grapes with more concentrated flavors and tannins than the balance of the Syrah vineyard. Our typical yield in this section is less than six pounds per vine.

VINTAGE/HARVEST: A wet spring led to a moderately cool growing season in 2006. These conditions pushed back our harvest about a week later than normal. We harvested our Syrah between September 26th and September 30th. While we harvested our Benchland Syrah at very ripe sugars, the wine shows some of the aspects of a cool vintage for Syrah-olive, pepper and smoked meat aromas and flavors.

VINIFICATION: 2006 marked the first year we employed whole-cluster fermentation with our Benchland Syrah. Over half of this wine was fermented in this manner. We've begun using this traditional winemaking technique because stems enhance aromas and tannin structure. The remaining grapes were de-stemmed and lightly crushed. The wine was fermented in a combination of small open and closed top tanks with indigenous yeast. The small tank size allows us to regulate extraction between punching down and pumping over. Once in barrel, we routinely stir lees for added texture and complexity. We aged this wine in 40% new French Oak for 17 months. This 100% Syrah was bottled **unfined** and **unfiltered**.

STYLE/DESCRIPTION: This 2006 Benchland Syrah shows the classic character of this vineyard site: dark color, with intense blackberry, chocolate and smoked meat flavors. The whole-cluster fermentation adds a measure of spicy complexity to this wine. Our Benchland fruit is our most structured Syrah. As such, I would try to hold on to it for at least 2 to 3 years before drinking. It should have no problem aging 5 to 7 years.

Harvested: 9/26, 9/27/06
Total acidity: 0.61g/100ml
pH: 3.88
Oak aging: 17 mos. in French Oak barrels, 40% new

Blend: 100% Syrah
Alcohol: 14.9%
Bottled: 3/26/08
Cases Produced: 500