



2006 KEEFER RANCH PINOT NOIR

VINEYARDS	Keefer Ranch, Russian River Valley 100%
FERMENTATION	5 day cold soak in open top fermenters, hand punched down 1 to 3 times per day, free run sent directly to barrel, press wine settled and barreled separately
BARREL AGING	10 months in 100% French oak, 30% new, 45% one year old, and 25% two and three year old barrels.
BOTTLED	August 1, 2007
PRODUCTION	445 cases 750 ml, 18 cases 1.5L

Freeman's only vineyard-designated Pinot Noir comes from Marcy Keefer's ranch located in the Russian River Valley, on Green Valley School Road. The Russian River Valley is a broad appellation in Sonoma County with quite a few areas of different microclimates. It is warm enough in the northern part for grapes like Zinfandel and Cabernet, but in the southern and western parts, the Russian River Valley is much cooler, and is perfectly suited for Pinot Noir. Keefer Ranch sits in the center the Green Valley, which has always been considered one of California's ideal spots for Pinot Noir. Marcy, her son Craig, and their small crew hand-farm the Keefer Ranch year round with no outside help at all.

2006 was a challenging year in many respects for Sonoma County Pinot Noir and Chardonnay growers. There were heat spikes in June and July mixed with cool, foggy weather. If you combine that with larger than normal berry sizes and tighter clusters, there's bound to be high botrytis pressure. Great growers like Marcy and Craig overcame these challenges in 2006 and provided us with perfectly clean, ripe and flavorful Pinot and Chardonnay. This took constant work in the vineyard all summer and severe selections at harvest time. Their work is very much apparent in the quality of their fruit.

2006 is also the first year when Marcy and Craig made their own Keefer Ranch Pinot Noir, at Freeman's caves.

In each of the 3 years we've made a Keefer Ranch Pinot Noir the common thread to the nose has been the rose petal aromas of the Clone 23. Another feature we've found in all the Keefers we've produced is a racy acidity on the palate, and the 2006 Freeman Keefer Ranch is no exception. The things that stand out in the 2006 Keefer are the higher than normal tannin levels balanced by an abundance of ripe, chewy fruit. We suggest trying one of these '06 Keefers in late 2008 and deciding how long to cellar them.