

# akitu

## Central Otago, New Zealand - Akitu

We had some sustained positive rainfall over the winter months, not too many snowfalls to frustrate the pruners although some very cold temperatures' in July. Nothing to worry about so on balance an uneventful winter.

Spring kicked off nicely too, with budburst in the first week of October followed by healthy rains and warming temperatures'. These were very constructive early conditions and consequently excellent vine development followed.

November became more unsettled with cold fronts bringing annoying frosts once a week that checked the positive progress. December however was just what we ordered; warm days, cool nights and little rain. Perfect atmospheric and optimal soil moisture ensured rapid canopy growth and after a golden spell of classic Wanaka spring weather flowering started in the second half of December delivering an even and full fruit set. A ridiculously late frost in the first week of January reminded us of our geographical vulnerability and proximity to the stunning Southern Alps. We did take some hits that will result in a reduction in yields for those lower blocks on the flats. An aberration for sure and the summer quickly returned and stayed set for a solid 6 week run. Such an ideal first half meant a busy fruit thinning cycle where we adjusted crop levels down to our sweet spot of 4.5 tons per hectare.

The long period of hot and dry conditions was broken at the end of February with immaculately timed rain that refreshed canopies and recharged soil moisture for the critical push to harvest. Mild and dry weather prevailed for the autumn months providing ideal ripening conditions. The helicopters dealt with a few minor frost events easily enough and harvest commenced on the 26th of April, concluding on the 3rd of May.

Overall a very good season indeed with a clean, healthy crop and resultant wines sitting somewhere between the weight and power of the 2014 and the elegance and perfume of the 2015.

