

The 2021 vintage at Weingut Egon Müller

Winter once again was mild with plenty of rain in December, January and February. It wasn't enough however, to balance the water deficit from the previous string of hot and dry years. February began cold with some snow but quickly it became very warm with temperatures reaching 18°C. Concerned by the ever earlier start of vegetation in recent years, we pushed through with the winter work, but the beautiful weather did not last long. From March through May it was colder than average. From May 14 to 26 it was rainy but otherwise quite dry.

June was beautiful without extreme heat. Flowering began late, but proceeded quickly. Due to the dry conditions, we only started spraying on 22 June when flowering was almost finished.

On July 14, heavy rain, mainly over the Eifel, caused unprecedented flooding. It was worst on the Ahr but Kyll and Sauer also rose very quickly to never seen highs with great damage. The Saar, on the other hand, which rises in the Vosges, was hardly affected.

The persistent humidity caused enormous Downy Mildew pressure. We sprayed systemically on July 16 and 17 and, after further heavy rains, on the 27th/28th. This treatment, the 4th, which was supposed to be the last, came a day late and there were infections on the grapes. We estimate the loss at about 20% and we had to treat the most heavily affected vineyards a fifth time.

August was very cool and humid, the young leaves continued to be infected by Mildew and veraison didn't begin until the middle of the month. As the grapes softened, it became apparent that there were unusually big differences in ripeness even in adjacent plots, which appeared to be due to the mode of cultivation of the vineyards and the level of yield.

September was warm, dry and sunny. October was also nice and mostly warm.

We started the harvest on October 11th, 3 weeks later than 2020. (In the 80s, that would have been considered early.) At the beginning of October it had rained a bit and the previously very healthy grapes began to rot. The sugar levels were consistently pleasing, acidity was after the cold August very high and the grapes were particularly aromatic.

About half of our harvesting team were first-timers. Since there was not much noble rot overall, it turned out to be very difficult to train the new pickers. Therefore, we formed a selection team, with the most experienced pickers harvesting the Botrytis grapes while the main crew picked the remaining grapes behind them.

We finished the harvest on October 28th. The average yield is 30 hl/ha, the sugar levels are higher than in 2020 but do not reach the level of 2019, and the acidity gives the wines an almost electrical tension, which, in combination with the brilliant flavors, gives reason to hope for a very special vintage.