HARVEST REPORT CHEQUÉN 2021

MARCHIHUE -VALLE DE COLCHAGUA
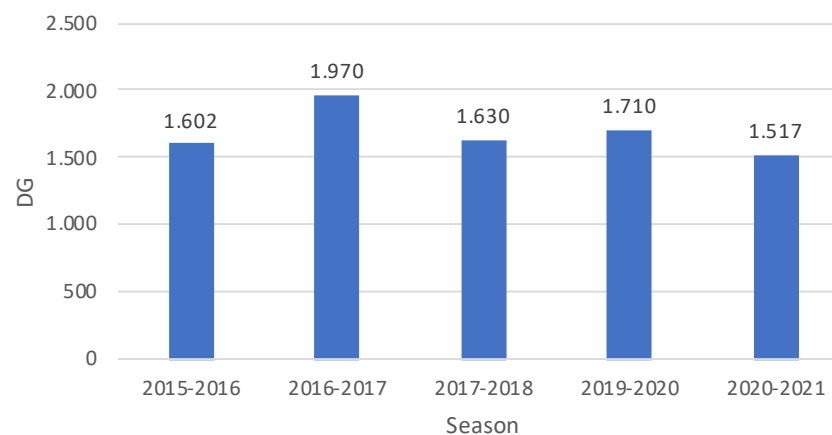
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Without a doubt, the 2020–2021 season had a variety of climactic events that defined it. A tool used to characterize and compare seasons is the accumulation of degree days with a base of 10°C, which is defined by monthly degree days or effective temperatures (T>10°C). This index measures the availability of heat for the normal development and ripening of vegetative species. Places or years that are warmer will have a greater accumulation, while places or years that are cooler will have a lesser temperature accumulation.

If we compare the last few years, and take the historical average of the last 20 years, which is 1,700, we can see that the 2020–2021 season is the season with the lowest temperature accumulation that we have registered, which tells us that this was a very cool year.

ACCUMULATION OF DEGREE DAYS WITH BASE 10°C
Fig. 1

To analyze the season in more detail, we'll separate the distinct periods of the recently ended season.
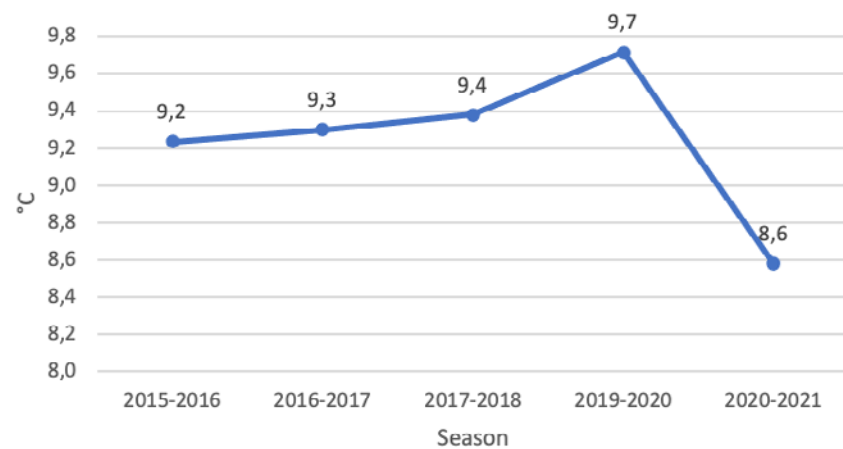
WINTER (JUNE/JULY/AUGUST)

The average temperatures in this period were lower than the last few years and also lower than the historic average, with winter precipitation of almost 400mm, which is 400% more than the previous year, and 100% more than the historical average. During this season the plant doesn't need water, but it's very important for the soil to retain a good amount of water, in order to begin the growing season.

We also have to consider more than just the fact that it was a rainy year, but we also have to look at the distribution of the precipitation throughout the season, and if we compare the 2015–2016 season, which was also rainy, the vast majority of the rain was concentrated in the harvest season, versus 2020–2021 where the rains were mainly in winter and summer, which contributed to a slow, balanced ripening.
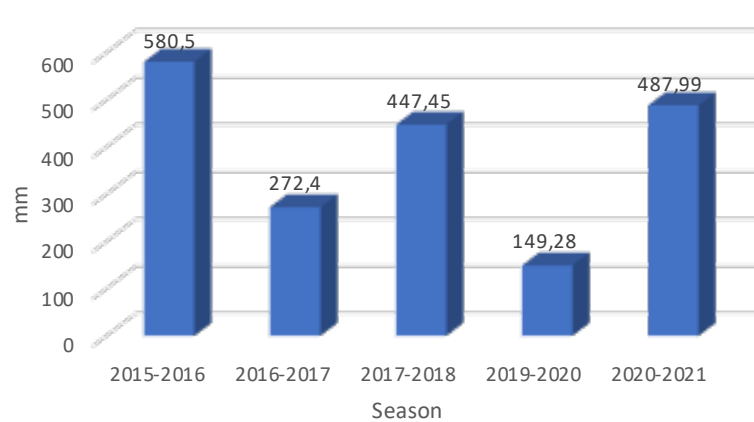
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AVERAGE WINTER TEMPERATURES (°C)
Fig. 2

