



## 2006 Vintage

### General meteorological and climatic conditions

January began with climatic characteristics which were similar to those experienced at the beginning of 2000, with an unusual persistence of below zero thermal values in terms of both minimum (peaks of  $-10^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) and mean daily temperatures. Dry weather throughout the month ended with a heavy snowfall on January 26, 27 and 28, which deposited a blanket of snow of up to 50 cm in depth. This was followed by heavy rains, reaching values which were decidedly higher than the average for the period.

The weather in February was very changeable, alternating cold, dry northern currents with southerly fronts that brought plenty of rainfall to our region. This wintery climate continued into March, and typically spring-like conditions did not appear until April. Overall therefore, the winter was rather long, cold and wet.

The first ten days of May were still marked by low temperatures, but a sharp rise in the second ten days reached summertime values, which continued until the end of the month. Though the cold made a comeback in the first ten days of June, a heatwave followed, taking the maximum temperatures as high as over  $35^{\circ}\text{C}$ , with no significant rainfall.

Overall though, the water supply in the first six months was lower than the historic average, penalized as it was also by the lack of the usual springtime peak.

Dry weather and scorching heat continued in July, interrupted only by some storms of little consequence. August though began with a completely different outlook: cool due to cold North Atlantic currents, but still with very little rainfall. This continued until the last ten days of the month, when a sharp recovery was recorded in the daytime maximum temperatures, and big differences between day and night.

The first autumnal rains did not make their appearance until mid-September, bringing the long spell of dry weather to an end: two fronts within a week of each other, which - though prolonged, as is customary in autumn - had the intensity that is typical of summer storms. Depending on the area, in just four days three/five times as much rain fell as the average for the month: slightly less than the total rainfall during the first eight months of the year. All this water did not cause any serious harm to the grapes however, as it was almost totally absorbed by soil in a state of serious water shortage.

### Comments on the vintage

The climatic pattern during 2006, distinguished by relatively little rainfall and a succession of more or less extended periods with temperatures above or below the average, had a direct affect on the vines, in which spells of rapid vegetative development alternated with relatively inactive periods.

All the early and medium-early ripening grapes benefited. The whites (Chardonnay, Sauvignon blanc, Arneis) reached excellent degrees of ripening, with medium-high alcohol, balanced acids, and very intense aromas. The Dolcetto grapes were picked with outstanding properties, which have produced wines of enormous potential in the winery, with excellent alcohol values, the right acidity, and very intense colours.

As far as the medium-late and late ripeners (Barbera, Freisa and Nebbiolo) are concerned, the rain in the middle of September was a cause of considerable concern amongst growers. Once again, however, the growers who proved to be astute in their tending of the vines and attentive in the balanced way they controlled the production of the plants were rewarded with a more than satisfactory state of health in the vineyard. The results obtained by those with the patience to wait before harvesting were sound grapes of excellent quality. Following vinification in the winery, the wines are showing very complex bouquets, the right acidity, and adequate alcohol: properties which are perfectly in line with those of the last great vintages.