



## 2005 WILLAMETTE VALLEY CH

**BACKGROUND** David Adelsheim was the leader in importing the “Dijon” clones from Burgundy that are reinventing Oregon Chardonnay. A match for the long, cool growing seasons and daily temperature averages of the Willamette Valley, plantings of Dijon clones in the vineyard has been translated into superior quality Chardonnays in the bottle. In just the second year of production, our CH is a relative newcomer to our line of wines. While a traditionally-crafted Chardonnay continues to play a strong role in our lineup of wines, the addition of a stainless steel style has afforded a new opportunity to experience the potential of Chardonnay grapes grown in Oregon’s unique climate.

**GROWING SEASON** Summer-like weather appeared in late January in the northern Willamette Valley, pushing activities in the vineyard over two months ahead of schedule, with bud break occurring quite early, on March 15th. Then, in late March, one of the driest winters on record turned in to one of the wettest springs. Cloudy, rainy and cool weather at bloom time, June 8-12, were the cause of reduced crop levels (approx. 75% of normal) for the vintage. These rains, however, saturated the soil and kept vines from any sign of water stress until late August. Cool temperatures throughout September and October and rains beginning at the very end of September, meant slow-ripening fruit and challenging decisions about when to pick. With good vineyard management to control the effects of the rain, we were able to avoid rot or mildew issues, allowing fruit to hang in wait of optimal fruit ripeness and flavor profiles. Cooler temperatures translated into structured acidity and ideal flavor development in the wines. Chardonnay picking took place on October 4th and 10th.

**VINEYARDS** The four Yamhill County vineyards in this blend - (51%) Stoller Vineyard in the Dundee Hills and (18%) Quarter Mile Lane, (18%) Bryan Creek, and (13%) Boulder Ridge Vineyard in the Chehalem Mountains - are all on basaltic-origin, clay-loam soils. These soils are capable of holding enough water to support grapevines through our annual summer drought, thus insuring the development of intense fruit flavors.

**WINEMAKING** Gentle, whole-cluster pressing separated the juice from the skins of the Chardonnay grapes chosen for this wine. The juice was pumped to stainless steel tanks for a cool temperature fermentation process, and the wine was bottled in April of 2006. The style of winemaking we’ve chosen for the “CH” - cool temperature, stainless steel fermentation - leaves the pure fruit characteristics of the variety to shine through, showing you what Chardonnay tastes like without adornment from oak and malolactic (secondary) fermentation.

**THE WINE** Although not made in typical Chardonnay style, the stone fruit flavors, richness and minerality that are the hallmark of traditional Chardonnay are surely present in this wine. Look for floral aromas, the scent of peach, flavors of perfectly ripe pineapple, and a pleasingly creamy finish. Pair with Alpine hard cheeses (comte, fontina, or aged gruyère) or rich chicken or fish dishes.

**THE LABEL** Just as we went with an abbreviation in naming our “TF” (Tocai Friulano), we’re calling this wine “CH.” However, in this case it was not done because of label law technicalities, but to mitigate confusion - calling the wine simply “Chardonnay” might create the expectation of a wine that tastes quite different than what you find in the bottle. The label drawing is of our winery, as seen from our Calkins Lane Vineyard, by Ginny Adelsheim.

**PRODUCTION** There were 537 cases of 12/750 ml bottles of 2005 CH produced.

