

2004 McLaren Vale (South Australia)

A longer than usual vintage, attributed to cool conditions during ripening, enabled the production of quality wines.

Good winter and spring rainfall ensured even budburst and enabled growers to maintain adequate soil moisture for maintenance of healthy grapevine canopies, from veraison to harvest, contributing to optimum flavour development.

A warm dry November saw a rapid flowering period which was followed by good berry set, and a quick even veraison. The coolest January in 12 years, followed by above average temperatures in February and dry conditions leading into harvest, maximised fruit flavours, sugar and acid levels.

Despite two days in February above 44°C, shrivel and sunburn was minimal due to good canopies filtering the damaging effects of direct sunlight. As a result fruit condition at harvest was excellent.