

Drought impacts Pinotage volumes but boosts quality and flavour

Pinotage producers are facing challenging times with South Africa's Winelands affected by the ongoing drought. The 2018 harvest will be characterised by smaller berries, lighter bunches and lower yields, however, the quality of the grapes is very promising - exceptional even.



moshehar via [pixabay](#)

On the foothills of the Simonsberg in Stellenbosch, Kanonkop winemaker Abrie Beeslaar expected the smaller berries to impact on the tonnage by around 10% but was excited about the flavours and colours being more concentrated.

André van Dyk, cellar master at Rooiberg in Robertson, suggested that the drop in production this year could be as much as 15%. The Pinotage harvest will be later than usual, he said, with dwindling water resources having to be very carefully managed.

Kaapzicht cellar master Danie Steytler predicted that the dry-land, older vineyards, in particular, will probably yield much less in 2018. The team has observed a close-to-normal bunch count per vine in the Bottelary area of Stellenbosch but concurred that the sizes of the bunches and berries were considerably smaller.

Beyers Truter of Beyerskloof reasoned that cool summer nights had contributed to the quality of the juices – great tannin structure, good fruit extracts, exceptional colour and flavour. “This looks like a brilliant year for Pinotage,” he enthused.

Beeslaar concluded that while the drought had made for challenging times, it was heartening to see how well the Pinotage vines were handling the adverse weather conditions – a true testament to how well this uniquely South African cultivar has adapted to the environment.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>