



AIRFIELD ESTATES

# 2009 Sangiovese

## VARIETAL COMPOSITION

100% Sangiovese

## VINEYARD

For four generations, our family has been farming in the Yakima Valley (Washington's oldest established AVA). Our estate vineyard is situated along the anticlines of the Rattlesnake Mountains, which frame the Yakima Valley to the North. The original vines date back to 1968. Over the years, the vineyard has expanded and now includes 26 different wine grape varieties, spans over 860 acres, and is positioned within a 4 mile radius from the original World War II Airbase that once resided on our family farm.

The Sangiovese was sourced from our Black Rock Vineyard. This vineyard block is a perfect site for Sangiovese. It is situated on a south facing slope, which drains off into the Black Rock Creek basin, for which the vineyard is named. The slope is steep, 8 to 10% grade, and is very shallow, which means that its water holding capacity is limited. Sangiovese is such an efficient user of water and tends to grow large canopies that adversely effect fruit quality. Thus it needs to be sited in a place where the vines can be spoon fed just enough water to survive. The block sits at approximately 1050 feet above sea level and was planted in 2006. The vines are trellised on a modified form of a Geneva Double Curtain. The configuration allows us to spread the canopy across a larger area, leading to better sunlight receptivity. It also allows us to spread out the fruit, targeting 3 tons per acre. With the trellis configuration we experience no bunch congestion and provide an environment of dappled sunlight to the clusters providing for optimal ripeness.

## VINTAGE

The 2009 vintage in Washington State was a warm one. While the average heat units for our vineyard is 2600, in 2009 we accumulated 2861 during the ripening period. By the 3rd week in September, pretty much every variety on the farm was at a brix and pH level in the harvest zone. Due to the fact that everything was ripening at once, it became a mad scramble to bring in the fruit at its ideal ripeness. This was accentuated by the freeze event that occurred on the morning of October 11th. Temperatures fell to 19 degrees in the vineyard, resulting in the rapid defoliation of our vines. This event quickened the pace of harvest as fermenters were piled sky high in the cellar to bring in the fruit before it lost its flavor. While the 2009 harvest was hectic, the vintage will be marked by ripe flavors, soft acidity, and high quality.

## WINEMAKING

Our winemaking begins with a pre-sort of the fruit to make sure only ideal clusters get vinified. After being destemmed, a gentle peristaltic pump is used to transfer the must to the fermentation vessel. The wine is fermented in 6 ton stainless steel tanks and 1 ton stainless steel fermentors. Pump-overs, Rack and Returns, and Punch-downs are used to extract tannin and color from the skin. Ideal peak ferment temperatures are 80-84 degrees. After the wine has finished fermenting it is pressed and settled for 48 hours before going to barrel. Barrels are typically 25%-35% new, and are composed of 60% French, 30% American, and 10% Eastern European. The wine goes through malolactic fermentation in barrel and then is racked. Blending occurs during the 2nd racking, usually in April. Racking continues every 3 months until the wine is finally bottled in April after 18 months in barrel. Prior to bottling, the wine is pad filtered and bottled using screw cap closures.

## WINE ANALYSIS

15.3% Alcohol  
3.54 pH  
7.65 T.A.

## RESIDUAL SUGAR

Dry

## BOTTLING DATE

April 27, 2011

## CASE PRODUCTION

119 cases



Hand-Crafted By Winemaker:

*Marion Z. Miller*

**COLOR** Purple garnet.

**NOSE** A rich bouquet of dried cherries, cranberries, cocoa, & toasted oak.

**PALATE** Full-bodied with generous acidity, smooth tannins, & rich lingering flavors.

**PEAK DRINKING** Now through 2018.