

https://napavalleyregister.com/news/local/bud-break-begins-in-the-napa-valley/article_9380752a-021d-5bb0-b2e0-02a7aadb822.html

Bud break begins in the Napa Valley

For the Register Mar 18, 2019 Updated 2 hrs ago

TRY 3 MONTHS FOR \$3



Buds break on vines in the Carneros region in southern Napa County in the spring of 2018.

Brittany Pederson, Renteria Vineyard Management

Napa Valley Grap growers has announced that bud break has begun in Napa Valley, marking the beginning of the wine grapegrowing season.

“Buds on Chardonnay in the Carneros AVA are swelling and bursting,” said Brittany Pederson, viticulturist at Renteria Vineyard Management. “These are the first signs of bud break. In the weeks to come, when the weather gets consistently warmer, the sap will start flowing and the vines will be woken up. Bud break will really start to take off then.”

Compared to last year, “bud break is about a week and a half later due to the winter rains,” said Allison Cellini Wilson, viticulturist at Cliff Lede Vineyards.

Over the 2018-19 winter, significant rain storms soaked Napa Valley soils. In total, the valley saw an average of 35 inches of rain between November and February.

“The soils have already absorbed all the water from the winter rains. We’re not seeing any stagnant water remaining out in the vineyards, which means our soils needed the saturation,” Wilson said.

The combination of springtime temperatures and ample water has created a spectacular mustard and cover crop bloom throughout Napa Valley.

“The cover crop has grown in well and is looking very healthy,” Pederson said. “Right now, we’re in the vineyards preparing for the 2019 growing season, which includes cover crop management, tracking nighttime temperatures for frost potential, and wrapping up pruning.”

Done throughout the first three months of the year, pruning creates vine balance, influencing grape yields and fruit quality. When pruning, 70 to 90 percent of the previous year’s growth is removed and select cane or spur positions are left. From the remaining buds on the vine, budbreak takes place, resulting in new growth and the start of the growing season.

“To start the growing season off with full reservoirs and soil profiles is ideal,” Wilson said. “Everything thus far is looking great and we anticipate a busy 2019 growing season.”

Kevin Courtney

City Editor

Kevin has been city editor since September 2010. He joined the Register in 1973 as a reporter. He covered Napa City Hall and assorted other beats over the years. Kevin has been writing his Napa Journal column on Sundays since 1989.