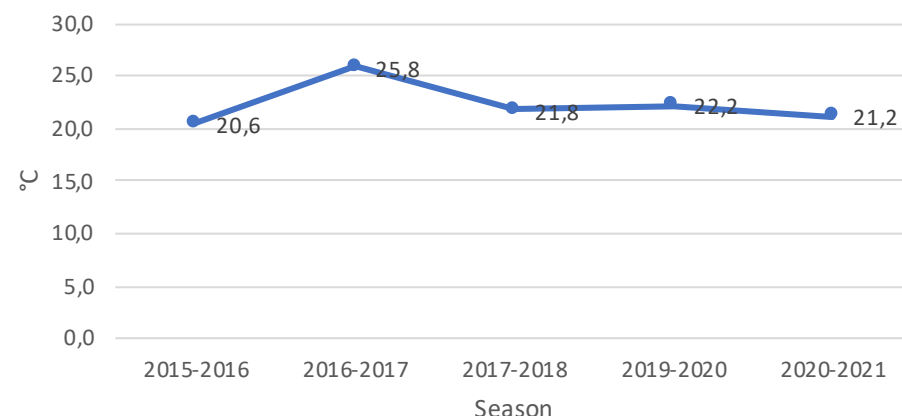**ANNUAL ACCUMULATED PRECIPITATION (MM)**
Fig. 3

SPRING (SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER/NOVEMBER)

Spring was already beginning to show us that it was going to be a cool season, as the average high temperatures in this season were very similar to the 2015–2016 and 2017–2018 seasons, which were also considered cool, with temperatures below the historic average of 20.9°C, and with just one episode of rain in September.

Considering these factors, bud break was 7–10 days later than the previous season, beginning the third week of September.

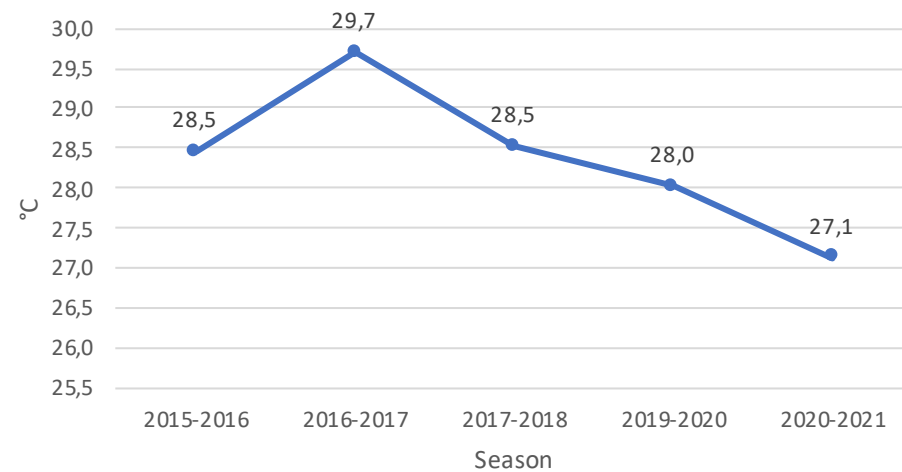**AVERAGE HIGH TEMPERATURES, SPRING (°C)**
Fig. 4

SUMMER (DECEMBER/JANUARY)

Summer's high temperatures followed the same trend, proving the 2020–2021 season was cooler than both the 2015–2016 and 2017–2018 seasons, 1.5°C cooler than the 20-year average, with veraison delayed by 10–12 days with respect to the previous year.

We had unusual rain in January, 35mm which were very well received in order to replace the ground water and add moisture in the season when the plants demand the most water. In order to avoid any health issues, we pulled leaves in order to increase ventilation in the canopy.

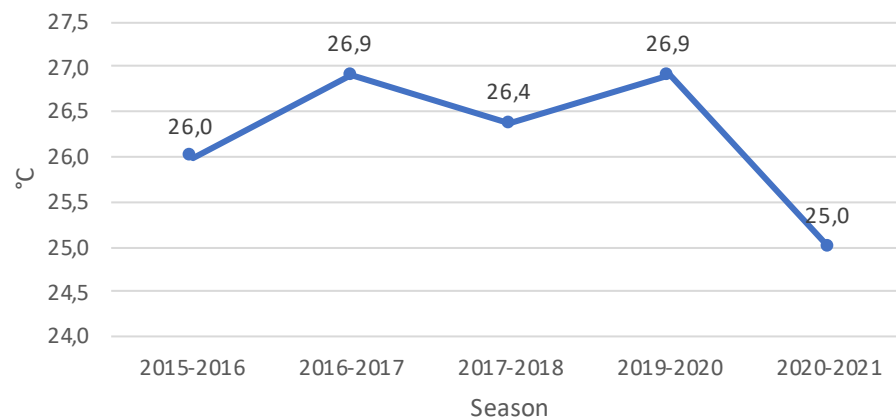**AVERAGE HIGH TEMPERATURES, SUMMER (°C)**
Fig. 5

HARVEST (FEBRUARY/MARCH)

During the harvest season the tendency was the same as throughout the season, which was very beneficial as the ripening of the tannins was accompanied by low alcohol and great natural acidity.

The harvest window was very broad, as there were more days to harvest the fruit with good ripening, versus a warm year when the window to harvest is very tight, and in a few days you can lose the optimal harvest.

AVERAGE HIGH TEMPERATURES AT HARVEST (°C)
Fig. 6

The 2021 white wines show a floral and citrus aromatic profile with a moderate level of alcohol and refreshing acidity. The red wines are showing intense color with profiles of fresh red fruit and spice, especially in the Carmenere, and the tannins are present but smooth, thanks to optimal phenolic ripeness. In general the wines are elegant and fresh.

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